

Back to yesteryear

Historical sites offer unique summer placement opportunities

By **TAMMY BLACKARD**
Staff Writer

Imagine living in a 255-room mansion surrounded by 130,000 acres of beautiful mountains and strolling through rooms filled with original Renairs, a chess set once owned by Napoleon and portraits by Whistler and Boldini. Or imagine pounding and shaping red-hot iron over an

open fire like the men of 18th century America did, while women dressed in long, old-fashioned dresses and bonnets walk by explaining your craft to hundreds of tourists. Sound intriguing?

Positions with historical sites and organizations in the Southeast can promise all this for exciting and unique internships and summer jobs.

A summer job at Old Salem in Winston-Salem offers workers a chance to travel back in time and explore the life of an 18th-century blacksmith.

Old Salem, settled in 1766 by Moravians, has been restored and opened to the public. Buildings that have stood along the cobblestone streets for two centuries contain many of their original furnishings. Dressed in traditional clothing, townspeople work as potters, weavers, spinners, dyers and blacksmiths.

Old Salem has jobs for 15 people, said Bob Stern, director of information. Most of these are for females to work in exhibit buildings and explain historic rooms and artifacts. These hostesses are paid minimum wage, Stern said.

There are also several craftsmen positions open for two textile workers (a weaver/spinner and dyer), a carpenter, blacksmith and gardener, Stern said. Textile workers put in 32 hours a week at \$3.50 an hour.

To apply for hostessing, contact Jackie Beck at 723-3688 or write to Old Salem, Inc., Box F, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27108. For craftsmen positions, contact Tom Cowan at the same address. The positions last from mid-June to the end of August.

Similar positions are available at Tryon Palace in New Bern. Tryon Palace is a 13-acre historic site in Craven County completed in 1770 for royal Gov. William Tryon. It served as the capitol of the royal colony of North Carolina until the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, and was

restored and opened to the public in 1959.

Some college students will be hired as guides for tours of the palace, said Nancy Kubik, administrative secretary. The June to August positions pay minimum wage.

"We also hire interns each year through the state, but the deadline for internships has passed this year," Kubik said. "They are good programs to think about for the future. This year we will hire a drafting intern and a data systems processor."

Applications, available from the state government, should be sent to Tryon Palace, she said.

Biltmore Estate, south of Asheville, offers some exciting summer opportunities. Biltmore House was completed in 1895 for George Vanderbilt; the 255-room mansion took five years to build. The house contains such art work and furniture as two Renoir paintings, a chess set once owned by Napoleon and a fountain by Karl Bitter. The estate sits on 130,000 acres of land surrounded by the Appalachian mountains, farmland and gardens designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, the designer of Central Park.

"We hire curatorial interns to take care of the collection and work in our library," said Susan Ward, curator of the house. "We will hire three or four paid and unpaid interns."

The paid interns are given \$533 a month with \$150 a month subtracted for living on the estate, Ward said. Unpaid interns receive free housing.

"Most of our interns have history and art history backgrounds, but we're not limited to that," Ward said.

"We only want highly self-motivated people with goals."

For an application, contact Ward or send a resume and a one-page statement indicating career goals and reasons for wanting the internship by April 6. Two references, academic or work, and a transcript are also required.

Biltmore Estate offers summer jobs as well. During the summer, 100 to 125 people are hired to work with landscaping, as guides and as salespeople, said Alice Schweitzer, personnel assistant. These jobs pay from \$3.75 to \$4 an hour. For an application, contact Barbara Johnson at the Employment Security Commission in Asheville.

