

# THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

September 3, 2021

Sunday, September 5th, is the start of the Fall Schedule. In order to have more Trades Shops open during the Labor Day Weekend, the new Fall Schedule has been altered for the next week. Below is the schedule for September 5th - 11th.

Labor Day Weekend							
	Sun 9/5	Mon 9/6	Tues 9/7	Wed 9/8	Thu 9/9	Fri 9/10	Sat 9/11
	<b>FALL</b>						
Apothecary	8		8	8		8	8
Bindery	8		8	8		8	8
Blacksmith & Public Armoury	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Cabinetmaker & Harpsichord-maker	8	8	8	8	8		
Carpenter	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Colonial Garden	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Cooper	8	8		8	8		
Engraver			8		8	8	8
Foodways	8	8	8	8	8		
Foundry	8	8		8			8
Gunsmith	8		8		8	8	8
Joinery	8	8					
Military/Magazine	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Milliner and Mantua-maker	8	8		8	8		
Prentis Field (Farming)	8			8	8	8	8
Printing Office	8	8	8			8	
Public Leather Works	8	8		8	8		
Shoemaker (Armoury)	8	8	8			8	8
Silversmith	8			8	8	8	8
Tailor					8	8	8
Tin Shop	8		8	8		8	8
Weaver	8	8	8			8	9am-1pm
Wheelwright (Armoury)	8	8		8	8		
Wigmaker	8	8			8	8	

*Apothecary* – Hi! I am Margaret Perry, the new Apothecary Assistant. I am a longtime Williamsburg resident and 2020 William & Mary graduate. I spent the past few years studying the interaction between humans, disease, and culture, and I'm excited to continue that here! Outside of academics, I am a printmaker and artist who loves fall hikes, horror, and all things gothic.



Robin - On behalf of all of us here at the Apothecary, we are delighted to welcome Margaret to our team. This week, we had an opportunity to talk to Katherine Pittman and Daniel Cross about their upcoming program called "Merriment and Measles". Great title! Mark, Sharon, and I were happy to share some 18th-century insights and treatment on the latter. Austin Munden dropped by, and we talked about some 18th-century primary sources on apprenticing as an Apothecary.

**The Apothecary Shop will be open on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.**

*Armoury:*

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

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

*Anthony Hay Shop* – 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. On Monday, September 6th, at 4:30pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Harpsichord-makers will present "Meet a Spinet." Join Colonial Williamsburg harpsichord makers Edward Wright and Melanie Belongia for an introduction to a spinet harpsichord: how it works, its music, who made them, and who used them.

*Brickmaker* – The Brickmakers are continuing their stay with the Carpenters, and the friendship between our Trades continues to blossom. We sense that it's only a matter of time before Bobby Clay invites us over to his house for one of his famous backyard barbecues and cornhole tournament. Nick has at long last begun his

journey into the world of plastering. In the 18th century, bricklayers often worked as plasterers, as well; so this skill is an essential aspect of the Brickmakers' apprenticeship. This week, we constructed a frame on which Nick hung split oak lath that has been generously provided by the Carpenters. Next, we will need to mix up a batch of our world-famous plaster, then Nick can begin the process of applying the plaster to the lath.



**Carpenter** – The Carpenter’s Yard will be open Daily, weather permitting.

**Colonial Garden** – The end of summer is here, so the Gardeners are busy pulling plants and preparing to plant fall crops. This week, the front quarter was hoed up and sown with crimson clover. With the rain storm that came through Wednesday, it has already germinated. The goal is to get the plants up to a nice size before the days turn much shorter and colder. Fall crops have been sown and are being potted up to grow on to a larger size. When the ground is prepared, the plants will be waiting. Fall plants are hardy greens such as cabbage, collards, spinach, etc.

We have collected seeds from some of our plants, such as African marigolds and balsam. The hot bed nearest our gate was outfitted with new sticks, and Sickle peas were planted. This is a variety that is an edible podded pea, and will grow in the hotbed, giving us a small amount of peas until the middle of January. A delightful treat to be had in the middle of winter.

The artichoke and cardoons are laden with slips, which can be harvested to be planted out in the Garden. Rather than seeds, the slips (shoots coming from the root) are used to increase the amount of plants set out in the Garden.

The Turkey cucumber is finally producing fruit. It will creep over the ground, but after encouraging the vines to go up on the trellis, it will produce long straight fruit. It was seen as an oddity. “Several curious persons have been to view them, the like having never been seen in these parts before.” An article in the *Virginia Gazette* in 1737 noted that the fruit grown was a yard in length and near fourteen inches round the thickest part. This was grown by Mr. Daniel Parke Custis, in New Kent County.

**The Colonial Garden is open Daily, weather permitting.**

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

**Engraver** – 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 on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday and at the Armoury Kitchen on Thursday.

