

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

November 19, 2021

Apothecary – Sharon found a 1790 reference in Galt's account book about a Negro Doctor that was owned by John Allen of Neck of Land. Margaret has been studying the trade of indigenous Virginia plants with England. She has also been collecting information about James Petiver of London, who actually specifies how he wanted plants packaged so they had a better chance of surviving their transatlantic trip to London. Mark has been busy with his Level 3 studies. Robin has been updating the curriculum for our pharmacy students.

The Apothecaries have discovered a unique way of celebrating Halloween. Mark collected spider webs for display in a small container. Domestic medical books suggest their use to stop bleeding. He checked Robert James' text, an 18th-century professional medical dictionary. James noted that cobwebs had been previously used in professional medicine. We are interested in volunteers for clinical trials. Just kidding, of course.

The Apothecary Shop will be open Tuesday through Saturday.

Armoury:

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

Tinsmith – This week in the Tin Shop, Steve has been working on a large lantern for the Palmer House. Joel is making a new soldering stove to replace the old one. He's been working with sheet iron that's a little bit heavier than the common tin plate we use. Jenny is working on a candle box, copied from one in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

The Tin Shop will be open Tuesday through Saturday.

Anthony Hay Shop –

Cabinetmaker – The Cabinetmakers are in full swing in preparation for their annual *Working Wood in the 18th Century* Conference. Bill has recently been focusing on the carved decoration on the front seat rail of the Benjamin Bucktrout Masonic ceremonial chair - the only piece of signed cabinet work from 18th-century Williamsburg. He is also going to be demonstrating work from other Williamsburg ceremonial chairs, but the curious decorations and fish-head feet on the Bucktrout chair are where he has chosen to start. Jeremy is in the middle of the usual labor of making drawers for his desk - walnut and pine coming together to make something usable. It won't be long before he is done with them though and can move on to the desk gallery in time for the Conference. John has finished up the bookcase doors but will leave them unfitted for now. He has been working on running some practice cornice moldings for the bookcase and has made a new sticking board to help with this. A sticking board is a specialty tool to help the user hold a piece of molding stock without clamping it, but still allowing them to cut the molding easily with molding planes. John is also finishing up the two moveable shelves in the bookcase and rounding the bases on his part of the project. If you haven't recently, come by and see the work being done - we always enjoy Guests.

The Cabinetmaker and Harpsichord-maker Shop will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Either the Cabinetmakers or the Harpsichord-makers will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Wednesday.

Carpenter – The Carpenters have been repairing fences at the Armoury, reinstalling the sheathing inside the Deane Forge as the Wheelwrights prepare to move back into their Winter Shop, and we are taking advantage of this warm November weather to paint our vehicles, gates, and workshop with a fresh coat of pine tar.



The Carpenter's Yard will be open Daily, weather permitting.

Colonial Garden – It is the seasonal last-minute preparations for frost that occupied the Gardeners this week. Treated wood was painted and installed under one of our hotbeds to deter termites. The window supports were nothing but hollow shells of paint after those subterranean saboteurs finished dining. Many thanks to Robert Watson for his help in painting and installing.

All plants in flower pots that do not survive the cold winter were placed in the new hotbed, where they will stay until spring. Tuberoses were all moved indoors to dry out and lay dormant until spring. Peanuts are placed out in the sun every day to sun themselves, and the first round of sweet potatoes were taken indoors after their hardening off in the hotbed. White and red sweet potatoes were dug up from the Sankofa Garden and have taken their place in the hotbed to harden off. The okra pods and stalks along with the vines of field peas were cleaned up and composted. The smell of basil still emanates from the dried basil stalks cleaned up from the edges of the Sankofa Garden. The pigeon peas continue to flower, and the pods continue to swell despite cooler weather. The first round of lettuce is outgrowing the bell jars, so we will harvest the larger heads and transplant with replacements waiting in the cold frame. Three rounds of lettuce is what can be grown from fall to spring. The fire pit awaits the cold weather, which is sure to arrive in the next week or so. Enjoy the fall colors.

