

“THE MECHANICK’S ADVISER”

for July 15 - 21

Apothecary – Our newest Volunteer started interpreting this week. Our student is busy writing a short paper on 18th-century beliefs on contagion and prevention. He will be contrasting this with modern methodology, as he is considering specializing in infectious diseases. To date, he has made four new medicines, and a fifth one is in progress. Sharon has been collecting and sending info on possible scenarios about Frances Everard’s medical condition so that it can be interpreted. For some years, it was thought to be T.B. Technically T.B. is a 19th-century word, and looking at the primary source data, we don’t think it was T.B.

Cabinetmaker – On Sunday, the Cabinetmakers took a trip down to the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. They spent the entire day on Monday examining a tilt-top table made in the Robert Walker Shop, King George County, Virginia. The piece will be reproduced for the “Woodworking Symposium” in January. In the meantime, Bill is finishing the corner chair and upholstering the slip seat. Brian continues work on the coffin stands for a curatorial program.

Cooper – The Coopers delivered a new cistern (water tub) to the Colonial Garden this week.

Joinery – This week in the Joinery, the Apprentices are finishing their benches. They are quite excited about this step, and are even more excited to find out what will come next! Other projects include a shelf for the Bookbinders and a tool chest for the Foundry.

Military Programs – Military Programs has been very busy this week, conducting Teachers Institute programs, hosting the Information Technology Department at the Ax Range, covering the Musket Range, and as always, presenting all of the usual programming.

Music – The Music Department has had a busy summer so far! We have moved our weekly formal program from “Music at the Raleigh” to “An Afternoon with the Governor’s Musick” at the Hennage. We continue to share a variety of topics related to music and history, and the programs have been well received by guests. Friday night concerts at the Capitol, themed “Jefferson in Paris” for the summer, have been going well and will continue through the summer season. Big changes are afoot in the Department. On July 4th, singer Adrienne Lotto kicked off the fireworks for CW by singing the National Anthem, as well as moving renditions of “America the Beautiful” and “Columbia.” That was her last official duty here, as Adrienne is leaving us to join a prestigious graduate program in Voice at Yale University. This week is also our viola da gamba player Jane Leggiero’s last week here. She will be going to Case Western Reserve University in the fall to pursue her doctorate in Historical Performance Practice. The Music Department will miss them but wishes them well in their future careers!

Silversmith – George has been working on several dozen spoons for orders and for the Golden Ball, and has begun spending time at the Foundry every Friday, as well. The last of the silver trays is in progress. Two of them are currently being stoned by Bobbie and William, in preparation for polishing by Preston, who is working on several small fluted bowls in the meantime. Lynn has begun engraving the third tray, as well as a large copper printing plate for a lady’s fan design. Parker is working on several seamed cups and trade silver. William has also been working on the base for his silver gurney bowl. Our intern, Megan, has finished her internship, and though we wish we could keep her here, we wish her the best of luck as she moves on to other opportunities.

Wigmaker – Work has been quickly progressing on the wig for the Smithsonian! We're approximately 55 hours into the project over the course of a month, and it's close to halfway done! Between frantically weaving blond hair, everyone in the shop has also been keeping up with our regular maintenance and other smaller projects as they come up. Debbie has also continued working on her hand knotted base. She did a time study, and a single row of 100 knots takes her 15 minutes. So far, she's over 50 rows of knots in!