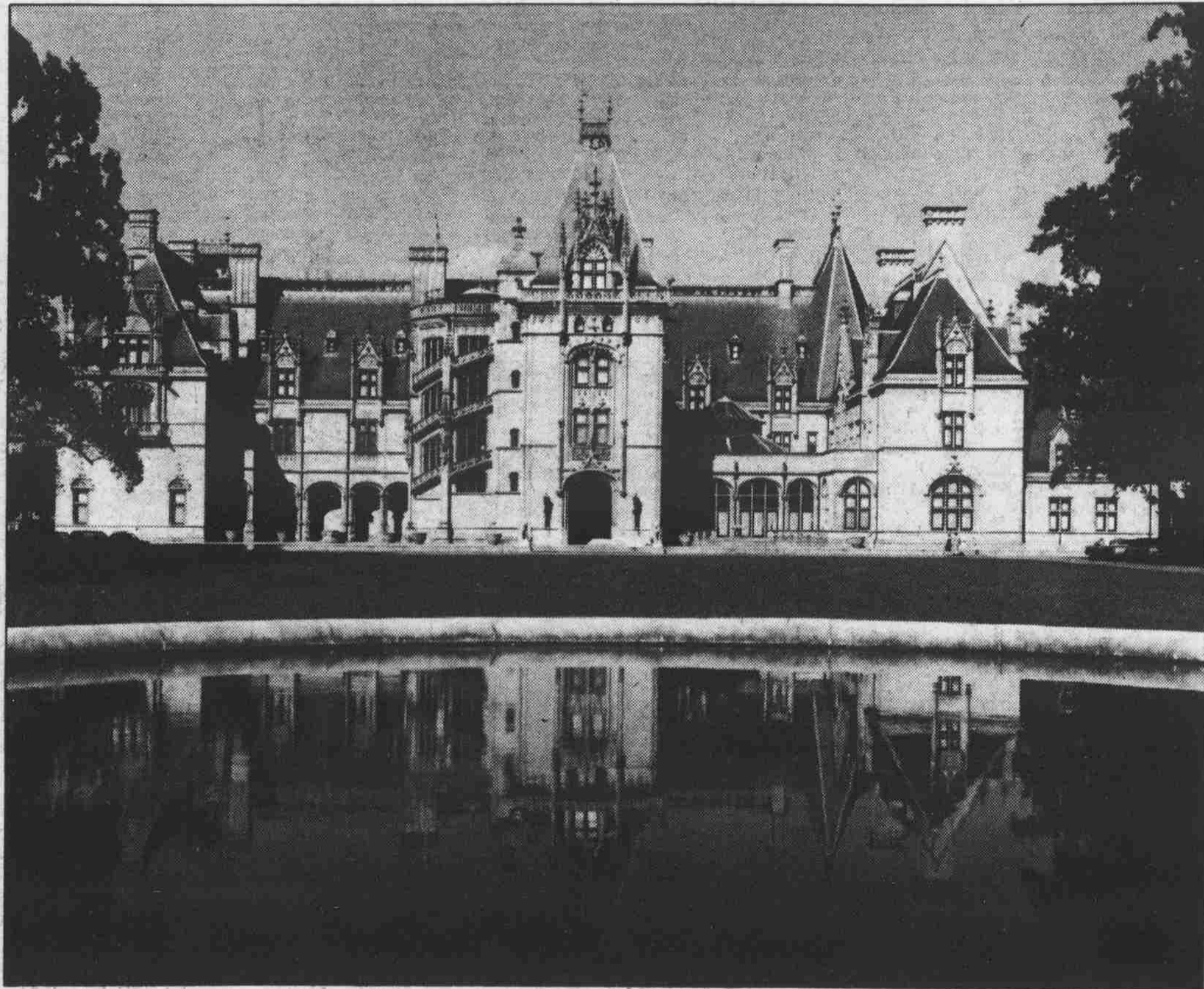
Williamsburg, the 18th century capital of Virginia, stretches from the James River to the York River. The restored colonial town is filled with historic buildings where George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry worked. The town is filled with craft shops, gardens, old residences and colonial taverns full of job opportunities.

"Summer positions are open now," said Lynn Bloch, director of employment. "Usually our jobs last longer than students can give us, but we're willing to work with them."

