

# Colonial Williamsburg

**Colonial Williamsburg hosts Working Wood Conference, Jan. 23-26, 2025**

*Scholarships available for students and emerging professionals*



*Images courtesy of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation are available to download [here](#).*

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (Oct. 4, 2024) – The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation will host its annual Working Wood in the 18th Century Conference Jan. 23-26, 2025. Offered both virtually and in-person, this year’s conference will explore the ingenuity and quality reflected in pre-Revolutionary furniture belonging to people from diverse walks of life. A limited number of in-person and virtual attendance scholarships are available to students and emerging professionals in relevant positions or programs.

Visit [colonialwilliamsburg.org/working-wood](https://colonialwilliamsburg.org/working-wood) to apply by Nov. 1, 2024.

Colonial Williamsburg’s senior curator of furniture, **Tara Chicirda**, will open the conference with a keynote on how people furnished their homes in the 18th century and how museum curators decide how to furnish those spaces today. **Steve Brown**, renowned cabinetmaker and teacher, will lead attendees through the process of building a Virginia cabriole-leg dressing table. Author and woodworker **Megan Fitzpatrick** will explore the dovetails, case construction, and painted surfaces of blanket chests. Colonial Williamsburg joiners **Brian Weldy** and **Ayinde Martin** will use a variety of benches to demonstrate the sophisticated greenwood turning and joinery techniques found in seemingly humble forms. To better understand how the timber to build and furnish a town was processed, Colonial Williamsburg carpenter, **Matt Sanbury**, and his team will offer a glimpse into how to hew and pitsaw logs into lumber.

Colonial Williamsburg cabinetmakers **Bill Pavlak** and **John Peeler** will trace the evolution of style and construction along with economic factors as they demonstrate aspects of fall-front desks and drop-leaf dining tables, respectively. Colonial Williamsburg senior conservator of furniture **Chris Swan** will consider how furniture's appearance has evolved over time by considering changing surface qualities.

Several projects featured at this conference are destined for Colonial Williamsburg's restoration of the Williamsburg Bray School (1760-74), the oldest known building in the United States in which enslaved and free Black children were educated and the home of its middle-class teacher, Ann Wager. Executive Director of Architectural Preservation **Matt Webster** will discuss the building's exciting rediscovery and restoration during the banquet's keynote; the conference will kick off with a short film looking at the material world of the Bray students.

To register and view the full conference agenda, visit [colonialwilliamsburg.org/working-wood](https://colonialwilliamsburg.org/working-wood). The majority of conference activities will take place at the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg, located at 301 South Nassau Street. A variety of [exclusive pre-conference activities](#) are available for in-person registrants, as are [special room rates](#) at Colonial Williamsburg hotel properties.

In-person registration is \$400 per person through Dec. 1 and includes presentations; opening reception; continental breakfasts on Friday, Saturday and Sunday; coffee & refreshment breaks; and a conference dinner Saturday evening. Virtual-only registration is \$150 per person and includes access to all presentations through the conference streaming platform. Both in-person and virtual-only registration include a seven-day ticket voucher to Colonial Williamsburg's Art Museums and Historic Area, valid for redemption through Dec. 31, 2025. Registration and payment in full are required by Jan. 3 for in-person attendance and by Jan. 23 for virtual attendance.

Working Wood is sponsored by the Society of American Period Furniture Makers, Early American Industries Association, and Lie-Nielsen Toolworks, Inc.

Additional information is available at [colonialwilliamsburg.org/learn/conferences](https://colonialwilliamsburg.org/learn/conferences) or by calling 1-800-603-0948 toll-free or emailing [educationalconferences@cwf.org](mailto:educationalconferences@cwf.org). Follow Colonial Williamsburg on Facebook and @colonialwmsburg on Twitter and Instagram.

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### ***About The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation***

*The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation preserves, restores and operates Virginia's 18th-century capital of Williamsburg. Innovative and interactive experiences highlight the*

*relevance of the American Revolution to contemporary life and the importance of an informed, active citizenry. The Colonial Williamsburg experience includes more than 600 restored or reconstructed original buildings, renowned museums of decorative arts and folk art, extensive educational outreach programs for students and teachers and 18th-century inspired culinary options from historic taverns situated along historic Duke of Gloucester Street. Colonial Williamsburg Resorts complement the experience, offering guests five unique hotel properties including the iconic Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star, AAA Five Diamond Williamsburg Inn, newly renovated Williamsburg Lodge-Autograph Collection, Williamsburg Woodlands Hotel and Suites, the Griffin Hotel, and authentic 18th-century Colonial Houses. The resort offers a range of events and amenities including four historic taverns, 15 food and beverage outlets providing exquisite culinary experiences from casual to elegant dining, the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club featuring 36 holes designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr. and his son Rees Jones, a world-class full-service spa and fitness center, pools, meeting and flexible event spaces, and scenic gardens providing the perfect venue for weddings and special events. Merchants Square, built alongside the Historic Area in 1935 as one of the first planned shopping districts in the United States, features more than 40 specialty boutiques with products ranging from apparel to fine jewelry, art, specialty foods and gifts. Philanthropic support and revenue from admissions, products and hospitality operations sustain Colonial Williamsburg's educational programs and preservation initiatives.*