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

Cooper – The Coopers recently welcomed a new Intern, Tamsyn, to the Shop. Tamsyn will be working with us through January. Since the Wythe site is currently closed for maintenance, we have been using the time to get her as prepared as possible to step in front of the public when we reopen. We have also been finishing up an order for the Jamestown Glasshouse, who have requested a number of buckets, and preparing materials for several current and future products. Harry has been working on some wine hogsheads, and I am going to start work on a tobacco hogshead for use by Ed Schultz in his agricultural interpretation. I also want to extend a special thanks to Joe Garcia for helping us unload an order of cedar of which we recently took delivery.

The Cooper Shop is open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Engraver – So, here are some photos of the goings on in the Engraving Shop. There are lots of secret squirrel stuff going on, filling custom orders (which have picked up), and we are preparing for another “Trades Tuesday”. Also, a reminder with up-and-coming holidays and retirements, if you are interested in having anything engraved, please request it ASAP. Do not wait until the last minute. Only one Engraver is production-cutting, and we are a busy Shop. Thank you.





The Engraving Shop will be open Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The Engravers will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Saturday.

Foodways – The Foodways Staff will be at the Palace Kitchen Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and at the Armoury Kitchen on Thursday.

Foundry – The Foundry will be pouring brass for the Harpsichord-makers this Saturday, making drafting tools for the Brickyard, and producing more goodies for the Engravers.

The Foundry will be open on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

Gunsmith – The Gunsmith Shop will be open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Historic Farming – We plowed most of the field a couple of weeks ago and sowed clover in it to replenish the soil. Yesterday, all of the cotton plants were grubbed out, as well. Much flax processing has been happening and is sent to the Weavers through the hands of Guests. It is easy to forget the power of just the smallest hands-on thing to our Guests. Look at how engaged these kids are at the simple act of picking seeds out of cotton.



Learning flows from the hands to the mind.

The Farmer will be at Prentis Field Tuesday through Saturday.

Joinery – The Joinery will be open on Monday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The Joiners will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Sunday.

Milliner and Mantua-maker – The Milliner and Mantua-maker will be open Sunday, Monday (closes at 3:00pm), Wednesday, and Thursday. On Monday, November 22nd, at 4:30pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Milliners will present “Re-animating 18th-century Fashion.” Through study and making, we bring 18th-century pictures to three-dimensional reality, give replicas of extant garments movement and sound, and realize clothing from 18th-century descriptions. This illustrated talk (fashion show) explores how we recapture 18th-century life and work with clothing.

Music – Greetings from The Governor’s Musick! Amy’s Hennage presentation of “The Bird Fancier’s Delight” was a big hit. It was chock-full of nightingale warbling, hen scratching, owl hooting, and cuckoo-ing. We had a lot of fun. A shout-out goes to Brady, who created some wonderful arrangements for the ensemble. This is actually a historically accurate practice: performers, especially in places like Williamsburg, where only a few musicians might be had for an evening, had to scale down larger works to fit their resources. Publications often also were simplified versions of pieces composed for the opera, church, or theater, so that people could play and/or sing them at home.

We have one more concert in our November program series on Tuesday, November 23rd, and then our Christmas Concert Series begins on Saturday, November 27th, followed by three Tuesdays: December 7th, 14th, and 28th. Our unadvertised presence in the Art Museums will expand in December, as well.

