

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

for April 24 - 30

Artificer - They are in full-blown packing and moving mode. They expect to be at their summer home at the Anderson Armory, ready to open to the public, on Sunday, April 24th.

Candlemaker – They have changed the schedule of their hands-on, guest participation program: eliminating some days and increasing the number of tickets on others. Adjustments like this are likely to continue as Spring warms and becomes Summer, schools let out, and the staff accumulate more skill and experience. They have installed a larger cast iron pot, which will allow for dipping longer candles. The brown beeswax is nearly depleted, and they have begun making yellow candles from fresh wax.

Cooper - Work continues on tubs for the Coach and Livestock Department. In addition, they repaired a barrel to be used as a prop for "Escape the King."

Fifes and Drums - From April 21-24, the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes & Drums Corps will be participating in the 20th annual Virginia International Tattoo at Norfolk Scope. This show is a key element of the Virginia Arts Festival and has become one of the most popular events of the Festival. The Tattoo itself features over 20 musical and military groups from 8 different Countries, and its cast and crew totals over 1900. The show will play for an estimated audience of 40,000. Our Fifers and Drummers have been working for several months to perfect new musical selections and a marching drill for the performance.

Gunsmith - They are in the process of making some knives, and the work on the rifle and cased pair of pistols continues.

Historic Garden – This week, they have been busy getting ready for the Garden Symposium: cleaning and weeding the beds to make sure everything is nice and neat, as well as cleaning out the water cistern with one of their JIs, Maggie. She had lots of fun in the water and collecting what had been thrown in. The staff enjoy the new, young help, and how eager their JIs have been during their training this month. Jen and Emily are planting artichokes on Friday, April 22, in a row next to the peas. In the past, they have only grown two artichoke plants; but they are wanting to try something new and hopefully get a really productive harvest. It has been a beautiful week to be outside in the Garden, and Jen and Emily are loving this Spring!

Joinery - The apprentices are continuing to work on packing crates for the ox cart, while Ted is working on a sign board for use in the Historic Area.

Military Programs - They are firing the Noon Gun, are in full swing with Military Reviews, are running the Musket Range, and are participating at the Tattoo in Norfolk.

Milliner - The Milliner re-opens to the public this week.

Tailors – They will be working on assorted summer garments and mending.

Wheelwright - They are working on the ox wagon and repairing wheels.

Wigmaker – They continue the daily maintenance of the wigs and hairpieces for all of our actors, dancers, and musicians. Regina is weaving hair for a new set of ladies curls and a queue for Doug Paulson, the Auctioneer. They are finishing up a handmade wig for the actor who portrays Patrick Henry and also working on a ladies "formal evening wear" wig and a few other hairpieces for display at the Mary Dickinson Shop.

Windmill - In addition to harvesting trees for the Historic Area shade-shelter project this week, Steve has started installing the sail hardware recently manufactured by the Blacksmiths. Thank you, Blacksmiths! Also, he has applied pine tar to the the Windmill tail pole and site gates. Pine tar is a natural wood preservative that was used in the 18th century.