

“THE MECHANICK’S ADVISER”

For April 7 - 13

Armoury:

Blacksmith – “The iron is in bloom here, and hammers are in full Spring fling, along with allergies, which may slow us a tad, unlike the school groups who are out in full force to witness the plethora of iron goods popping up all over the floor around the anvil, including: Mark’s sword, brace, hub bands, mallet bands, and punches; Aislinn’s buckles, locks, axe, and nails for the Shoemakers; and the Apprentices all aflutter with clouts, clout nails, punches, spoons, slide bolts, and pliers.”

Tin Shop – “Outnumbered by their sooty neighbors, yet holding their own in the iron ring, the Tinsmiths continue to acclimate the Anderson site to this new season with their coffee pots and cups; all the while maintaining their status as dazzling beacons among all Smiths with their great pierced lanterns.”

Carpenter – “The Carpenters have been splitting out white oak material to build sheep hurdles for use at the Historic Trades Garden site. We need to make two more to complete the order. We are happy to say that this is one hurdle we have nearly overcome...”



Ayinde gazing over a plethora of completed sheep hurdles

Colonial Garden – “This week in the Garden, the Gardeners kept busy with weeding, ground preparation, more weeding, and caring for our seedlings. As our seeds germinate in the hotbed, they are transplanted into pots and moved to the cold frame until the weather is warm enough and there is room in the Garden. Harvested this week were collards and kolrabi, of which both went to the Inn. With a large crop of endive, we have begun to blanch the greens
Department of Historic Trades and Skills

to make them sweet and tender. Lady Jane tulips are blooming as well as the anemones, daffodils, wallflower, and forget-me-not. The paw-paw trees are in full bloom, and the raspberry canes are leafing out. Sent to the Palace Kitchen were lettuce, broccoli, and turnips.

“We anxiously await the crown imperial lily to bloom. The flower buds have appeared but have not opened.”

Foundry – “The Foundry is busy filing and fitting the door hinges for Carter's Grove. Only a few finials remain to be poured. We've started casting bandoleers and badges for the 80th Regiment of Foot, and soon we'll be casting badges for ‘Drummer's Call Weekend’.”

Music – “The Governor’s Music completed five Fridays of ‘Women in Early Music’ concerts at the Raleigh Tavern Apollo Room in March as part of Women’s History Month, which included all female composers: Elizabeth Turner, Anna Bon, Madalena Lombardini Sirmen, motets of the Cantiques Spirituel and Ursuline Convent of Quebec, Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de al Guerre, Maria Hadfield Cosway, Madam Duval, and Ann Ford Thickness.

“We turn now to our spring Palace Concerts. This spring, we look at Charles Burney’s Travels with concerts that include quotes regarding composers and national styles. We will be returning to the sites around Palace Green now that the weather is warmer, and the spring season has begun. Our new staff, Brady Lanier and Karol Steadman, have met with John Watson to begin learning how to tune spinets. On May 3rd, Danny will be playing harpsichord in the Governor’s Palace Ballroom, and Amy, Jenny, and Brady are preparing to play trios outside for Jefferson’s Palace Garden Party. Our volunteer, Bill Owen, continues to play spinet music at the Wythe House, the Geddy House, and the Cabinetmaker Shop.”



Silversmith – “Bobbie continues working on the casters this week. Lynn also continues her printing plate of John White’s weroan. Chris has been completing custom orders and drawing tea pot parts. Preston is working on several small fluted bowls. George has been raising a mug, beginning some sugar tongs, and doing some much-needed cleaning on the multitude of chasing tools that we realized were squirrelled around the shop. Parker has been focusing on two small Jefferson cups. William is polishing the chain for his chatelaine and working on trade silver.



Long-forgotten chasing tools receiving a little love

“Most of the Shop was recently able to finally convene together and celebrate Chris’ promotion to Journeyman with a wonderful dinner at Blue Talon.”



Celebrating Chris promotion to Journeyman

Wigmaker – “Greetings from the Wigmakers! As it has been the past few months, the Bromfield wig continues to be the main focus of our work. The light is starting to appear at the end of the tunnel for this particular project, and we’re hoping to finish it very soon. Sara has been frizzing the short horse hair being used for the top of the wig, as well as doing a lot of the weaving, and Betty has then been stitching the rows of hair onto the base, as well as supervising the entire project.

“Meanwhile, we have been incredibly busy with maintenance behind the scenes. Regina has been heading up this work, either doing the combing, washing, and redressing of wigs herself, or assigning them to another staff member to make sure they’re ready when needed. Debbie has been assisting with all of these projects, as well as continuing to update our inventory system, keeping track of all the wigs coming and going on a regular basis.”