

# Women in Turning Newsletter

November 2023



## Women's Woodturning Week in Ireland

by Elizabeth Weber

**AAW** | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF WOODTURNERS

Located in the green hills of County Carlow, Ireland, the Glenn Lucas Woodturning Study Centre welcomed a group of nine women for a week of friendship, inspiration, good food, and making shavings. Throughout the last week of August, Glenn Lucas and his wife, Cornelia McCarthy, hosted a Women's Woodturning Workshop with women from around the world.

The class was funded by a generous benefactor, and women sent in applications to be considered for a spot in the workshop. A total of 89 women applied, vying for one of the nine spots. Participants included Ena Dubnoff (USA), Danielle Flowers (England), Diana Friend (USA), Rabea Gebler (Germany/Japan), Marisa Klaster (the Netherlands), Maria Lindberg (Sweden), Kamilla Stokkevag (Norway), Annette Weber (Switzerland), and Elizabeth Weber (USA).



*Glenn Lucas (on the right) with the nine women who received scholarships to attend the Women's Woodturning Week.*

Glenn, a world-renowned woodturner known as one of the world's foremost production woodturners, led the workshops. He has been woodturning since 1990, and during his career he has developed excellent tool control and an understanding of wood that has allowed him to produce large quantities of bowls of the highest quality. Cornelia has worked with creative businesses since 1989, and serves as a freelance advisor and project manager, helping run Glenn Lucas Woodturning.

Glenn's longtime dream of having his own woodturning school became a reality when construction began on the space in 2019. The Glenn Lucas Woodturning Study Centre is a world-class facility that opened its doors to students in August 2021. Ena Dubnoff, an award-winning artist from the US who came into woodturning after retiring from an extremely rewarding career as an architect, said about the space, "I found the

school in a picture book setting with green pastures, white clouds, blue skies and donkeys outside the windows of the most amazing shop."

This five-day workshop covered a lot of in-depth skills. Projects in the workshop included turning thin-walled vessels, closed form bowls, fine detail platters, and individual projects that related to the work that each of the women is best known for. Glenn was keen on helping each woman work on refining their skills at the lathe, sharing his knowledge in hopes they could apply those skills to their own work. Emphasis was placed on properly sharpening and honing turning tools and applying the tools to the wood with an understanding of grain orientation. Everyone drew inspiration from watching each other work and seeing what they created at the lathe.

Participant Rabea Gebler has been enrolled in a Japanese woodturning program in Japan and spoke about her experience. "I had so many 'aha!' moments while learning from Glenn. I started turning on a Western lathe by watching his videos, but I have since spent a lot of time deep-diving into Japanese turning. It was a critical moment for my turning career to get back on the Western lathe and have all the tools, cuts, tricks, and tweaks explained to me. It made me understand both Japanese and Western turning better and left me with a massive amount of ideas."

Norwegian woodturner Kamilla Stokkevag loves to create modern designs in wood and expressed thankfulness for the opportunity. "Glenn is a very talented teacher! My week at the woodturning center was rich in learning, inspiration, and

## Women's Woodturning Week con't

experiences. I learned so much about tools, wood, and woodturning techniques. I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from someone with his skill and ability to communicate the craft. It was such a great experience getting to know other woodturners and their stories. The participants were of all ages and experience levels, which made it even more special."

Speaking more to the diversity of what each woman brought, Danni Flowers said, "Turning alongside eight visionary females was so refreshing, learning from each other's cultural design interpretations and techniques, while bonding over the collective aspiration to enrich woodturning. I have come away feeling alive with energy, new design ideas and techniques to explore." Danni is a contemporary design maker in the UK, and she has participated in programs like the Emerging Turners Program sponsored by The Turners' Company.

Ena Dubnoff had similar sentiments. "I went to the Glenn Lucas workshop expecting it to be similar to others I have attended, but it offered so much more than that. We had the best imaginable equipment and tools, the best instruction, the best food, and attention to our every need. But the best of all the opportunity to get to know amazing women from all over the world and to hang out with Glenn and Cornelia."



Top row, left to right: Rabea Gebler, Kamilla Stokkevag, Ena Dubnoff.  
Bottom row: Danni Flowers.

The camaraderie felt among the women was genuine. Maria Lindberg, who spent three years studying traditional Swedish woodworking and earned a journeyman's certificate at Sätergläntan, said, "We laughed so hard together and we found so much warmth, love, and friendship! I feel so grateful that I was chosen for this week, and I will cherish the memories for the rest of my life!"

Rabea Gebler also said, "I can only say the same. The banter and woodturning skills were unmatched!"

Elizabeth Weber, a US woodturner and the recipient of the 2023 American Association of Woodturner Professional Outreach Program's Artist Showcase Award, said, "I felt so much at home while I was in this workshop. There were so many laughs and incredible moments. Community is such an important thing in developing a sense of belonging. Glenn and



## ***Women's Woodturning Week con't***

Cornelia did a wonderful job in helping to foster that atmosphere. It's also such a treat to watch Glenn teach – his knowledge of the tools and wood is remarkable.”