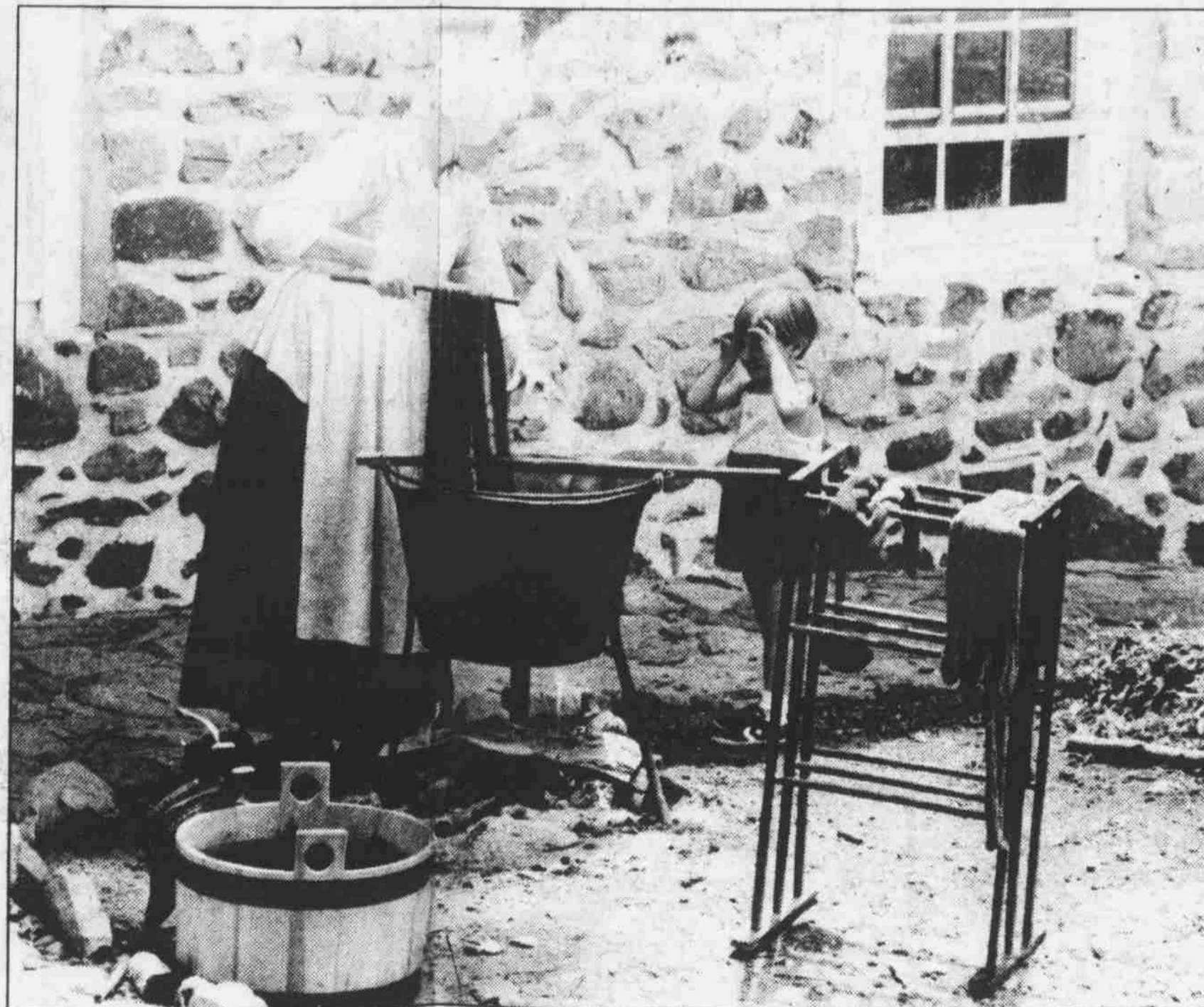
Positions are available in hotels and restaurants and in the visitor's center, as guides and as craftsmen.

"All of our jobs pay well above minimum wage," Bloch said.

