

“THE MECHANICK’S ADVISER”

for September 9 - 15

Apothecary – “First-year pharmacy students from Hampton University, just down the Peninsula from us, are going to be visiting the Shop starting this Saturday for the next three weeks. One of their professors is including History of Pharmacy in her curriculum. Follow-up on our first pharmacy student as some have asked: he was a 6th-year pharmacy student. We don’t usually quote notes, but this one was special. In a recent thank-you note, he wrote, ‘Thank you once again for the fantastic experience of the past six weeks. Our next student will be here Oct. 1.’”

Armoury:

Blacksmith – “Muddling through airborne puddles of humidity, the Blacksmiths have been busy with cooking wares, bed wares, door wares, and tools. Mark has been working on chisels for the Cabinetmakers, compass rods for a bed, tools for the Artificers, and striking knives; Aislinn has been forging and filing on spoons, forks, spatulas, a broiler, and handrail; Jessie has been wrestling framing squares. Many of you may already have met our two new Apprentices, but we are happy to welcome Owen Kelsey and Alex Hinman into the Anderson Blacksmith Shop!”

Tinsmith – “Steve has been working on plates; Joel has been making horn lanterns, and also their paint; Jenny has been making teapots.”

Brickmaker – “Brickmaking will end on September 16th to focus on dismantling last year’s clampe and constructing this season’s. We’ll still have clay in the pit, however, so we’ll be able to offer some treading for a few weeks afterward.”

Cabinetmaker – “Bill did it! After 15 years of standing in the Shop corner, the 34” wide mahogany board has finally found a project. It will be used for the 30” diameter top for the Robert Walker tea table. Bill finished the drawing for moulded table edge and is now dimensioning the mahogany board. Brian finished one of the two “Escape the King” Caskets, and the second is a third of the way complete. Ed has temporarily set aside the harpsichord (though he continues to make adjustments) to manufacture parts for two harpsichord classes he’s teaching during the “Woodworking Symposium”.

Colonial Garden – “One would expect the temperatures to be a little more moderate to match the date on the calendar. However, it has been hot and humid. The celosia and squash beds were cleaned off, soil turned, amended, and smoothed. The melon bed continues to produce and looks good, as well as the cheese pumpkin. The pumpkin has slowed a bit but still has enough vigor to slowly take over more ground. One pumpkin hangs suspended in the air as a result of the vine scrambling up a tree. As the pumpkin grows heavier, it sags closer to the earth due to its weight.

“The last of the potatoes were harvested and the ground turned in preparation for root crops. The propagation bed was re-seeded with fall crops, and the cold frame is filling up with transplants. This week, we harvested and sent to the Kitchens: green beans, onions, scotch bonnet peppers, pimento, and cayenne peppers. The castor bean plants are reaching for the sky and look stunning. Cypress vine that is on the round fence in the front Garden has taken off since the sunflowers have been removed.

“The last of the ears of corn and sunflower heads have been harvested and are drying daily in the sun. We look with anticipation to the day that we dig the Jerusalem artichokes as they are larger than expected. Our Apprentice, Megan, has taken on the role as caterpillar wrangler and is moving caterpillars off the celeriac, parsley, and skirret and relocating them to the parsnip bed, where they do not damage the crop and can eat to their delight.

“Many young guests helped this week in washing flower pots, hoeing, and some weeding. As a reward for their work, they receive a “medal” in the form of a bean leaf that naturally sticks to their clothes. So, when you see someone wearing a bean leaf, you know where they have been!”

Foundry – “The Founders have been working on brass cloak pins and pewter candlesticks, and we are making pewter patterns for the large door hinges for Carter's Grove. In the photo below, we are turning the pewter finials for the hinges.”



Joinery – “The Joinery is still a whirl of case-making. Alas, were it cake-making, they’d be all the more excited, but such is their plight. Dovetails are being laid out and cut, fit, and assembled. The next few tentative steps will be towards building the face-frames for the cupboards, but that particular challenge still lays beyond the horizon.”

Military Programs – “Military Programs is continuing work on the 80th project, as well as adapting old programs to create more diverse and educational demonstrations. We are also working with the Artificers, who are creating musket slings for the matross aspect of our artillery portion of "The Necessity of Order in Battle." Finally, the staff is preparing for our work trip, which is set for later this month: September 23-27.”

Public Leather Works – “With ‘cooler’ fall days upon us, The Public Leather Works has begun to offer our workshop program ‘Less Talking, More Doing.’ The workshop invites ticketed adults and teens to join us for an hour’s instruction in basic leather craft. Participants produce for themselves a high-quality steer hide waist belt. Workshops are held Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 am. Advance tickets are required.”

Silversmith – “Chris is nearing completion on the last of the seven silver trays. Bobbie has been working on a pair of small cups, as well as several specialty spoons (salt shovels, pierced-handled teaspoons, etc.). George has been working on several meat skewers and has been raising a silver mug. Preston continues working on his small fluted bowls and is preparing to work on a tankard. Lynn has finished engraving the six silver trays that are finished and is working on brass plaques for the presentation boxes. The fan plate is nearly finished as well. William continues to practice varying script styles for engraving work and has begun practicing monograms. His first Gurney bowl should hopefully have a base by the end of the weekend (third time’s the charm, right?), and a second Gurney bowl has started taking shape. Additionally, with the help of Preston, William cast and scraped his first silver ingot this week, which will eventually become another bowl and a series of various spoons. Parker has been making bases for his seamed cups and practicing raising a beaker in copper.”

(L)William casting an ingot
(R)The newly-born ingot



Wigmaker – “In what should not come as a surprise, the Wig Shop is still working on the same major projects from last week! Weaving continues for both the judicial and Jefferson wigs, as well as work on new hairpieces. We’ve also had several new wig requests coming in, so everyone (Sara in particular) has been busy getting those wigs ready for fall programming, including two wigs for the newest show at the Play booth Theatre, ‘The Guardian’. As always, should you have a need for a wig or hairpiece, let us know!”