The lessons taught throughout the week were sometimes more subtle in nature. US woodturner Diana Friend, recipient of the 2022 Wharton Escherick Award for Excellence in Wood, elaborated on other ways that Glenn and Cornelia managed to teach the women throughout the week. “They showed us that we can make a space to work together where we all just want the best for each other and can love diving into the work. We can support each other by going to each other's gallery openings, spreading the word of other women's work through our purchases and praise, and we can take our work seriously while also making space to have fun. And most importantly, we are able to teach each other along the way.”

Inspiration continued to extend beyond the lathe and the group of women. As part of the class, Glenn and Cornelia invited three Irish woodturning artists— Max Brosi, Roger Bennett, and Kathleen Walsh - to share their inspirations and discuss the evolution of their work throughout their careers. They brought pieces of their art to show the women and dove deep into their journeys, each artist having the same passion for advancing the craft of woodturning but having their own unique journey to success. Diana Friend said, “I really enjoyed hearing about their philosophies, their work, their techniques, and the ways they each go about their businesses.”



*Top row, left to right: Elizabeth Weber, Diana Friend, Session with Max Brosi, Roger Bennett, and Kathleen Walsh. Bottom row, left to right: Maria Lindberg; Roger Bennett, Max Brosi, Kathleen Walsh.*

## Women's Woodturning Week con't

Dutch woodturner Marisa Klaster was an art director for many years and now aims to combine functionality and play. After hearing the talk by the three Irish wood artists, she realized, "By discussing and sharing our learnings and experiences with each other, and with three visiting famous Irish artists, I had the opportunity to reflect on both my talents and my limits. That's priceless and gives you a very good focus for the future in every way."

Swiss woodturner Annette Weber finds joy and peace in the process of creating unique pieces that honor her late daughter's legacy. She was overjoyed to be a participant. "What a week! To join these international women was such an honor. There are things that money can't buy, and this is one of those experiences. I am taking home so much that will stay with me for the rest of my life."



Left: Marisa Klaster. Right: Annette Weber.

The focus of the women's workshop was also on developing one's business. In addition to Glenn's teaching, there was an afternoon discussion on the importance of images. Rachel Doyle, an Irish photographer working for RaRa Photography, spent an afternoon with the women discussing how photography can tell a story that can have a profound effect on viewers. She emphasized using a camera rather than a phone for quality photos. And she completed the afternoon by taking photos of each woman with pieces of their work.

The week culminated with an exhibition that showcased all the women's work. Glenn and Cornelia opened the study center to the public and the space was flooded with art enthusiasts eager to see everyone's work and hear about the women.

By the end of the event, one feeling was unanimous. Each woman expressed gratitude for everything that they had learned from the workshop, from improving their skills to building their confidence. "Glenn's thoughtful and informative guidance has given me self-confidence in my own ability in turning and the motivation to push my own woodturning career into the next phase," said Danni Flowers.

All the women are grateful to Glenn, Cornelia, and the benefactor for making this week an unforgettable one. New friendships and skills forged in Ireland will last a lifetime.

*Photos for this article were generously provided by Glenn Lucas.*

---

## Useful links for Women In Turning

[AAW Website](#)

[WIT website](#)

[Newsletter archive](#)

[WIT Liaison](#)

[WIT events archive](#)

[AAW Woodturning Fundamentals Learning Portal](#)  
(sign in as  
a member to access)

*Would you like to support the programs and activities sponsored by the AAW Women In Turning Committee? It's easy to donate to the program online. Your gift will help strengthen communities and enrich lives through its investment in a variety of activities. [Click here to donate](#). Thanks!*



# Women in Turning - Thank you to all our Veterans!

*We have many women veterans who participate in our WIT groups and activities across the world. Here are a few that responded to a request for information about their service.*

## **Cape Cod Woodturners: Veteran Deb Chapin**

I entered the Air Force as a young 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant officer in 1979, with a big dream to see the world in my three-year commitment...never ever thinking I would retire from the military in 2003 with over 24 years on active duty. I was an Air Force Nurse Corp officer, having many different nursing positions throughout my career, including medical surgical, critical care, obstetrical-nursery, administrative and even a staff position with the Navy at their Bureau of Medicine in Washington DC. From my first assignment at Beale Air Force Base, home of U-2 and Blackbird Spy planes, to my last assignment, at Andrews Air Base, I enjoyed my military journey with assignments at Incirlik, Turkey; Yokota Air Base, Japan; Air Force Academy Hospital, Colorado Springs; Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA. During my first assignment at Beale, I enrolled in a woodworking class, making a wood table. Although it was the only woodworking class I took while in the military, I loved learning how to use power tools and working with wood. Fast forward to 2018, I had retired from my nurse practitioner position and enrolled in a woodturning class. I loved it, and have continued to turn, while becoming an active member of Cape Cod Woodturners Club. While in the military, I learned that life is really what you make it, and you can do whatever you put your mind to. I wanted to learn how to turn wood, I surrounded myself with Cape Cod Woodturner friends willing to teach me and now I get to share my love of woodturning with other club members. Life is whatever you make it, and it's better when you make it with wood.