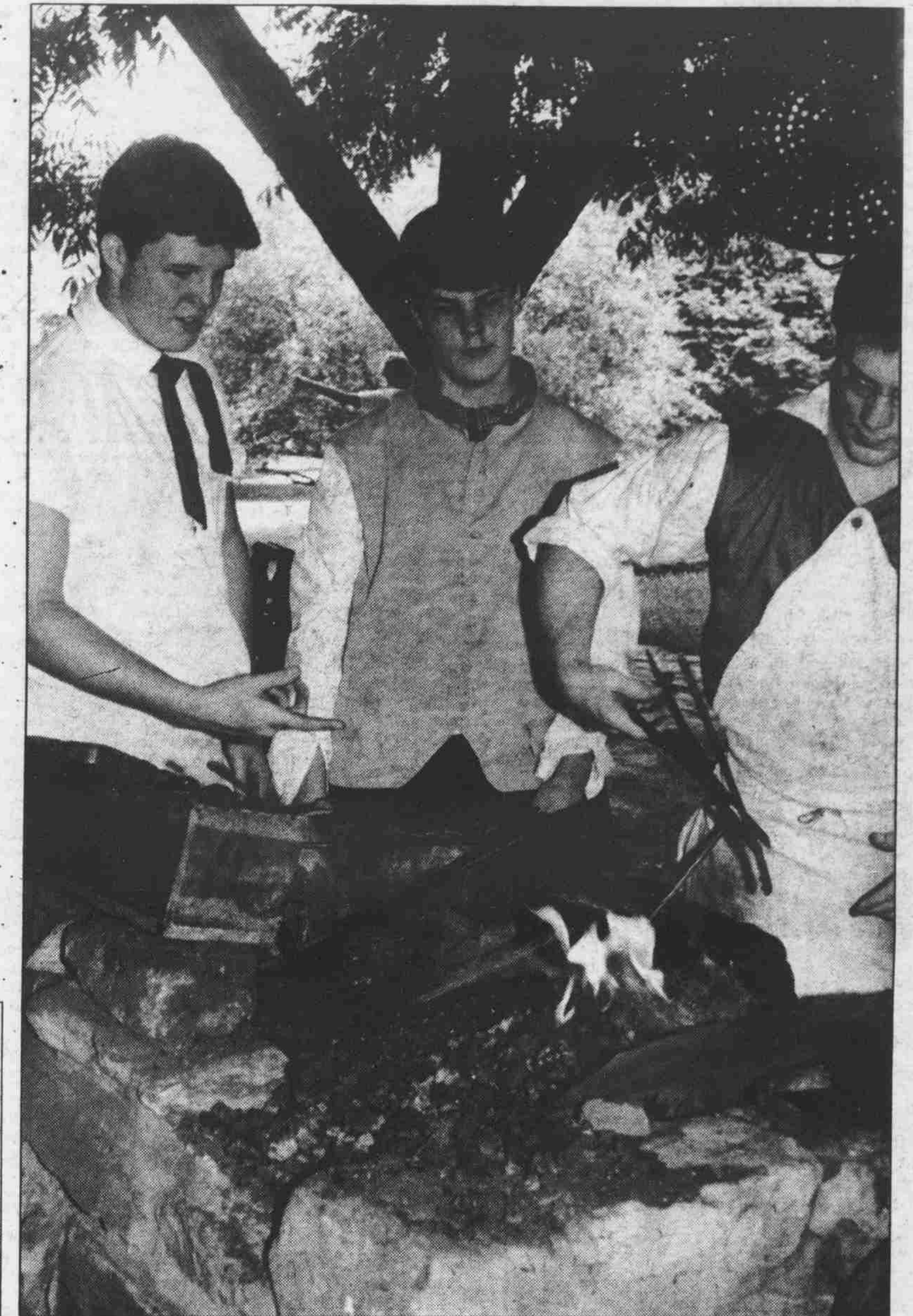
For a list of all new job openings, call 804-220-7129. To apply for positions, call 804-220-7000 for an appointment.



Students may spend their summer as an intern in the library of the Biltmore Estate south of Asheville



Townspeople in 18th-century dress are part of the heritage of Old Salem



Craftsmen Patrick McDougald (left) and Steve Hall flank apprentice Kenneth Crook in the Blacksmith Shed