

# *THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER*

## *December 30, 2021*

*Apothecary* – Mark has been experimenting with a new medicine that reminds us of sugar daddy candy, but it definitely is not candy. Due to the vinegar in the formula, the presence was a bit strong when compounding. We survived, barely. There are written descriptions as to how the finished product should look, so he is critiquing the results. The product was used topically to raise blisters on the skin.

Margaret found great references on the international quest in the 18th century for new botanicals. Sharon has found great references to social history in the site records. Robin has been typing up the information for their Summer Workshop and doing more organizing of study notes collected over the years.

**The Apothecary Shop will be open Tuesday through Saturday.**

### *Armoury:*

*Blacksmith* – Lately, the Blacksmiths have been working on a good range of work. Ken and Mark have both been making axes big and small. Ken has also been working on chisels and a froe and Mark on buckles, pinking irons, and some repairs to the bellows. Aislinn and Alex have been forging and filing bench hammers, while Aislinn has also been working on leather stamps, marking knives, and fire steels. Alex and Broadus have been hammering out strap hinges, and Alex has also continued his work on hoes, and started on bands for a wheel hub. Broadus has had a lot of work to do finishing thumb latches and has made a few fire steels, too. Owen, meanwhile, is focused on rakes and hasps. As we approach the new year, it's important to remember that all's well that falls well at the foot of the anvil.

**The Blacksmith Shop will be open Daily.**

*Tinsmith* – **The Tin Shop will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.**

### *Anthony Hay Shop:*

*Harpsichord-maker* – The Harpsichord-makers have been busy installing the hitch-pin rail (a kerfed moulding that sits on the inside of the bentside on top of the soundboard, holding the pins that receive the looped string end). Melanie has been working on preparing the oak jack rail, which will be veneered to match the rest of the walnut veneer décor. Sara made a cherry straight edge earlier this week and has been working on refining the jacks we prepared for this instrument. Ed has been putting the finishing touches on his Edmund Dickinson presentation that he will be delivering on January 5th at the Hennage Auditorium and reprising for the *Working Wood* Conference later in January. Happy New Year to all!



**The Cabinetmaker and Harpsichord-maker Shop will be open Sunday through Thursday. On Wednesday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Harpsichord-makers will present, “A Williamsburg Artisan Goes to War: Edmund Dickinson’s American Revolution.” This is the story of a Williamsburg artisan who ultimately fought and died as a well-regarded officer in the American Revolution.**

**Brickmaker** – This week, the Brickmakers are continuing the task at hand: bricks, bricks, and more bricks. Moving them, that is, and what a task it is. As more of the old kiln is cleared away, it appears that there is an end in sight; but alas, that is weeks away. Clearing out of the general working and communal spaces has yielded one spic-and-span tool shed and many a trash bag. The old site is looking better by the day, I'd say. In other news, a hefty delivery of composite pallets has arrived in the yard, which will become the home of the bricks that were not on the kiln. These same bricks may become the paving bricks in the new yard! Beyond news from the yard, we eagerly await the return of our very own Apprentice Nick, who will be returning to the yard very soon. The crew, and the bricks, have missed his witty nature.





**Carpenter** – The Carpenter’s Yard will be open Monday through Saturday, weather permitting.

**Colonial Garden** – The warming breezes of spring have descended upon the Colonial Garden ... ‘Tis but December’s end? The author begs your pardon. The weather seems at odds with the calendar. To begin again ... The mild December days have allowed the Garden to produce steadily. Curley parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*) and two varieties of lettuce (*Lactuca sativa*), to whit - Tennis Ball and Spotted Aleppo - were harvested for the Foodways Program, with sufficient surplus to provide a basket of greens to the Williamsburg Inn for some fortunate Guests. Lest the reader succumb to fear about there being sufficient leafy goodness as we head into the New Year; take comfort that seedlings grow anew under the Gardeners’ practiced care. Holiday Guests to the Garden have seen the preparation of plant frames. The gluing of paper to the frames was followed by the painting of said paper with boiled linseed oil. Thus rain resistant and light translucent, the frames will be placed over our rows of endive (*Cichorium endivia*) as protection from the potential of frost and certainty of rabbit. Finally, the Gardeners pass their thanks to the Coopers, who provided a heaping of wood shavings for use as shims and fire-starting material.



A green bounty





Exceedingly young lettuce



Paper attached to the frame being painted with linseed oil

**The Colonial Garden will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday, weather permitting.**

**Cooper** – In addition to our continued production of buckets and wine hogsheads, the Coopers participated in filming a short video on Adam Waterford, a free black man working as a cooper in Williamsburg during the 1770s. The video will be used during the upcoming *Working Wood* Conference.

**The Cooper Shop is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.**

**Engraver** – The Engraving Shop will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

*Foodways* – The Foodways Staff will be at the Armoury Kitchen Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

*Foundry* – The Foundry will be open Sunday, Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.

*Gunsmith* – The Gunsmith Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.

*Historic Farming* – Prentis Field is closed for the Winter.

*Joinery* – The Joinery will be open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

*Milliner and Mantua-maker* – The Milliner will be open Sunday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

*Printer and Bookbinder:*

*Printing Office* – The Printing Office will be open Sunday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

*Bindery* – The Bookbindery will be open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

*Public Leather Works* – The Public Leather Works will be open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

*Shoemaker* – The Shoemakers are open on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at the Armoury.

*Silversmith* – The Silversmith Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

*Tailor* – The Tailor Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, and Thursday.

*Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing* – The Weaver Shop will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

*Wheelwright* – The Wheelwright Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

*Wigmaker* – Happy New Year, everyone! This past week, we worked on rearranging the Shop display and trying to figure out what to do with the items we've recovered from the Gallery after our extended visit. We enjoyed our time there, but there's nothing like being in your own Shop. Debbie is now adding a drawstring to Dave Catanese's wig, then it will get a proper wash and style for Lord Dunmore. Benton has styled his first official wig and will put his hands to work on the next style this week. Edith has been diligently working on her hand knotting and will soon decrease in size to the smallest gauge. For our next big project, Debbie and Edith will be making a new wig for Robert Weathers, while Benton continues to work on his variegated human hair queue. As always, please contact us for any hair needs that may arise.

**The Wig Shop will be open on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.**

*The Mechanick's Adviser* is a publication of the Colonial Williamsburg Department of Historic Trades & Skills.

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