## **Northeast Florida Woodturners Association**

### **Tracey Lee**

USN - Photographer 1979-1982  
NAS Pensacola, FL  
NAS Oceana, VA

### **Colleen Larsen**

USN - Radioman 1971-1974  
Pearl Harbor, HI

### **Donna Eversole, LCDR, NC, USN**

US Navy Nurse Corps Officer 1971-1992  
Stationed at Naval Hospital Bethesda, MD  
Philadelphia Naval Hospital, National Naval Medical Center,  
Bethesda, MD, Naval Hospital Jacksonville, Naval  
Hospital Okinawa, and Naval Hospital Great Lakes, IL.



*Tracey Lee: while in the US Navy and now.*



Hi, I'm **Dawn Greenberg**, a United States Navy veteran and a woodturner. I was introduced to woodturning when I was in high school. I joined the Navy and didn't think anymore about woodturning. Fast forward to January 2020 and my local community college offered an evening woodturning class. I signed up and did so well the instructor asked if I would be interested in teaching. The beginning instructor position was offered to me in August of 2021. I'm now hooked and get a lot of enjoyment from teaching and turning.

## Women of South Kansas Woodturners

The South Kansas Woodturners (SKW) presented turned pens to the veterans of Kansas Honor Flights. Eight women from SKW turned many of the pens: Ruth Chipman, Nancy Pester, Brenda Keech, Dana Danaver, Carrol Cumberland, Kay Edmondson, Dana Decker, and Kae Decker. Six are pictured here (left to right: Ruth, Nancy, Dana, Brenda, Carol, Kay):



The club turned 350 pens in three sessions at Brenda's shop and handed them out at three returning flights. Ruth, Nancy, Carol, Kay and Brenda participated in each of the return home ceremonies.



**Brenda Keech** is our only women veteran in the club. She served 21 years in the US Air Force as an aircraft mechanic. Her woodturning venture started five years after retiring from the USAF. She had been a woodworker for many years, when she decided to give turning a try. She has been turning for nine years.



# Women in Turning - Wig Stand Initiative

## Healing heARTS –

### a Northwestern Medicine Living Well Cancer Participant Art Show

by Marie Anderston

I was contacted by Cheri Hunt from Living Well Cancer Resource Center after our October Windy City Woodturners meeting asking if I might be able to join their Art show to do a woodturning demo and possibly show some of the wig stands. I agreed. This show included over 30 artists who have all been touched by cancer in some way. The entire evening people shared stories that were very inspirational, including cancer-free patients turned volunteers, family members and so many members of the community coming out to support these artists. I met many first-time vendors that were amazing artists who had joined the show because of their connection to Living Well. The repeated theme I heard was they did not think of themselves as artists before cancer but had been exposed to art during their healing journey and now cannot picture life without creating. The work included talented artists in photography, oil painting, watercolors, mixed media, quilting, polymer clay, basketry, caricatures, charcoal, fiber, beading and more.

There was quite a bit of interest in my demo. Apparently, a mini lathe on top of a wooden platform clamped to an aluminum table causes quite a noise when it's running. Fortunately, I had the sense to rough turn the tenons onto the spindles I was turning so there was none of the "click, click, click" from knocking off spindle blank corners. Still there was quite a bit of vibration on the table so you can imagine the noise. The good news is that it drew a lot of attention.

I took the Log-to-Bowl display and explained the process over and over and over. There were several highlights during the evening. First, a young girl (maybe six years old?) walked right up to me as I was turning my first top of the evening and said quite sassily, "I know what that is," as she pointed to the machine in front of me. I said, "Really? What is it?" She came right back with "It's a lathe!" Needless-to-say I was thrilled and gave her the top that I was working on. Second, an older woman stopped by and asked a lot of questions. Her husband had been a carpenter all his life and she was happy to see that there was "a wood artist" here. After some conversation I learned that she had been a client and a volunteer at Living Well until her husband had passed a couple years ago. She had since retired from being a high school art teacher. She admired the wig stands on display and was in need of inspiration to get out of her funk and into her art. Long-story short, I sent a wig stand home with her to decorate and she left with a promise to complete it and a smile on her face. Third, I handed out at least 10 of the club brochures. Hopefully we will have some new faces at the November meeting! There was also an inquiry about doing a demo for a high school next spring. I will share more when I hear back from her.

Overall, the demo was very well received, and I look forward to seeing how the seeds that were planted germinate. There may be some new opportunities to spread the joy of turning. Stay tuned!



## Carolina Mountain Woodturners

Pam Dergin

On September 16th six members of the Carolina Mountain Woodturners met to turn wig stands. Six were produced and donated to the women's cancer group in Hendersonville NC. It was a fun gathering for such a worthy cause.



