Time passes without help, but tracking its passage requires effort. Early in the 19th century, some people accomplished this through an unusual paper calendar with moveable parts titled Perpetual Almanack.

Now archived in the Winterthur Library, the Almanack recently became a project for Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation (WUDPAC) second-year Fellow Kimi Taira, a paper major with a library/archives minor.

Kimi had asked for a project with moveable parts and was pleased to receive the Almanack. It is constructed so that users can note the year, month, date, and day of the week by viewing four moveable paper tabs as they slide back and forth behind windows cut into a fixed facing page, almost 8 x 10 inches in size. Yellow ribbons that serve as handles are attached to the ends of the paper tabs, and the tabs are held in position by backing paper attached to the facing page. The year and date tabs move horizontally, while the month and day-of-the-week tabs move vertically. Information on the tabs would allow the Almanack to be used between 1809 and 1813.

As a result of her analysis, Kimi believes the Almanack's current synthetic yellow ribbons and pressure-sensitive tapes are more recent replacements of the original silk ribbons and animal hide glue. The paper was made by Delaware's first paper mill, the Gilpin Mill, and the engravings were done by P.R. Maverick, whose shop was on Liberty Street in New York City. Kimi is less sure about how the Almanack was used and is still working to understand the full meaning of some of the engravings, such as the head of an angel on the facing page. She theorizes that because the Almanack is an early republican piece engraved with patriotic artwork rather than more traditional astrological symbols such as the sun and the moon, some of the iconography might have been signaling the young country's transition from its colonial past.

Though the Almanack came to her in a frame, she also believes that when new, it was more likely to have been displayed on a table than hung on a wall.

When she completes her analysis, Kimi will prepare a suggested treatment protocol. Because the Almanack's primary value lies in its use by researchers, she will consult Senior Librarian Richard McKinstry before making recommendations for possible treatment by a future art conservation student.