**Foundry** – This week at the Foundry, we live streamed our “Trades Tuesday” about making a bronze sundial with the Engravers. The event went very well with great questions from the viewers, and was fun, as well.

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

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

**Historic Farming** – Ever wonder why tobacco gets such a hard time about using up the land? Grubbing out the roots of the tobacco plants this week, I found this!



The full root



Close up of tobacco root

**The Farmer will be at Prentis Field Sunday, and Wednesday through Saturday.**

**Joinery** – The Joinery will be open on Monday. The Joiners will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Sunday. From Tuesday, September 7th, to Friday, September 17th, the Shop will be closed for annual maintenance.

**Milliner and Mantua-maker** – The Millinery will be open on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

***Music*** – Greetings from The Governor’s Musick! Beginning next week, Amy, Jenny, and Brady will be giving half-hour mini-concerts at 1:30pm, 2:30pm, and 3:30pm on Wednesdays at the Raleigh Tavern. These programs will provide a Guest experience on the musical life of 18th-century Williamsburg, with all its various settings, people, and instruments.

Jenny continues her work on the enslaved fiddlers of Williamsburg, with an eye to finding original sources on their repertory. Brady has been researching the viola da gamba repertory of the James River Manuscript, which dates from 1738 and is in the holdings of the Library of Virginia. Amy continues her research on Frederick the Great and is developing a musical walking tour. She is also working with the Art Museums on their upcoming music exhibit. Karol is now back, although virtually and part-time for now, and is reading *The Singer’s Precept*, a pedagogical work by Domenico Corri. Corri, who emigrated to Scotland in 1771, was a student of voice teacher Nicola Porpora, himself best known as the vocal instructor of the renowned Handel castrato Farinelli. As music teachers in Virginia often advertised being familiar with “the Italian method,” this work provides valuable insights on what a voice lesson in Colonial Virginia might have sounded like.

**The Musicians will be in the Art Museum on Friday mornings and afternoons as advertised and on Saturdays, unadvertised and subject to change, and at the Raleigh Tavern Apollo Room on Wednesdays throughout the fall at 1:30pm, 2:30pm, and 3:30pm for half-hour presentations.**

### ***Printer and Bookbinder:***

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

***Bindery*** – Good day to all from the Bookbindery! It is our pleasure to announce that Apprentice Bookbinder Barbie Swanson has passed the 4th Level of her Bookbinding Apprenticeship and will henceforth be working on her 5th and final level on the way to becoming a Journeyman Bookbinder! For the curious reader, Barbie was assessed for proficiency in several different skillsets, and are as follows:

#### Level Four

- How to pare leather using traditional tools
- How different leathers pare
- What types of books they would be used on
- The vulnerability of leather
- The uses of half bindings
- Blind tooling
- How to use the engraved brass tools and their vulnerability
- The precise temperature and how much moisture needs to be in the leather before tooling

#### Required Reading

- History of English Craft Bookbinding Techniques, Middleton
- Biography of Roger Payne, Cyril Davenport

Looking ahead to Level 5 expectations, Barbie will be responsible for creating a full leather binding in goatskin, demonstrate proficiency in gold tooling, and making title patches and inlays – among various and sundry other skills. By the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> level, to show attainment of all desired skills, the Apprentice will visit an original Williamsburg Binding, take measurements with the aim to make a report, and make a reproduction at the Bookbindery.



Apprentice Barbie Swanson would like to thank Dana Copeland and Martha Webb for making her Apprenticeship possible, the Bookbindery and Printing Office teams, her precious family and beautiful friends, and her partner in crime, Nat Lasley, for standing by her through thick and thin, and for all for their unwavering support of her when she thought she just could not do it! Love to all!

**The Bookbindery will be open on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.**

***Public Leather Works*** – The Agents of Leather would like to remind you all that you have less than one week to get your entries into the “Guess the New Apprentice” Sweepstakes. To sweeten the deal and make it as accessible as possible, we will now be accepting entries written on Francs, Drachma, Kroner, Yen (but only in denominations greater than 100,000), and any Canadian currency, but preference will be given to the One- and Two-Dollar coins (Loonies and Toonies).

In other news, the saga of the nearly empty space in the upper Southwest corner of the Shop (right) continues into its 610th day.

This has been an issue for us since we first moved in, and the Joiners had ensured us that this could be swiftly and easily remedied by the installation of some shelves that could be used for the storage of our leather rolls (jelly rolls are stored elsewhere). Alas, we still await the clarion sound of saw and hammer rectifying this emptiness in our lives.



On a completely unrelated note, our Intern Agent Victoria has completed a Valise that was quite recently requested by the Joiners.