---

## Cape Cod Woodturners

Robin McIntyre





**Cape Cod Woodturners, con't**



Top row, left to right: Deb and Don Chase and Robin McIntyre; Ellen Adamson and Robin McIntyre; Deb and Don Chase and Robin McIntyre; Judi Sitkin and Robin McIntyre. Bottom row, left to right: Jan Casiello (mahogany), Robin McIntyre (maple); Judi Sitkin and Robin McIntyre; Robin McIntyre (maple and Florida rosewood).

*“Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing must be attained.”*

*– Marie Curie*



# Women in Turning - Sharing Experiences

## WIT POP-UP WORKSHOP JEWELRY DEMO - BANGLE, PENDANT, AND RING

On September 23, Women in Turning hosted a pop-up workshop concentrated on jewelry projects. Gretchen Nieb demonstrated the processes for making bangles with polymer clay inlays, wood pendants for necklaces or earrings, and stainless steel rings with stone inlay. The workshop had 13 attendees including 3 new members to the Tennessee Association of Woodturners.

Photos from the WIT Pop-Up provided by Carol Ventura



Finished pieces from the workshop including stainless steel ring with semi-precious stone inlay, cherry bangle with swirled polymer clay inlay, and matching off-center pendants. (Clockwise from left)

Gretchen explains the process for turning pendants as attendees look over examples of finished pieces. (right)



Gretchen Nieb applies stone inlays to the ring cores. (Above)





**Tennessee Association of Woodturners - WIT Pop-up con't**  
by Chris Price

---

**WIT JEWELRY DEMO - BANGLE, PENDANT, AND RING**

---



The class after a successful workshop! (top)  
Gretchen turns the rough profile of the bangle (left),  
and parts the bangle from the remaining pendant  
blank (above).

## Tops for Dakar Children

by Daryl Gray

For one month this spring I volunteered on Mercy Ships in Dakar, Senegal, Africa. I am an operating room nurse in my real job and went there to help perform surgeries on patients from Senegal and The Gambia who otherwise would not have access to such care.

My woodturning club, Indiana County Woodturners Association, from Western Pennsylvania, made over 200 tops for me to take with me to share with the people of Dakar who were on the ship.

Fifty of the tops went to the rehabilitation department on the ship to use for hand rehab. The girl in the picture at rehab had surgeries to release the burns on her torso, arm and hand.

The ship has a full Academy for kids K-12. Another fifty tops went to the Academy to share with the students—and staff, LOL. Living on a ship for a year, or longer, doesn't leave much space for toys so these tops worked well for entertaining the children.

The kids in most of the other pictures are from the wards. They have only their beds for private space and their caretaker sleeps in a berth under their bed. One hour per day they get 'veranda' time, when they can be out on the deck for some fresh air and playtime. This is where I was able to share the tops with the kids and ward nurses. They were excited to have something small that kids can use at night for entertainment—most of these kids don't have anything from home to play with because they just don't have anything.

It was amazing to see the smiles light up from such a small gift.

It was very humbling and such an honor for our small club in Indiana, Pennsylvania, to bring such joy to kids and adults nearly halfway around the world. To be able to share our scraps of wood to help with rehab was an even bigger bonus.





## Pay it Forward: Generosity and Kindness

by Linda Ferber

Have you experienced a moment of unexpected generosity or kindness? At the SWAT symposium this past August, I witnessed such an event from WIT sponsor Niles Bottle Stoppers. Carl Jacobson, owner of Niles Bottle Stoppers, held a live event from his vendor booth during which he did a random drawing for a door prize of their products. The online winner asked Carl to pay it forward to a women turner attending the SWAT symposium. Carl asked me to help select the recipient, a young women that attended the WIT meeting. Amelia Stiefel immediately came to mind. Amelia is starting her woodturning journey and was excited and honored to be the recipient of these supplies.

We are thankful for the kindness and generosity of Carl and Niles Bottle Stoppers. We can continue this ripple through our community with the powerful potential of generosity and kindness by also utilizing the pay it forward philosophy.

Pictured Amelia Stiefel, her father and Carl Jacobson



---

## Monthly Demos for NorCal Woodturners WIT

by Noel DeSafey

### Green Wood Turning Class September 8th

Our club is fortunate enough to have a “Wood Gathering Crew” who goes out to local areas with downed trees and cuts and processes the wood into bowl blanks for members to use. Many of us don’t have the space for storing wood as it dries or even roughed bowls so we worked with some of their members to set up a green wood bowl turning class —turned, thin walled bowls that were designed to warp, creating character! They were kind enough to bring us some freshly cut wood and even spent the evening with us instructing us on the best methods for success. It opened up an entirely new niche of woodturning for us and now we are some of the first ones at the meetings, ready to pick out new pieces of green wood to work with!







## Arbortech Hands-On Class – September 17th

After a fantastic demo at our club's July Meeting and Ice Cream Social, Brian from Arbortech graciously agreed to a hands-on spoon-making class for our WIT group, making an entire experience of it for us! He arrived with custom t-shirts made for all of us and proceeded to cover a large table with Arbortech tools for us to work with for the day. He explained how each tool functioned and then instructed us on how to use each to accomplish our goals. He spent several hours with us as we each created our very own custom spoon!





