

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

for the week of October 25 - 31

****PLEASE NOTE: THE MILLINERY, SILVERSMITH, APOTHECARY (on Oct 31), AND WIG SHOP (on Oct 30) WILL CLOSE AT 2:00PM ON OCT 30-31****

Apothecary – The survey team met for the third time, and the survey draft is coming along. The new skeleton is here, and it looks great. They want to thank everyone that was involved including Joanne Bowen, Ellen Chapman, Heidi Quant, Amanda Keller, and James Zilius. You all are absolutely great – this was a huge project. The Apothecary says THANK YOU!!!!

Armoury:

Blacksmith – They continue working on a coin press for the Curator of Numismatics, making andirons for Collections for Raleigh Tavern, and forging smoker's tongs for Anderson display. They have begun work on window hooks for Monticello, hinges for the Carpenters, and marking knives and cooking spoons for Prentis.

Tin Shop – They are making baking molds for Foodways, a canister for the Coffeehouse, patterns for a wig box for the Wig Shop, and continuing to work on lanterns to light the new workshops.

Artificer's Shop – They will be continuing work on a pair of saddle valises and filling a request from a donor for closure straps for "History Boxes." In light of the recent cold snap, plans are underway to move the shop to its winter quarters at the Magazine. They would also like to thank volunteer Jan Tilley for the many times he has rearranged his schedule to help provide coverage for the shop.

Basketmaker – They are repurposing old baskets and making a couple of new baskets for static street displays.

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, as well as the upholstery for a half set of side chairs. 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.

Carpenters – They are building a small building for storing tools at the Carpenter's Yard.

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: Much plowing and sowing and harrowing. Duke and Dan, the farm's oxen, are doing an excellent job pulling the plow and harrows to put their fields to bed for the winter. The hogs are getting fatter by the day.

Domestic Arts: Much gardening and cooking this week. They will be starting to plant onions and garlic, as well as collards as need be for a continuous harvest. They are also digging really nice sweet potatoes and will prepare them next week. They are cooking apple fritters and will be roasting a chine of mutton with root veggies like turnips and radishes.

Below is a picture of Ed's "young helper" plowing the field:



Gun Shop/Foundry –The Gunsmiths are beginning to engrave a rifle lock and continue to make 2 pistol locks. The Founders are working on polishing a large stuffing spoon of pewter and some pewter taper sticks for Prentis Store.

Historic Garden – The Fall garden is still under way. Now all of the tulip bulbs and spring daisies and flowers are going in. The last of their pole beans were harvested. The beans were pulled out, and the trellis taken down. The profile of the garden is quickly changing to their winter motif. Sweet potatoes are just about done curing, and the Armory Kitchen will receive some for cooking very soon! The covering of the paper frames is still yet to be done. They are hoping it happens soon after the bulbs are in so that they are ready when the second round of endive is planted out of the cold frame and into the garden. The endives are still blanching; and hopefully, with the aid of upside down pots instead of the straw bells, they will really be able to get them to turn white. The cardoon is also ready for blanching and will be wrapped shortly. Onions and garlic are finally starting to come up, and the spinach is really starting to flourish.

Joiners – They are working on a musket crate for the Market House, a toolbox for the Artificer, and a small chest for the Carpenters.

Millinery – Sarah and Abby are working on their presentation for a conference at Belair Mansion in Maryland. Their topic is 18th-century clothing suitable for the bedchamber (those pieces of clothing that first were worn in private spaces, and later in the century became appropriate for public spaces). For this presentation, everyone in the shop is making a silk Sultana robe, petticoat, and a third-quarter 18th-century cap to protect the hair while sleeping. Janea is working on back-ground planning/ research for their 2017 paper for the Textiles Symposium, their December gown-making program, and a "How We Know What We Know" program for November. This program will be jointly presented with Robin Kipps on the 18th-century connections between Fashion and Medicine.

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

Shoemaker – A custom pair of size 13 common shoes was recently completed for one of the Nation Builders. Work is underway on a pair of half boots, and a number of staff have come by to try on stock shoes. This past week, they also delivered two pairs of shoes to Great Hopes for use in their site interpretation: one pair of russet (i.e. un-dyed) strong shoes for the slave cabin and a pair of heavily-cobbled common shoes.

Silversmith – They are working on various sorts of spoons and salt shovels, Gurney Bowls and a fluted bowl, a “skittle ball” teapot, a pair of patty pans, a small dram cup, Revere Beakers and raised beakers, a thistle cup, trade silver jewelry, rings and letter charms, a 12-inch Montieth, 2 copper vessels (one being raised by the intern, the other by an apprentice), and ladles. The intern is scraping an ingot she cast and 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 – They finished dyeing with indigo, fustic, madder root, and black walnut. Gorgeous colors (see picture below). They dyed silk ribbon for CDC for Native American dress accents. They are working on threading a new blanket project and coordinating with C&L for the 25th-anniversary Leicester Longwool celebration on Nov 14 and 15. “Fleece to Fabric” will take place on the 14th in their back yard.



Wheelwright – The shop will re-open on Tuesday, Oct 27th, so they will be putting everything back in place. They will continue fixing the ox cart and will be finishing cart wheels.

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).