

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

for the week of November 1 - 7

Apothecary – Two members of Hampton University's faculty from the College of Pharmacy came to visit. Both the Director of Experiential Education and her Assistant Director talked with us about future opportunities to work with their students. Plans were discussed to have a pharmacy class visit the site and for a few to study at the Apothecary as part of their experiential learning requirements for graduation.

The survey team met for the 4th time, and we are going to test our new survey with participants for clarity and the length of time it takes for individuals to complete.

Armoury:

Blacksmith – They continue working on a coin press for the Curator of Numismatics. They are reworking the tent poles for the Washington Tent Project, repairing a Wheeler's axe, and making a slide bolt for the Scale House door, cooking tools for Prentis Store, and an iron Rim lock (an apprentice project).

Tin Shop – They are making a kettle for the Carpenters, tinder boxes for Prentis Store, and soldiers drinking cups. They continue to work on lanterns to light the new workshops.

Artificer's Shop – They will be moving to winter quarters at the Magazine on Sunday, Nov. 1st. They expect to be ready to reopen to the public at 9:00am on Monday, Nov. 2nd. Days of operation will continue to be Sunday - Thursday. They wish to thank their brother and sister Tradesmen and Tradeswomen from Foodways, the Tin Shop, and the Armoury for their frequent assistance and many kindnesses over the season. They look forward to their return in Spring 2016.

Bindery – They continue to work on a rule book for the Cabinetmaker and a music book. They have begun working on two cookbooks for Great Hopes.

Brickmaker – They are busy constructing their clamp, or kiln, where the bricks made this summer will be fired Nov 18-22. Work will include stacking the 27,000 or so bricks, encasing the green bricks first with previously fired bricks and then a layer of clay, and of course, stacking firewood.

Cabinetmaker – They continue work on the replication of two case pieces and an easy chair. Upholstery on the six side chairs has been completed. The harpsichord makers are preparing materials for two new spinets and their presentation to the 2016 Working Wood Symposium. The treadle lathe is now in operation.

Candle-maker – Candle-making is now in the planning stages. Tom Redd is gathering up interpretive source materials, reviewing interpretive objectives, and has briefly discussed concept opportunities with the Weavers, Joiners, Farmers, Gardeners, and Foodways. The Candle-makers will be fairly mobile, meaning (with animal support), the shop might be able to set up and operate in any open area for a few hours or a few days. This kind of mobility brings to mind the trade fairs that Historic Trades occasionally put on, back in the 1970's and 1980's, often behind the Courthouse.

Several trades are helping to gather up and prepare equipment and materials. The Toolmaker has started repairing and renovating some of the wooden and steel candle-dipping machinery. The Coopers assisted Tom in moving the said equipment to the Toolmaker Shop. The Farmers have turned over a quantity of beeswax from

previous activities at Great Hopes. Short objectives include assessing, listing, and sourcing the full inventory of needed materials and equipment, and acquiring the same in time for the 2016 shop opening.

Carpenters – They are framing a small storehouse, making shingles, and making laundry/wash poles for installation in the Historic Area.

Coopers – They are repairing casks for the transport program.

Foodways – They are working with Aleworks on a test batch of porter. They are also working on a series of pre-made punch mixes based on 18th-century recipes and practicing on some sugar work for next year's confections program. The next Brewing program is Sunday, November 1st.

Great Hopes Plantation –

Farming: They will be cross-plowing a large area in the bottom field to loosen the soil for planting flax next Spring. The cotton is opening fast in the field over the last week. They will plow with the bloggers from Mars, Inc. this Friday.

Domestic Arts: This week, mustard greens, spinach, and corn salad are coming up in the slave garden! They will be making brooms and cooking things such as corn cakes and a deer leg. Culinary externs from the Williamsburg Inn will be visiting to see how they cook. On Saturday, they will wash fleece to begin to card and spin. Also, the baby chicks are starting to free range for the first time.