Sadly, Intern Agent Tolson must constantly wear the Valise, as we have no shelf that can accommodate it. Once a shelf can be procured, the Valise will be off to its new home, ready and eager for new adventures. If any other Shop or Department has need of our services, please do not hesitate to inquire. Thank you for your attention and, once again, don't forget to get those entries in!!

**The Public Leather Works will be open on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The Shop was also scheduled to be open on Saturday, September 4th, for the Labor Day Weekend, but it will now remain closed that day.**

**Shoemaker** – The Shoemakers will be at the Armoury on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

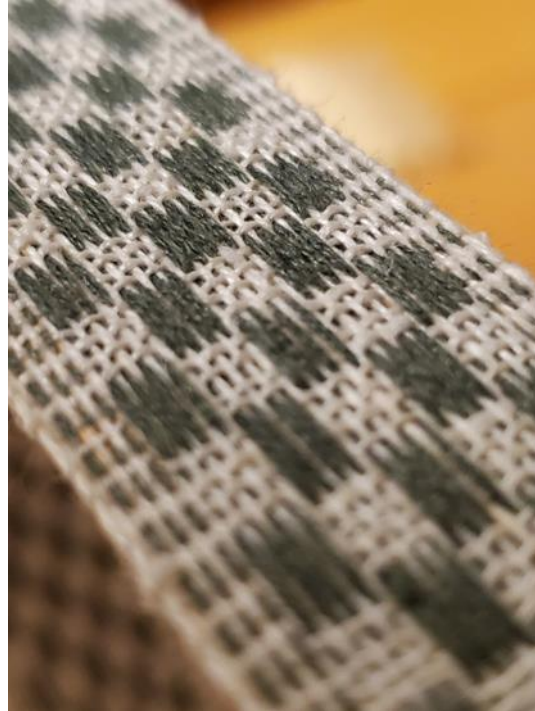
**Silversmith** – The Silversmith Shop will be open on Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. The Silversmiths will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Friday.

**Tailor** – The Tailor Shop will be closed September 4th – 8th. The Tailors day in the Art Museum Gallery on Thursday is questionable at present.

**Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing** – Work continues to pile up, but in the swinging of the beater bar and in the simmer of the dye pots, there is much to be learned. The entire Shop has been busy preparing for the imminent arrival of our new Apprentice, whom you will soon be meeting in this very publication. Everything is coming together, and plans have been laid to make the first week as smooth as possible. There will be much to learn. However, as you all know, the learning never stops.

Annie has finished her experimentation with the replacement tape for the bed hangings at the Wythe House. Making such narrow tape on a full-sized loom may seem silly at first, but she has learned the fastest

method. Just this last Friday, Annie was able to finish the first of what we now know will be many warps of tape. As a warp of this size (only a single inch wide) is not something we have experience with, the amount of trial, error, and revision cannot be overstated. Nor can the sheer elation from Karen once we had our ultimate success.



Joe has finished his small-scale dye experiment to reproduce Snuff Brown. Our colleagues from the Public Magazine came by our Shop for a visit, several weeks back, to inquire as to the specific colors worn on the uniforms of several of the Virginia Regiments during the Revolution. One uniform of Snuff Brown with white facings was of particular interest. A combination of Madder and Fustic, with a pinch of Iron for an afterbath, produced a gorgeous brown to rival many of our other recipes. We may see this recipe again.



Learning and education isn't always plain to see in triumphs and successes, but sometimes hidden in mistakes and failures. Another run of blue and white Edinburgh Check went onto our Counterbalance loom at the beginning of this week but was already fighting the Weavers by the end of the first day. The temple was accidentally placed too far into the fabric, causing the edge to blow out. Several inches had to be woven without the aid of a temple to reinstate the structural integrity of the fabric and allow the temple to be reapplied. A reminder for Masters and Journeywomen, a new lesson for Apprentices.



**The Weaver Shop will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday (open 9:00am-1:00pm).**

**Wheelwright – The Wheelwrights will be at the Armoury on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.**

**Wigmaker** – This past week, Benton practiced his first weaving technique until his fingers pled for mercy. It's always a rough start when you weave hair for the first time, but after just a couple days, he's got a nice smooth weft to show off. On to the next weaving pattern, of about twelve!

The Marquis' wig is complete! It has been washed and now needs to be set in order to take on the long buckle curl that he favors. The next wig up for construction will be for Dave Catanese. Edith is tackling one of the more complicated men's fashions: the Bob wig. The Dress Bob (four rows of curls or more) was Edward Charlton's number one selling fashion. Nearly every wig-wearing man had at least one Bob in his collection, and Peyton Randolph had seven of them! It appears he also bought a plain Bob (three curls or fewer) for Jack.

Maintenance continues, and as always, please reach out through your Supervisor if you'd like a wig or piece.



Benton's weft

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

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