## Pyrography Class – October 1st

Another member and former school teacher in our club also does pyrography that she often incorporates into some of the most beautiful and creative pieces you've seen. It was such a treat when she agreed to host a small group of eight at her house. We had a tour of her home gallery and an instructional lesson on pyrography followed by a hands on session where we were all able to try out a variety of wood burners and tips. After a fantastic day of burning, she invited us back for a follow up session the next month! In the meantime many of us invested in our very own woodburning pen and when we returned for our follow up session we were ready to burn wood. Several members even worked on embellishing wig stands that we had previously turned. Our mentor was even gracious enough to gift each of us with a turned acorn with the homework of burning it and bringing it to our club meeting in February when she does a presentation for the general member meeting.





## Jimmy Clewes Workshop – October 7-9

Once again, a small group of four of us headed to Las Vegas to take another Jimmy Clewes workshop—two of us were repeat students! Despite several hours of flight delays, they finally decided our “dented” plane was ok and we were off to Vegas. Despite getting into our hotel at 1:00 a.m. we were up, ready and excited for a full day of wood turning. We stayed at the Palace Station Hotel and were able to walk back and forth each day for woodturning, busily chatting about what we were going to work on that day, or reviewing what we had done, comparing notes and inspiring new ideas along the way. We all started with the same project—an ogee bowl with shou shugi ban and colored dyes. From there we all worked on our own projects but broke each day at noon for a delicious home cooked meal from Jimmy’s lovely wife Mary. After 3 days of creativity we carefully packed up our newly turned treasures and headed for the airport, ready to return to our regular schedules. It was a fantastic Columbus Day weekend, filled with learning, creativity, and bonding between us four ladies!





## Pewter Embellishment – October 14

One of our creative club members incorporates pewter into his turnings and has been showing off his bowls at club meetings for some time now. I was quite excited when I asked him if he was willing to do an in-person demo for some WIT members and he agreed. I was even more excited when he told us all to bring a small bowl, turned on the outside, and still on the chuck so that we could each try our hands at making our own pewter embellished bowl! We arrived at his shop (an unbelievable space in itself) and were treated to a table of goodies prepared by his wife, just for us. After going through the entire process Brian worked with each one of us individually to make our own pewter design in the bowls we had brought. We designed our pieces, each melted pewter, poured it into our bowl and then turned the outside, bringing it back to round again. Our homework was to finish the inside of our bowls. We had a great time, enjoyed delicious snacks and learned an entire new process to embellish our woodturning. As a bonus, we were even surprised with special glasses to wear to view the eclipse before we started turning!





# Women in Turning - From the Archives

## Interviews

This article appeared in *American Woodturner*  
Volume 1, Issue 4, 1987: pp 12-13.

Merryll Saylan, Page Editor

### An Interview with Gail Redman



A few years back, I did research into the role women played in the Arts and Crafts movement. The Victorian era, the Arts and Crafts, its connection to our recent crafts movement has always fascinated me; to learn that women did woodworking and woodturning over a 100 years ago is very gratifying. When David Ellsworth, President's Page (Sept. 86) mentions with tongue in cheek that he had not located any documentation "that woodturning has ever been anything but a totally male sport", I had my subject and first interview for the *American Woodturner*.

The roles of women in the growth and development of the "Arts and Crafts Movement" was more involved than I had realized. I had realized that the arts movement, itself, was a reaction to the Industrial Revolution, to the differences between products made by hand or by machine, between quality and individuality versus quantity and uniformity. Art and beauty was thought to be a solution, tame the machine by applying design to its products. Schools of art and design were started; clubs, guilds, exhibitions proliferated.

During this period, women gained social recognition, status, or security through marriage. Ruskin thought women and the home represented peace and shelter. William Morris believed women enjoyed looking lovely, having children, and managing a home skillfully. It was considered wrong for women to work; work was considered disgraceful. But England had a population crisis. *The Art Journal* said women outnumbered men by a million, creating a group of "destitute gentlewomen" who were incapable of making a living. The work they did must be "suitable" and not be crass. It was "acceptable" to be a teacher or a governess; art became a "suitable" occupation. Women flocked to the new art and design schools. They became involved in the clubs and guilds. Art education became popular for women

even if they did not need money because it was thought it would give them discipline, patience, and obedience. One association, the Home Arts & Industry, trained artisans with the goal to encourage the growth of handicraft and to raise the standards of taste. It sponsored annual exhibitions where Charles Voysey displayed furniture designs along side those of the Hon. Mabel de Gray.

In the United States, women were thought better off and were discouraged from education and career. We did not have the population problems of England. Handicrafts became a popular outlet for women. The ideal of design and industry was similar to England, resulting in the flourishing of art and design schools. Woodworking — woodcarving in particular — was on the curricula for women. The *American Architect and Building News*, in a review of the Women's Pavilion at the World's Centennial, 1877, "the question was naturally asked, 'Have women turned cabinet-makers?' It could be answered in the affirmative, for several of these pieces were entirely made by women." The woodcarving program in the School of Design in Cincinnati in the 1870s, played a big part in the Movement. The Master, Henry Fry, felt that women's hands are better "fitted for the development of the beautiful in art."

