

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

for February 28 – March 5

Apothecary – Sharon and Robin are working on their programs for Women's History month. Robin is working on some training material for the shop, and Sharon is working on a medical fact sheet for training manuals.

Armoury –

Blacksmith – They are ironing a dumpcart for the Wheelwrights. Items being made are socket chisels, a key to a three bolt door lock, curtain rods, nails, claw hammers, 10 handrails for historic buildings, and a ladle and skimmer (for the Candlemakers).

Tin Shop – They are working on lanterns for the Museum of the American Revolution, gill cups, coffee pots, and lanterns.

Artificer – They wish to extend their thanks to the Brick Masons and the Carpenters for their efforts on re-flooring the Artificer's Shop, and to the Joiners for the fabulous new cutting table. They are ramping up for an exciting Spring and Summer.

Miss Emma Cross will be rejoining the crew Sunday, February 28th, followed by Mr. Jan Tilley on March 6th.

Basketmaker – They will be finishing up a wool drying basket for the Prentis Store and continuing to work on a variety of in-house basket requests. As material is getting low at the moment, some much-needed splitting also needs to take place.

Bindery – The shop is closed for maintenance Monday, February 29 – March 11.

Brickmaker – They are paving the Armoury Workshop (Artificer Shop) with the Carpenters.

Cabinetmaker – Work continues on a brass-banded mahogany tea caddy, a tripod music stand, and an easy chair frame. The harpsichord makers will continue work on components for a spinet.

Candlemaker – They are proceeding at a steady pace. They are still conducting interviews and working on plans. Firewood has been purchased and new tools acquired. In time, all will be made shipshape.

Carpenters – They are installing a floor in the Armoury Workshop (the Artificer's Shop).

Cooper – Below is a picture of an oval sea chest that they produced:



Dance – The Dance SIs at the Raleigh are having a great time with Guests. It is feast or famine in terms of the Guest attendance (a few couples or large school groups), so these extra Colonial Dancers are helping to bring things to life in the Apollo Room! The Guests really enjoy “Dancing with the Colonials!”

Fifes and Drums – The Fife and Drum Senior Corps is currently working on new music for their participation in the Virginia International Tattoo held in Norfolk this April.

Foodways – “Secrets of the Chocolate Maker” will be held on Tuesday, March 1st. They are preparing for the “Ales for the Ages” conference on March 18-20.

Foundry – They are making a pair of bronze candlesticks for a custom order, drawer pulls for the Weaver, and items for Prentis Store.

Great Hopes - The staff are busy getting ready for the re-opening of the site on March 18th. Apple and peach trees are being pruned, the kitchen and slave house cleaned top to bottom, farm implements cleaned and repaired, the Tobacco House is being rearranged for better interpretation, and massive amounts of compost is being spread in the gardens. Stef Dunn finishes a week with the Weavers. They are also assisting the Historic Gardeners this week.

Gunsmith – They are in tool-making mode right now. They are making a new ramrod drill, as the old one is worn out. They are also making a spur center for the treadle lathe. A new leather drive belt has been put on the lathe, and it works great. They are also making some new patterns for a pocket knife, ram rod thimbles, and muzzle cap. The apprentice is working on new pliers and other tools that he will need in the future. Work on a pair of pistols and a rifle continues.

Historic Garden – This week has been a big one for the garden. Despite the weather, they have been able to collect and start mounding up dung for the second hotbed that will be started in March. The sycamore trees along Francis Street were pollarded, and the gardeners were able to collect sticks for future use in the garden, such as trellising and making wattle fences. Also, Thursday, February 25th, was Wesley's last day. They had an awesome goodbye lunch for him and are wishing him well on his retirement. He will be missed here.

Military Programs – They are currently preparing for a very busy season! With programming at the Military Encampment, Armoury, Acting Programs, and the Magazine, preparations are ongoing. Military Programs is preparing to offer a fond farewell to John Hill, Kent Brinkley, and Dale Smoot, and looking forward to taking on more staff to help with the coming programming. Military Programs is also joining the new Musket Range staff for much of their preparation, to step into their new role as extra instructors for the range, as needed. There are also talks going on currently on a variety of subjects in the Guard House at 11:00am Thursday through Monday. They are also commencing clearings for all current Militia members for both musket and cannon, and preparing to take on new members in the coming months.

Music – The staff continue to perform in programming at the Raleigh Tavern during the day. Amy Miller and Jenny Edenborn will be performing in “Unbecoming Her Sex” at the Raleigh as part of Women's History Month. The program highlights female musicians in Europe who took on roles usually only held by men. Gabriela Williams is getting her feet wet as the first of several itinerant musicians and is helping out at the Raleigh and doing research. The musicians are preparing for the continuing Palace series that will begin in the spring.

Musket Range – The Range has undergone rapid development in the last few weeks. Three Range Masters and three Range Instructors have been hired. The grounds are nearly completed, and all equipment has either been acquired or is in the process of being built. Range safety courses are coming up for all new range staff, along with the staff of Military Programs. They are on track to be ready to open by the March deadlines!

Printers – The shop is closed for maintenance Monday, February 29 – March 11.

Shoemaker – Val just finished a pair of size 5 “boys” common shoes, the smallest size that they can produce, for Jenny in the Tin Shop. This means that all of the full-time staff in that shop now have a pair of handmade shoes! On the other end of the size spectrum, Rob has completed his first pair of pumps, size 15.

Silversmith – They are working on various sorts of spoons (including mote spoons), salt shovels, Gurney Bowl and some fluted bowls, a pair of patty pans, trade silver jewelry, rings, and letter charms, a 12-inch Montieth, ladles. 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.

Weaver – The new Weaving Shop at the Greenhow Tenement is almost ready! They will have a “soft” opening beginning on March 7th. Please come by and let them know what you think. The shop will not be advertised in the Program Guide until March 14th.

Wheelwright – They continue working on an ox wagon for children’s rides.

Wigmaker – Debbie is still working on weaving and attaching the wefts of hair to her German reproduction wig. Regina is continuing to clean, repair, and restyle wigs for actors/actresses, dancers, and musicians. Betty finished 2 new falls (half wigs) for the new program “Affairs of the Heart” (which opens this weekend!) Terry is blending and weaving hair for a hairpiece (ladies curls) that will be assigned to Whitney Thornberry, one of the actresses.

The Wig Shop has also been conducting interviews this week for our JI position and preparing to wish our longtime friend and Journeyman, Ms. Terry Lyons a happy retirement. She will be extremely missed!!

Windmill – A big thanks to the tree crew and the Landscape Department for clearing the trees growing along the pedestrian bridge and path to the Historic Area. There is now a clear view of the mill for our guests as they cross the bridge. Matt Webster and Steve Chabra ran the mill for a bit on Thursday, February 25th. Over the next week, a contractor should be on site to finish installing the lightning protection for the mill.