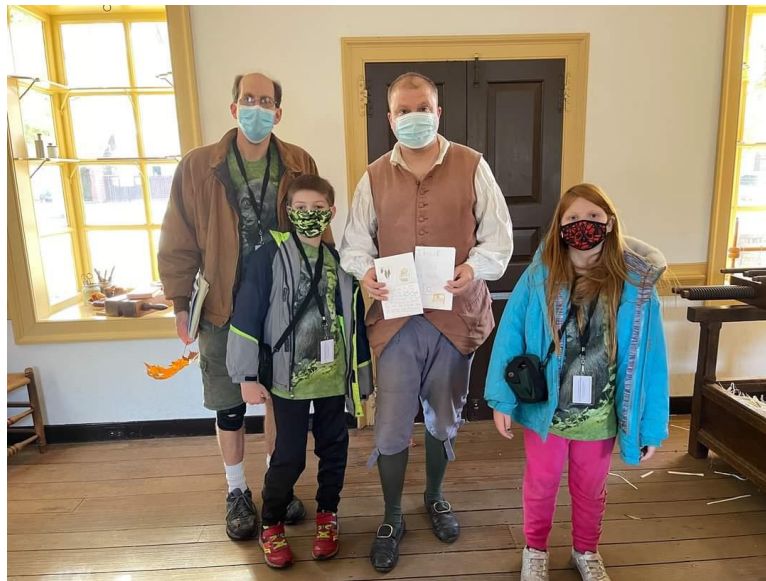
Brady, after his participation in the LGBTQ+ seminar, is continuing his research into Isaac Bickerstaff, a popular librettist who had to flee England when he became caught in the middle of a scandal and was accused of homosexuality. It ruined his career and deprived England and Ireland of one of its most talented and popular librettists. Amy continues her research on Cherokee women. Jenny is in the embryotic phase of a Shakespeare program, based on the actress Kitty Clive and her insertion of Shakespeare songs into whatever piece she happened to be performing at the time. Karol tracked down facsimile editions of Arne Shakespeare songs for future use. We hope everyone has a wonderful Thanksgiving--

The Musicians will be in the Art Museum on Friday mornings and afternoons as advertised and on Saturdays, unadvertised and subject to change.

Printer and Bookbinder:

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

Bindery – Good day from the Bookbindery.



As Interpreters here in Colonial Williamsburg, it is uncommon to find even one person who does not give 110% of themselves to their work. Preparation, research, time, and the utmost attention to detail - all towards one end: that the future may learn from the past. To say that I am proud of my colleagues throughout the Foundation, for continuing to do this vital work during a pandemic, would be an absolute understatement.

As we welcome new friends in greater numbers, and welcome back the loyal and friendly faces who call Colonial Williamsburg home, I want to take the time to recognize and share a snippet of the outpouring of love we have received this week for our efforts. We at the Bookbindery often hear of the work our colleagues are doing and the subjects that are being taught. I am very often impressed by the dedication amongst our ranks to our work, and to this place.



We. Are. Loved.



Until Next Time.

The Bookbindery will be open Tuesday through Saturday.

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

Shoemaker – The Shoemakers are open on Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday at the Armoury.

Silversmith – The Silversmiths have been very busy indeed with the usual projects and some last-minute commissions! It's Otters, Otters, Otters, and more trade silver as Megan is rounding out her first-year apprenticeship goals. Bobbie showed some of these pieces in the Livestream two weeks ago on Native American trade in Williamsburg and the Colonies. Trade Silver jewelry was a desirable commodity in the fur trade and Indigenous communities, and it has a visual language all its own.



The 1705 Nelme teapot is looking more like itself every day, and Chris is worried that it may actually come together in a reasonable fashion. George cast a gold ingot in the Shop today, and over the next several days, we will be drawing it out into wire for a pair of custom wedding rings ... we may cast another to complete the order; stop in and see!



The Silversmith Shop will be open on Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. The Silversmiths will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Friday.

Tailor – The Holiday Season is nearly upon us, and the Tailors are busy making up a suitable suit for the Christmastide parties to come! The customer has ordered a red cloth coat with gilt thread buttons, light blue ottoman silk waistcoat trimmed in narrow gold lace, and black silk satin breeches.



The Tailor Shop will be open on Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday. The Tailors will be at the Art Museum Gallery on 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, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Wigmaker – This week has been fruitful for the Wigmakers, and you might have seen them about town gathering Trades trash for their Holiday tree. Benton continues weaving hair, and Debbie is stitching the wefts of hair to the caul for Dave Catenese's new wig. Edith continues to work on her second flaxen wig and has nearly completed the caul. This Monday, Edith and Debbie will work to dress an array of heads for the Milliner's program at the Hennage! Please don't hesitate to ask for hair assistance if you require it!

The Wig Shop will be open on Sunday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The Wigmakers will be in the Art Museum Gallery on Monday.

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

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