Windmill: There has been lots of activity at the mill this week. Work is being done by a contractor to grade the site and prepare for the installation of temporary hurricane struts. These modern adjustable poles will help protect the mill during a hurricane. Steve has been preparing new copper flashing to stop rain water from running down the windshaft and entering the mill. He is also preparing to move the old handmill that is located behind the Deane house to a location where it also can be restored. He is very pleased with the progress at the mill site. It will not be long until we have a functional mill again.

Gun Shop/Foundry –The Founders cast 15 pewter candlesticks and are now filing, polishing, and assembling them for Prentis Store. The Gunsmiths are engraving a flintlock and making springs for the pair of pistol locks.

Historic Garden – All bulbs and spring biennial flowers are planted and mulched. The fall vegetables are continuing to grow nicely; and with the aide of pots instead of the straw bells, the endive-blanching has been proving more successful. Sweet potatoes are done curing and ready to be used by the kitchen! The Mushroom Cultivation Seminar that Jen attended was very informative, and plans are being made to get mushroom cultivation implemented in the garden. Wesley's blue book is completed and in the works of getting a copy for the Garden Shop and the Rockefeller library.

Joiners – They will be finishing the polls for the George Washington dining tent. They will be making drawers for the Blacksmiths, a work still for the kitchens, and completing a posting board for the porch of the Anderson House that will be used for broadsides.

Millinery – They are helping the Tailors with stitching on the bed furniture for George Washington's campaign bed and will be cutting up ermine pelts (they look like furry lizards, but oh so soft) for a custom ordered wedding muff. They also enjoy the contributions of three volunteers. Jeanne Asphundh comes once a month to support our Branches of the Trade program, Fiona Fimmel was a NAIDH intern last semester, and she

continues to volunteer with us. Last week, Donna Brock joined the mischief and mayhem of “Margaret’s Merry Milliners” (as Janae calls her staff). Her career was in corporate and employee communications with the pharmaceutical industry. Her love of history opened up a new career in communications, designing websites for historical societies, supporting social media, writing historical scripts, etc. Donna and her husband Jason just finished moving from Massachusetts. They are now at home with their two dogs Ajax and Chancellor, in Toano. When not volunteering, or doing genealogy research, Donna and Jason see the USA using one of their favorite modes of travel – Harley-Davidson’s horse-power.

Printers – They are continuing the presswork for “The Articles of Confederation;” and when away from the press, they are assembling stitched books.

Shoemaker – This past week, Rob delivered two pairs of slippers to the Blacksmiths. These were his first completed projects for other staff and were based on images of blacksmiths working in slippers during the period. Over the weekend of October 24th and 25th, Al and Brett were in Savannah giving presentations at the annual meeting of the Honourable Cordwainers’ Company.

Silversmith – They are working on various sorts of spoons (including mote spoons), baby cups, Gurney Bowls and a fluted bowl, a pair of patty pans, a small dram cup, Revere Beakers and raised beakers, a thistle cup, trade silver jewelry and letter charms, a 12-inch Montieth, 1 copper vessel (being raised by the intern), and ladles. The intern will be making a 17th-century bodkin. Please note that at any given time, not all of these items will be being worked on, but all will be available to be seen and discussed with anyone who is interested.

Tailors – They are working on the mattresses and curtains for Washington’s camp bed and finishing details on the Marquees.

Weaver – Karen accompanied other trades’ women in a brief presentation on Women in Trades for the OI staff on Tuesday and Thursday. The shop is finishing up dyed embroidery yarns for the Millinery and Prentis Store. Other goodies sent to Prentis include tow for fire starter, cochineal insects, coasters, yarn, and a blanket. They will be dyeing with indigo on Friday in order to get a deeper color on linen for an upcoming project. They are managing to work another double-cloth blanket using up leftover yarn from previous projects. They have begun getting organized for the big move.

Wheelwright – They continue finishing up cart wheels and ox cart repair.

Wigmaker – They are constructing a Bob Wig, comprised of human and horse hair, which Debbie saw in Germany, a wiglet for one of the AI’s, and a hand-knotted base for a new wig for Richard Schuman (Patrick Henry). They also continue to do daily maintenance on wigs used by CW staff to support various programming (plays, Ghost Tours, Rev City, and commercials).