

MOM'S JOY ROOM

Where Obsolescence Ends and Wonder Begins

2964 Fairmont Road • Morgantown, West Virginia 26501 • (304) 282-3671

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY & APPRAISAL

Antique Convertible High Chair & Stroller

American, circa 1885–1910 • Turned Spindles & Wooden Wheels • Converts from High Chair to Stroller

ESTIMATED WORTH

\$275 – \$500

Reflects the working conversion mechanism, complete spindle construction, and honest, unwashed original surface.



The chair in high-chair form — tray up, spindle back, wheels below



Side view, showing the wheeled frame — as styled for display in the Joy Room

History & Background

In the decades around 1900, American furniture makers built what may be the most practical piece of nursery furniture ever made: the convertible high chair. At mealtimes it stood upright, a tall spindle-backed chair with a wooden tray for the baby's food. When the meal was done, the whole piece tipped back on its own wheeled frame and became a stroller, so a mother could wheel her child from kitchen to porch without ever lifting him out of the seat. Some designs converted further still, into a low chair or a walker for a toddler finding his feet. It was one piece of furniture doing three jobs at a time when families did everything by hand.

The form belongs to the great era of American bentwood and wicker nursery furniture, the same tradition that produced Heywood Brothers and other Massachusetts makers' famous "combination" chairs of the 1880s through the early 1900s. This example carries every hallmark of that period: turned and tapered spindles throughout, a Windsor-style back of vertical spindles and horizontal rails, a flip-over tray, a ventilated seat board, and four small spoked wheels on a rectangular base frame. The dark, honey-brown patina, oxidized metal wheel rims, and worn original surface all point to genuine age rather than reproduction.

No maker's mark or label is present, which is typical: many of these chairs were made by small regional factories and sold through hardware stores and catalog houses without branding. It is therefore attributed to the American convertible high chair tradition of circa 1885 to 1910 on the strength of its construction and materials, and it converts and works as built. Today these chairs are loved a second way: collectors and decorators style them as plant stands, display shelves, and candle pedestals, exactly as this one has been dressed here. It joined the Mom's Joy Room collection in October 2026.

Notable Information

- ◆ Era: circa 1885–1910, American, Victorian to turn-of-the-century
- ◆ Form: convertible high chair — tips back on its own wheeled base to become a child's stroller
- ◆ Construction: turned spindles throughout; Windsor-style spindle back; flip-over wooden tray with raised edges; ventilated seat board; rectangular base frame
- ◆ Wheels: four small spoked wooden wheels with metal rims, showing honest oxidation
- ◆ Surface: dark, aged original patina with wear consistent with more than a century of life
- ◆ Attribution: stylistic — unmarked, as most examples of this form are
- ◆ Condition: complete and structurally sound; conversion and wheels intact
- ◆ Joined the collection: October 2026

Collector's Notes

The conversion mechanism is the heart of this piece's value: many survivors have lost trays or frozen wheels, and a chair that still tips back and rolls is the example buyers want. Comparable marked chairs by the known makers of the form retail in the \$400-575 range at antique shops, and unmarked but honest examples like this one sit just beneath them. As a display piece it has a second career, and the dark patina should be preserved with a soft dry cloth only — no washing, stripping, or refinishing, which would take a century of history off the wood.

*"One chair, three jobs, and a hundred years of getting babies from the kitchen
to the porch."*

Mom's Joy Room
2964 Fairmont Road
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Sandy Wade
PROPRIETOR
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