*The Art Journal*, 1861. "In the lowest classes, [employment] has already been solved. There, the necessity of earning their own bread is so apparent from their earliest years that women accept their lot with patience, and are able and willing to work at whatever offers itself. Rejecting nothing, and being competent to most things, they fear nothing, except it be illness and that only because it incapacitates them from their daily labor." Manufacturers did not object to the wider employment of women in all kinds of work or the same kind of suitability required for the "gentlewomen." One manufacturer said, "Why object, women work for lower wages than men." In a census report of England in mid-century, over 4,000 women were employed in the woodworking trades: 2500 women were in the fields of cabinetmaking, chairmaking and upholstery. There were over 100 turners with fields such as umbrella makers, walking sticks, and parasols employing over 500.

One woman, Esther Tonkins, was a British entrepreneur and artisan. She specialized in turnery. The shop was licensed in her name in 1805 after taking over from Richard Tonkins. To license a shop, one had to be a Master. Her shop specialized in finished products to supply building carpenters and furniture makers. With this brief history — designed to connect the past with the present, I should like to introduce the subject of this interview. Gail Redman runs a shop in San Francisco that is quite similar to that of Ester Tonkins.

Gail Redman started as a second grade teacher working in a tough neighborhood with a lot of stress. She took a high school evening woodshop class to relax, and started turning. She remained in these evening classes for three years. She quit teaching and traveled in Southeast Asia for 9 months. On her travels she studied woodcarving in Indonesia. A friend had emigrated to New Zealand and let her know that she could



probably get a woodturning job there, so she moved to Auckland in 1974.

She got a job with Matloe Woodturning under Master Dave Wilcox. He came from a long line of English woodturners. Gail told them she had turned at night for three years but she lacked shop experience. They liked her, kept her on and trained her. When you start as an apprentice, you start by sanding, then move up to roughing out, then to the simpler mass produced items. The firm specialized in very traditional items: parts for furniture, such as coat stands. Gail remembers turning what seemed like thousands of salt and pepper shakers. She remained there for 15 months before returning to San Francisco where she got a job with Haas Wood & Ivory Works, one of the city's oldest firms. Victor Lauteri was the Master in the shop and took Gail under his wing. Victor spoke very little English so Gail enrolled in night school to learn Italian.


In 1977, Gail decided to open her own business, a rather humble beginning in a large garage. She had brought back tools and a lathe from New Zealand. The lathe was the last one built by a machinist before he retired, and is still her favorite. A friend of Gail's helped her set up the shop, but since he could only work on the bed for the lathe on the weekends, Gail could not turn. She spent a few months "pounding the pavement" going to every contractor and architect known to do Victorian work as well as to furniture makers. She would cruise the streets and walk construction sites. This approach was so unusual that many of these people did their best to help her and to refer work to her.

In 1984, Gail hired a woodturner, Grant Jacobs, from New Zealand. He had gone through the four year apprenticeship program, and Gail's old Master tested him before she hired and sponsored Grant in the U.S.

The work that comes out of the shop varies from week to week, but the bread and butter items are balusters, corner blocks, and table legs. She's turned juggles for jugglers, lots of drawer knobs, and some rosewood drumsticks. Her favorite jobs are the "mystery jobs;" items for inventors who never let on how they're really to be used.


Gail has a number of lathes. One has an 8 1/2 foot capacity, so she is often able to turn columns — particularly with the current popularity of Post Modern design. Gail is able to complete most balusters in 12 minutes or so, including the time for marking, turning, and sanding. She has been known to do them in 8 minutes. Corner blocks take about 3-4 minutes, complete. Posts and caps, 5 1/2 feet by 6 feet, take about 30 minutes. Grant can turn about 96 blocks a day and about 4 balusters an hour. As with us all, the pace of her workshop is strongly affected by the coming and going of customers, and by frequent phone calls.

In "The Art of Woodturning" show at the American Craft Museum, 1983, Gail had a whole balustrade there, consisting of newel post, a whole row of balusters, and handrail, plus a series of rosettes and finials. She is also a member of Artistic License in San Francisco, a Guild of highly skilled artisans

trained in Victorian architectural and decorative art, and restoration. She also did a lot of work for Preservation Park in Oakland. Gail is married and has an adorable 9 month old little girl. It was rather enjoyable seeing Gail in coveralls when pregnant — and still turning. 

