



THE
MECHANICK'S
ADVISOR

12/21/2023

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Apothecary

Sunday through Thursday

We're gearing up for January and winding down the year of work. Margaret has been working on level 3 bandaging; Stephannie has been getting into (reading about) narcotics; Sharon continues with the ever-illegible Ledger B. Wishing everyone a happy and healthy holiday season!

- Margaret Perry



*The bandage for
the jaw, which
Margaret made
this past week.*

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Brickyard

Saturday, Wednesday through Sunday

This week in the Brickyard, the crew has continued to occupy the back of the site as plastering and wood splitting have been our main tasks. In the last few weeks, Journeyman Carpenter Bobbie aided Apprentice Madeleine in creating a sample panel wall which now has the first coat applied, the scratch coat. This will be followed by the brown coat, to achieve level, and a finishing coat. Otherwise, this week Apprentice Apothecary Margaret stopped by the yard to enjoy the tranquility of plastering and give Master Josh tips on avoiding scurvy.

- Madeleine Bolton



Madeleine applying the scratch coat



Here we see Master Josh regaling Margaret of his time at sea.

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Cooper

Tuesday through Sunday

Our last update provided a clue about our wreath for this year. Did you guess that we were making a turkey? If so, you were right. If you haven't had a chance to stop by the shop to see our wreath, we've included a picture of the finished product. Happy Holidays!

- Jonathan Hallman



This year's wreath at the Coopers Shop.

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Engravers

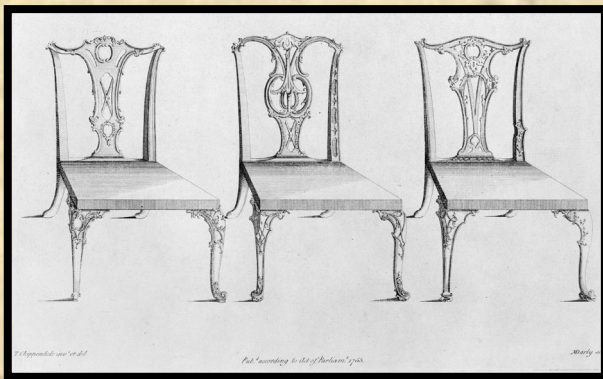
Sunday, Monday, Wednesday through Saturday

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all from the Engraving shop!

William, Emma and Lynn have kept busy as usual for this time of year.

William has completed a custom order of pewter teaspoons the Foundry has made for a private order. Emma has unfortunately fractured her drawing hand but is taking the opportunity to read up on Engraving and hone those interpretive skills. Lynn has set up her plate for the Woodworking conference and preparing for January.

- Carol Zelesnikar



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Farming

Tuesday through Saturday

Like all Trades, the Historic Farmers are always engaged in an experimental archaeology mode to help us understand the past by doing it. Farmer Marshall Scheetz recently initiated a new experiment on sheep folding. The restriction of sheep in hurdles was meant to fertilize the fields through their manure in a distinct location and then move it in planned manner to improve the overall fertility of the soil in the field. Marshall researched the concept using sources from England where it was frequently used, and it's use by progressive farmers here in colonial Virginia. He built the hurdles, coordinated with Coach and Livestock, and helped wrangle the sheep. This experiment will reveal it's results on the crops next summer. Can't wait to see!



*Marshall
encouraging
the sheep to
do their
work.*

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Fife and Drums

As of writing this, we have done 2 of the 3 Grand Illumination and Yule Log performances. One more to go! We are also very excited and have been preparing for the Christmas Guns program on Christmas Eve. Lastly, please join us in welcoming our new fife instructor, Ms. Catrina Richter! She comes from Mountain Fifes and Drums in California and is excited to join our Corps!

- *Rebecca Sterner*



The Sr. Corps enjoying watching the fireworks last Saturday.



Our new fife instructor.

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Founder

Tuesday through Saturday

This week the Founders have continued on several projects. On Friday, Apprentice Leanne cast some more silver tray feet for the silversmith's shop. After that we utilized the hot forge for Apprentice Drew and Leanne to cast and then finish some more musket balls to round out our last order for the range (for the year!). Journeyman Mike continues to work on shoe buckles and has resumed work on some harpsichord hinges. We all hope you are having a happy and healthy holiday season!

- Leanne Bellouny



Some of Journeyman Mike's in progress work.

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Gardener

The Gardeners are open every day.

Cold-hearty plants dominate the garden now. Plenty of greens continue to grow despite the series of frosty nights. There is even new growth amongst the overwintering flowers. The cold and wet weather has slowed activity in the garden; nonetheless, the digging up of perennial plants for transport to the new site continues. A tip of the cocked hat to Master Paul and the wheelwrights for repairing and repainting our basket barrow.

- Marc Nucup



Healthy salad burnet (Sanguisorba minor) despite the frost.



More perennials potted for transport to the new garden.

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Harpsichord Maker

Sunday, Monday, Thursday through Saturday

I am pleased to announce that Melanie Belongia has completed her apprenticeship. She now stands as journeyman harpsichord maker. I am really pleased to call her now a valuable colleague. We both, though, still have so much to learn, so much we wish to do. Please come by and say congratulations to her on her splendid achievement.

