



TALKING WATER NATURE RETREAT · CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

Cob Ceremony Hut – 2025 Earthbuilding Workshops

Build Something Real: Join Our Cob & Cordwood Workshop Series at Talking Water

FROM OUR ARCHIVE

Originally published July 30, 2025. This workshop series has already taken place. The details below are preserved as they were first published.

Ready to get your hands muddy and your heart full?

This late summer and fall, we're welcoming builders, dreamers, and curious souls to Talking Water Nature Retreat for a series of hands-on natural building workshops. Whether you're brand new to cob and cordwood or looking to deepen your skills, this is your chance to learn by doing alongside experienced builders and fellow earth-lovers. Come visit our forested 82-acre mountain retreat on the edge of Chattanooga, TN and immerse yourself in the kind of sustainable, creative community you want to see in the world!

What We're Building

We're crafting a one-of-a-kind Cob Ceremony Hut – a gathering space designed for ceremony, ritual, yoga, meditation, and celebration.

Surrounding the hut, we will construct a Cordwood Amphitheater so that you can bring your community along for special day and create space to take in the forested mountain around you.

You're invited to help shape every phase of the build, from foundation to finish!

Workshop Schedule

Come for one weekend or dive into the full build. Each session teaches specific techniques:

WORKSHOP	DATES	FOCUS	PRIMARY INSTRUCTORS
Foundations	Aug 23–24	Trenching, drainage, run-off control, & erosion control – less formal, more action-oriented kick-off	James Such (Talking Water) & Chris Hansberger (Cob Builder)
Stacked Stone & Doors	Aug 25–28	Stacked-stone retaining walls, mortar techniques, & doorway framing	Bobbie Such (Talking Water) & Chris Hansberger (Cob Builder)
Windows & Bottle Logs	Aug 30–31	Cutting & installing colorful bottle walls, & cob detailing	Bobbie Such (Talking Water) & Chris Hansberger (Cob Builder)
Cob Walls & Sculpting	Sept 5–14	Mixing cob, sculpting, constructing niches, shelves, & wall-building from start-to-finish	Chris Hansberger (Cob Builder)

WORKSHOP	DATES	FOCUS	PRIMARY INSTRUCTORS
Cordwood Walls	Sept 13–14 Sept 20–21	Make walls of stacked cedar rounds and glass bottle logs, utilizing sawdust-lime mortar	Bobbie Such (Talking Water)
Interior & Exterior Plaster	Sept 24–28	Natural plastering techniques to seal and beautify	Bobbie Such (Talking Water) & Chris Hansberger (Cob Builder)
Living Reciprocal Roof	Oct 12–16	Roundwood rafters, sheathing, & full green roof installation	Josh Burg & Sarah Crippen (Clay Sand & Soul Cob Builders)

Why Join Us?

- **Hands-on training in sustainable, artistic building**

Led by friendly people who want you to learn and who are committed to helping you leave empowered to build your own dreams.

- **Camping, cabins & delicious meals**

Camping is available on-site, or you're welcome to rent a cozy Talking Water cabin. A shared outdoor shower is available to all attendees. We provide breakfast & lunch each workshop day, plus a healthy, homemade community dinner one evening per weekend. Snacks and drinks are available throughout the day.

- **Unplugged mountain magic**

Hammocks, forest trails, blue holes, and quiet mornings with the birds

Whether you're dreaming of building your own off-grid cabin, joining community builds, or simply trying something new: this is your moment to get inspired, connect, and build something lasting.

Let's Build Together

Each workshop is a gathering of good people, good food, and big dreams. You'll leave with skills, friendships, and a sense of what's possible when we build with our hands and hearts.

WHERE Talking Water Nature Retreat • Chattanooga, TN

WHEN August 23 – September 28, 2025

We're committed to accessibility and will always try to say "yes" if you're genuinely interested, reach out and let's talk to make sure you can get the knowledge to help you grow your future!