**2nd ANNUAL**

# SWITZERLAND TOUR




for  
**TURNERS, CARVERS & WOODWORKERS**

Led by  
**WAYNE & MARLIES BARTON**

**SPECTACULAR & INFORMATIVE 15 DAYS**

For More Info:  
**WOODWORKING ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA**  
P.O. Box 706, Plymouth, NH 03264 — (603) 536-3876

## MIKE SHULER



**CELEBRATING AMERICAN WOOD ARTISTS**

THE ARTS

AND

THE GALLERY

GALLERY

**JOANNE RAPP**

---



---



---

TELEPHONE (602) 949-1262

4222 NORTH MARSHALL WAY SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85251

# Women in Turning - Safety Tips

## A Word About Toy Safety

When turning toys that are intended for young children, such as spinning tops, dolls, rattles, ball-and-cup games, etc., ensure the toys are safe for young children to play with. Information about toy safety is available from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission ([cpsc.gov](http://cpsc.gov)). Another resource is [KidsHealth.org](http://KidsHealth.org). Generally, imagine what a curious, clever child might do, and take safeguarding steps accordingly. Make each doll as safe and strong as possible. Here are some factors to consider:

- Ensure any small additions/accessories such as buttons are secure and cannot be removed, as they could become a choking hazard.
- Ensure metal components, especially rare-earth magnets, are absolutely secure and cannot be removed.
- Choose child-friendly, nontoxic finishes.
- Take steps to safeguard against choking hazards for small children. This could take the form of a small toy as one unit or smaller components that could be separated. [KidsHealth.org](http://KidsHealth.org) advises, "Toys should be large enough—at least 1 1/4" (32mm) in diameter and 2 1/4" (6cm) in length—so that they can't be swallowed or lodged in the windpipe. A small-parts tester, or choke tube, can determine if a toy is too small. These tubes are designed to be about the same diameter as a child's windpipe. If an object fits inside the tube, then it's too small for a young child. If you can't find a choke tube, ask a salesperson for help or use a toilet paper roll tube."

---

## Videos from AAW Video Source & YouTube

[How to Make a Cryptex Puzzle Box: Carl Jacobsen](#)

[Making a Flinstones Car: Carl Jacobsen](#)

[Making a Spin Top: Eli Avisera](#)

[Turning a Wooden Train Whistle: Cip Mendez](#)

[Turning a Minion: Woodslee Summercraft](#)

*"The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain. When I'm inspired, I get excited because I can't wait to see what I'll come up with next. Find out who you are and do it on purpose."*

*— Dolly Parton*



## From the Editor:

November is a month for reflecting on things for which we are thankful, and for giving to others. In this issue of the newsletter, the Women in Turning committee honors our women veterans for their service. Our Wig Stand Initiative, launched in March 2023 and at the 2023 AAW symposium, is building momentum. We also have contributions about other efforts for charity involving women in turning. Thank you to all who contributed information and photos to share in this newsletter.

I've initiated a new section for the newsletter: *From the Archives*. I've been looking through the American Woodturner archive to find articles that focused on women turners. To my delight, I discovered the columns by Merryll Saylen in the early issues of the journal. One major benefit of membership in AAW is access to the publications archive. If you are not yet a member, please join so you can take advantage of this perquisite. If you are already a member and have not yet explored the archive, take a look – you'll be amazed by this wonderful resource.

Many thanks to the contributors for this edition of the newsletter: Marie Anderson, Deb Chapin, Pam Dergen, Noel DeSafey, Linda Ferber, Daryl Gray, Dawn Greenberg, Brenda Keech, Tracey Lee, Glenn Lucas, Robin McIntyre, Chris Price, and Elizabeth Weber. A special thank you to Jean LeGwin for help with copy editing, and to members of the WIT committee for proofreading.

I'm always looking for articles to put into the newsletter. If you have news to share about your local WIT group, a story about your journey in woodturning, tips to share, or projects to share, please send them to me. The newsletter is only interesting if we share our activities with one another.

***SO.....Please do send me information from your WIT groups and stories about your events and successes. I'd also like schedules for demonstrations and classes you teach.***



**AAW's 38th International  
Woodturning  
Symposium**  
**May 23-26, 2024 | Portland, OR**  
Register by April 5 to save up to \$120

*"Still, I wonder if more women artists, musicians and writers aren't household names because we don't have enough faith in our own pursuits to give ourselves the time we desperately need to be transformed by a creative vision. Maybe that glass ceiling isn't really made of glass at all, but of sticky little fingers, dishes piled in the sink, and mortgages that demand two incomes."*

*- Holly Robinson Peete*

# Opportunities for Women in Turning

## Classes, Workshops, Exhibits, Demonstrations, and Grants

### AAW: Resources for Remote Demonstrations:

<https://www.woodturner.org/Woodturner/Chapters/Chapter-Officers-Toolkit/Chapter-Remote-Demonstrations.aspx>

#### Arrowmont:

9–14 June: Dixie Biggs

30 June–12 July: Beth Ireland

13–18 October: Elizabeth Weber

27 October–1 November: Kalia Kliban

#### John C. Campbell Folk School:

2024

24–30 March: Andi Wolfe

31 March–April 6: Sally Ault

21–28 April: Cheryl Lewis

12–17 May: Dianne Friend

17–22 November: Dixie Biggs

#### Peters Valley School of Craft

21–25 June: Kimberly Winkle

6–8 September: Janine Wang

#### Marc Adams School

15–19 April: Dixie Biggs

20–21 April: Dixie Biggs & Betty Scarpino

10–14 June: Jennifer Shirley

5–9 August: Jennifer Shirley

9–13 September: Donna Zils Banfield

21–25 October: Sharon Doughie

#### Snow Farm Craft School

13–18 October: Dixie Biggs

### **Calls for Entries:**

[American Association of Woodturners Exhibits](#)

The WIT Committee would like to cordially invite you to join the American Association of Woodturners. It is an organization that has a lot to offer women turners. Not only for the reasons listed on these pages, but because we believe in the community we have within the organization.

