

“THE MECHANICK’S ADVISER”

For May 26 – June 1

Apothecary – “The great picture below is of one of our Volunteers, Donna Marie Gaumond. She started working with us last year after retiring from a career in hospital pharmacy. The photo was taken by Carlo La Fiandra.



“This week, our guest pharmacy student has compounded several medications, including a carminative [or as it was also known at the time, a med for windy patients]. The directions mention that the powder could be wrapped in paper or put in deal or card boxes. I want to thank Ed Wright at the Cabinet Shop for information about deal referring to soft woods such as white and yellow pine, and details on making boxes. Thank-you to Chad Jones at the Printing Office on a quick crash course on types of paper also known as card. We have a request in to Collections to see if there are any extant boxes in our collection.”

Armoury:

Blacksmith – “The Blacksmiths’ throats burn, and voices grow hoarse as the busy (and allergy) season continues, but still they conspire to forge the weathervane’s spire. The Shop is no less busy with other, less conspiratorial efforts. Ken has been making a racket with his sign bracket and forging chisels that sizzle. Aislinn keeps her bench under lock(s) and key(s), now with aid from a newly forged petit drill bit. Mark has nailed it with some new nail headers and a compassionate compass point for the weathervane. The Apprentices continue to look rakish with rakes, spoons, door handles, bench dogs, and brick molds. In the brief moments between it all, the nails rain down at the foot of the anvil. Watch your step!”

Tin Shop – “Like their metal, the Tinsmiths remain stable this week, still working on lanterns for the Palace Stables, and coffee pots to adorn forge and fireplace. The tap of their hammers heralds light in the darkness and warmth in your belly, both appreciated even as the sun lingers longer and longer each day.”

Cabinetmaker – “Hello from the Hay Shop. While Brian and Bill continue work on the two tripod tables, plans have begun for next year’s ‘Woodworking Symposium.’ Ed has returned to working on the lid and stand for the harpsichord. Melanie and John are in NAI training.”

Carpenter – “The Carpenters are making ladders, building drawbenches, and riving clapboards. We completed a replacement set of steps to go up to the Peyton Randolph Kitchen, which have just been installed.”



Colonial Garden – “The Gardeners are finishing up the last big wave of transplanting for the summer season. This week, we planted our tomatoes, peppers, turkey cucumber, fennel, and many herbs. We harvested peas and edible flowers for the Palace Kitchen. The rye straw was bundled and stored for later in the summer when we will experiment with making insulating straw mats for the Garden. We now have two more fine watering cans thanks to the Tin Shop, just in time for summer weather. Our citrus trees and other tender plants have returned from their winter home with the Landscape Department (thanks Scott for looking after our babies all winter!). New flowers in bloom this week include: Carolina lupine (*Thermopsis villosa*), leek (*Allium ampeloprasum*), endive (*Cichorium endivia*), and larkspur (*Consolida ajacis*).”

Farming – “The tobacco is doing really well, but we need to be ready with replacements if disease or insects destroy them. The picture below shows Bryan Austin separating small tobacco plants in the seed bed.”



Gunsmith – “Things are starting to ramp up with anticipation in the Gunsmith Shop with the new Apprentice starting in a few weeks. Jeff Geyer has been helping out as a part-time Interpreter, which has been a huge help, not to mention entertaining.

“As for the projects, Darrin is in the final shaping of a round face English rifle lock. Polishing all the parts, forging and filing the springs will be the next step. Richard continues the work on the pair of silver pistols.”

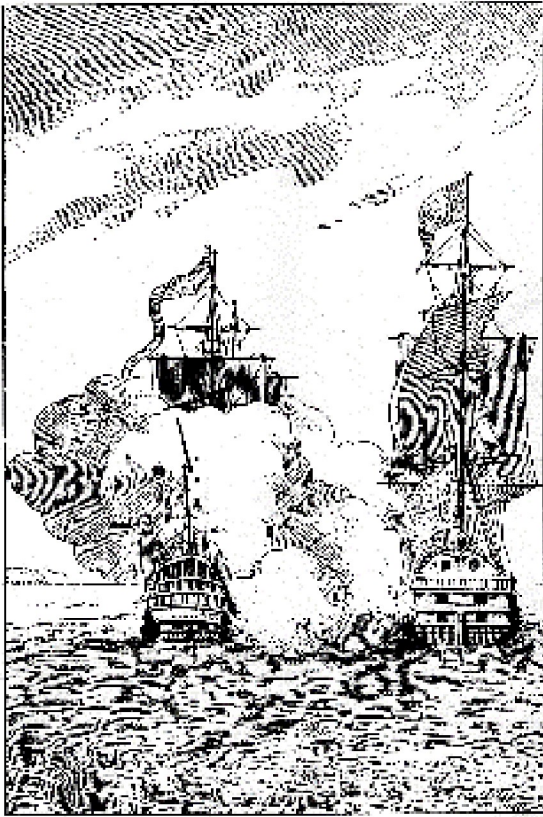




Joinery – “The Joinery will be as busy as always this week. Scott has almost finished coping his mortises on the walnut door. This painstaking process requires diligence and attention to detail, and cannot be rushed. Peter is “exploring” the process for making the face frame for his hanging cupboard and hopes to make good progress this week, despite the heat going directly to his thick New England skull. Amanda is studying a four-paneled door and taking measurements from it, in preparation for constructing a replacement. She is gathering a cutting list and will begin preparing material shortly!”

Public Leather Works – “Jan finished the helmet for Mike in the Taylor Shop. Andrew finished the cartridge pouches for Military Programs, and Jan made the belts.”

Silversmith – “Bobbie continues working on the lid for the tankard, as well as several mote spoons. Chris is raising the body and lid of her teapot. Lynn continues work on the canoe printing plate, and with the help of Preston, had the opportunity to cast her first silver ingot. Preston has also been working on the body of the tankard. George continues to fix the chasing tools. Parker has begun a new beaker, raising it in copper as a practice piece. William is working on engraving trade silver and setting up a large copper plate engraving.”



William's next engraving project



Lynn casting an ingot