- Edward Wright



*Melanie Belongia,
Journeyman
Harpsichord
Maker.*

Melanie Belongia, Journeyman Harpsichord Maker.

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Joiner

Sunday through Thursday

As December rushes past, January and the Working Wood Conference hurtle closer! Master Brian and Journeyman Peter are busy making rails and stiles for the front of the Eastern Shore Blanket Chest, as well as planning the live demonstration they will present during our conference next month. They will be showing the connections between joiners' work building doors and furniture. If you pay attention to doors around the Historic Area, some of these shapes may look familiar to you!

Apprentice Laura continues to work on the toolbox, this week joining the parts of the lid. By joining perpendicular pieces at either end of a wide board, cupping of the board can be reduced and keep that lid working perfectly for years to come.

Happy Holidays and we look forward to writing our next entry in the new year!

- Laura Hollowood



*Eastern Shore
Blanket Chest,
1795-1805,
Museum Object
Number 1930-
108.*

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Musket Range

Ticket Event

The Musket Range Staff recently made a trip to a local indoor gun range. We tried out some new timey guns and did research on how their range is run. We all appreciated the new guns that go off when the trigger is pressed and the climate controlled environment but we started missing our range and guns. We all want to wish everyone a Happy Happy Holiday!!!

- Jeffery Thomas



Andy with his 44 mag.



Doug with a British Enfield.

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Shoemaker

Open Daily

The Shoemakers are delighted to have a fireplace to work by - thank you Leather Breeches shop for taking us in! Victoria has made a "trial fitter" to test the pattern for her dancing pumps and has started stitching the real uppers. Nicole is catching up on repairs and has started the patterning process for a pair of half boots.

- Nicole Boileau



*This year's
Shoe Shop
wreath is
based on
The Old
Woman
Who
Lived in a
Shoe. Like
the title
character,
we're
hoping to
find a
spacious
shoe home!*

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Silversmith

Sunday through Tuesday, Friday and Saturday

The silversmiths are busy with tray making as usual. Megan has finished a mote spoon that is now for sale in the James Craig shop. Chris is working on ring repair and chasing another tray. Bobbie has soldered the rim onto her tray and is preparing to solder on the feet cast at the Foundry. Preston has been busy working on his large and small bowls as well as polishing a host of jewelry and spoons. George has been hammering out an ingot and chasing in tray guideline for even more trays.

- Megan Cantwell



Multiple feet cast at the foundry on the left, one cleaned up and filed on the right.

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Tailor

The Tailor is open Sunday through Thursday

The tailors are busy with projects. The shop is making a new coat and waistcoat for a photoshoot in mid January. The Brafferton suits continue to be in progress as well.

18th century tailor shops would have been busy up to, and even through, the Christmas season. The season was one of the most social of the year; filled with parties, balls, and weddings.

- Michael McCarty



*The shop is sheared
and the fleece is sprigged
for the season!*

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Weavers, Spinners, and Dyers

Sunday through Wednesday, Saturday

After lots of TLC on the countermarch loom, we are finally making fabric! Most of the core components were rehung or replaced so the machine could run at top speed. We are now doing some color sampling on the first yard to test out which weft colors will make the twill texture come to life. Over on the counterbalance we are starting to drop slats. This is a sign that one is approaching the end of the warp. With that in mind, we have begun preparing for our next project there as well. This will be a green and white check destined for The Bray School.

- Pamela Russo



Pictured is the most recent color sampling done on the Birdseye twill. Contrasting weft yarn easily shows the complex texture.

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Wigmaker

Sunday through Thursday

The wig shop has been steadily finishing projects left and right; intern Elias has just finished the bob display wig. The Burgess Ball styling is in full swing, please reach out to us if we've contacted you for a fitting. Benton and Debbie are nearly done with their projects. We'd love to thank our colleagues for voting us best site and wreath, you're the best!

Edith Broward Edds



*Elias putting in
the finishing
stitches!*

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Wheelwright

Sunday through Friday

For the next two weeks, the Wheelwright Shop is going through a much-needed facelift! Hopefully the drainage installed will help the building to survive another 85 years. Pics coming soon!

- Paul Zelesnikar



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Next Week, Look Forward to Updates From...

- **Bookbinder**
 - *Tuesday through Sunday*
- **Cabinet Maker**
 - *Sunday, Monday, Thursday through Saturday*
- **Cooper**
 - *Tuesday through Sunday*
- **Famer**
 - *Tuesday through Saturday*
- **Fife and Drum**
- **Founder**
 - *Tuesday through Sunday*
- **Historic Masonry**
 - *Sunday, Wednesday through Saturday*
- **Milliner and Mantua-Maker**
 - *Tuesday through Saturday*
- **Musket Range**
 - *Ticket Event*
- **Shoemaker**
 - *Daily*
- **Silversmith**
 - *Sunday through Tuesday, Friday, Saturday*
- **Tin Plate Worker**
 - *Tuesday through Saturday*
- **Wigmaker**
 - *Sunday through Thursday*
- **Wheelwright**
 - *Sunday through Friday*

Editor.

Matthew Siepinski