Did you know that less than 10% of the membership are women? We want to grow our representation within AAW, and we need YOU! Please join us.

There are several levels of membership, depending on your needs. To learn more about these options, click on the [membership page for AAW](#).

### AAW Grants available for WIT

Under-represented Populations Outreach Grants: These grants may be requested for events such as activities or workshops to promote women in turning. All AAW Grant applications are reviewed annually. However, since these events may be time-sensitive, such grant applications will be considered periodically during the year. More details are available on the website. Grant recipients are expected to disperse information about AAW, and promote its activities. Grants cannot be used for food or personal expenses, or to pay a stipend to the grant applicant.

WIT AAW Membership Grants: To encourage women to join AAW, the WIT Committee offers a limited number of WIT-sponsored half-price one-year “General” AAW memberships to women. WIT is also offering at no cost a one-year “General” AAW membership to women who join AAW for the first time AND join their local chapter for the first time.

### **Eligibility**

To be eligible, a grant recipient must be a woman who has never previously been a member of AAW.

### **Process**

Only the chapter AAW WIT Liaison, chapter president, or chapter vice-president may request the grant. If you have questions, please email [wit@woodturner.org](mailto:wit@woodturner.org).



*“Be first and be lonely.”*  
- Ginni Rometty



## Endnotes:

**Encourage WIT.** The mission of WIT is to encourage and retain women in woodturning. Here are some suggestions of how you can help: 1) Introduce a friend or neighbor to woodturning by bringing her to a chapter meeting, 2) accompany her to an open shop session, 3) teach her in your own shop, and/or 4) offer to be her mentor for a year.

If there is a new member in your chapter who is not yet a member of AAW, tell her about AAW's 90-day guest membership: <https://www.woodturner.org/Woodturner/2020%20Grants/WIT%20membership.aspx>.

Pay it forward. Instead of telling a new member about the guest membership, buy her a membership. In return, she can pay it forward by bringing another new member into the AAW. This generous gift may be the beginning of a lifetime of enjoyment for many new woodturners.

**Did you know?** There are many benefits of AAW membership, including a world-class journal, publications on techniques, videos, a directory of learning opportunities, and other online tools. Check out all the opportunities for members at [Why Join AAW?](#). If you've not had an opportunity to explore the AAW website, take a few minutes to look around at <http://www.woodturner.org>. The [Women in Turning website](#) is hosted by the AAW site. You'll find all our newsletters, information about WIT outreach grants, and many other goodies there.

### **Diversity Statement:**

The American Association of Woodturners (AAW) is dedicated to advancing the art and craft of woodturning worldwide by providing opportunities for education, information, and organization to those interested in turning wood. The AAW welcomes and encourages participation by all individuals regardless of age, race, culture, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental difference, politics, religion, socioeconomic status, or subculture. We strive to cultivate an organization built on mentorship, encouragement, tolerance, and mutual respect, thereby engendering a welcoming environment for all. The AAW further promotes diversity in all areas of activity, including membership, leadership, committees, staff, outreach, public engagement, and recruitment, within the association as a whole and within each chapter.

(Adopted April 19, 2019)

## Women in Turning Committee Contact Information:

Kimberly Winkle (Chair)

Email: [wimkinkle@yahoo.com](mailto:wimkinkle@yahoo.com)

Marie Anderson

Email: [danmar12@yahoo.com](mailto:danmar12@yahoo.com)

Dixie Biggs

Email: [dixie@dixiebiggs.com](mailto:dixie@dixiebiggs.com)

Linda Ferber

Email: [lindajaneferber@gmail.com](mailto:lindajaneferber@gmail.com)

Jean LeGwin

Email: [jlegwin@ec.rr.com](mailto:jlegwin@ec.rr.com)

Robin McIntyre

Email: [robinmcintyre@comcast.net](mailto:robinmcintyre@comcast.net)

Tib Shaw

Email: [tib@woodturner.org](mailto:tib@woodturner.org)

Andi Wolfe (Newsletter Editor)

Email: [andiwolfe@yahoo.com](mailto:andiwolfe@yahoo.com)

Linda Britt (ex-officio)

Email: [lbbritt@comcast.net](mailto:lbbritt@comcast.net)

*"Just because you  
make a good plan,  
doesn't mean  
that's what's  
gonna happen."*

*- Taylor Swift*

# AAW

# AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

WIT Newsletter Editor: Andi Wolfe - [andiwolfe@yahoo.com](mailto:andiwolfe@yahoo.com)