

Women in Turning Newsletter

Summer 2022



Women in Turning (WIT) - The first seven years

by Kathleen Duncan

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF WOODTURNERS

At the Phoenix symposium in 2014 a small group of about 20 women met to discuss women's issues within AAW. There was a consensus that something was needed to make women feel more welcome within the woodturning community and AAW. Some of the ideas that came out of that meeting were a symposium for women, a virtual women's chapter, a newsletter, committee within AAW, weekend retreat, and an active social media presence.

Kathleen Duncan was elected to the AAW Board of Directors (BOD) beginning in January 2015. Once she was on the BOD, several women asked her to work on women's behalf and ask the AAW BOD to establish a committee to address women's issues. Although the AAW president did not whole-heartedly endorse a committee solely for women's issues, he finally agreed to add a committee to focus on women's issues to AAW's other committees and appointed Kathleen to be the first chair starting in September. One of the goals of the committee was to increase the number of women within AAW. At that time, less than 8% of the membership was women. The initial committee was comprised of several of the women who had attended the Phoenix meeting and it became known as WIT (Women in Turning). There was also an existing and active private Facebook (FB) group known as *Women in Turning*. The WIT committee had the ability to fundraise as a nonprofit, have support of the AAW for programs, and fall under AAW's insurance coverage.

The first order of business for the new committee was to write a **mission statement**. It is as follows:

WIT is dedicated to encouraging and assisting women in their pursuit of turning, to sharing ideas and processes to further members' skills and creativity, and to increasing participation of women in the field of woodturning.

EOG Auction Collaboratives

Women recognized that the activities envisioned at the Phoenix meeting would require some seed or "egg money" and decided to embark on a fund-raising project, *Egg Crate*, to be auctioned at the 2015 Pittsburg symposium. Women throughout the country responded to calls on the FB page, and in the private FB group, to make turned eggs. Women made and submitted so many eggs, that it required 3 decorative crates to display them. The monies from the auction went into a restricted AAW account. *Egg Crate* sold for \$9,000 and 49 women participated in the project.

With the success of the *Egg Crate* (2015), the committee undertook a second EOG auction collaborative, *Fruits of Our Labor* (2016), which was auctioned at the Atlanta symposium for \$12,000. Fifty-two women participated. After the symposium, the committee produced a catalogue with individual images of all the pieces in *Fruits of Our Labor*. An on-demand publisher produced the catalogue and sales revenues went to the WIT account.

In 2017, 43 women contributed to the *Open and Shut* collaborative, a collection of turned boxes which was auctioned for \$9,500 at the Kansas City Symposium. Finally in 2018, 49 women contributed spin tops to *Topsy Turvy* which was auctioned for \$3,000 at the Portland Symposium. Once again, the committee produced on-demand catalogues for both collaboratives.

With *Topsy Turvy*, the committee decided not to pursue additional collaboratives for the immediate future.



Left: Fruits of Our Labors; Right: Open and Shut, open and closed

Photos by Dixie Biggs

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Newsletters

The committee produced its first newsletter in September 2015. Initially the newsletter was a bimonthly publication, but by the following year it became a much larger, very informative quarterly newsletter. The mailing list for the newsletters was an email list of persons (both AAW and non-AAW members) who requested the newsletter, maintained by the AAW staff. When the new AAW computer system was introduced in 2020, the original list was dropped. Since then, staff generates a WIT email list as needed, which includes all paid AAW members who indicate "female" on their personal profile. (The [newsletter archive](#) can be accessed from the Women in Turning site at AAW.)

RAP and Liaison

RAP (Regional Ambassador Program) began in 2015 with the goal of trying to help women woodturners network regionally. RAP ambassadors conducted WIT informational meetings at many of the regional symposia. There were two self-funded regional events at Arrowmont, and several women opened their shops for women in their area for small regional events.

In January 2018, the WIT committee began work to replace RAP with WIT liaisons. Liaisons were recruited from as many chapters as were willing to participate. The duties of liaisons include greeting and welcoming chapter newcomers, informing women members about upcoming WIT events and other turning events that might be of interest to women, and explaining the benefits of AAW membership. The WIT chair sends emails to liaisons as needed and asks them to forward the information to the women in their chapter. Liaisons are tracked with the AAW database. Staff must be informed when there are new liaisons or liaisons choose not to continue.

Hands-on Room

In 2016, WIT ran a hands-on room at the Atlanta symposium. Fifty-seven symposium attendees attended one or more of the seven rotations. This was funded through donations and the WIT EOG auction money. Lathes donated by Nova for the hands-on room were in turn donated as part of the EOG grants.

Exhibitions

As part of the WIT mission, the committee believes it is important to promote turned art by women. In 2017, AAW curator Tib Shaw submitted a proposal to the Appalachian Craft Center for a juried exhibit, *Turnabout – Women at the Lathe*. The proposal was accepted, and the show, curated by Dixie Biggs, Sharon Doughtie, and Tib Shaw, ran from January through March 2018. The exhibit subsequently traveled to two other venues.

A second invitational exhibition, *Women in Wood*, in Port Townsend, WA, and Tacoma, WA, 2018.



Turnabout: Women at the Lathe, a blended invitational and juried exhibition celebrating both known and new voices in our field. View the catalog online [here](#).

Turnabout premiered at the Appalachian Center for Craft (ACC), in Smithville, Tennessee, from January 15, 2018 – March 12, 2018. Next stop was the AAW Gallery in St. Paul, June 3-July 29; and at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, August 10-October 10, 2018.

In the image, by columns, left to right:

Col 1: Janice Levi, Martha Collins, Jeanne Douphrate, Marilyn Campbell.

Col. 2: Andi Wolfe, Ena Dubnoff, Dixie Biggs, Kailee Bosch, Louise Hibbert, Sally Burnett.

Col. 3: Liz Kent, Helga Winter, Hayley Smith/Louise Hibbert, Barbara Dill, Kimberly Winkle, Tania Radda, Kristen LeVier.

Col. 4: Janine Wang, Katie Adams, Cindy Pei-Si Young, Diana Friend, Donna Zils Banfield.

Col. 5: Melissa Engler, Jennifer Shirley, Sharon Doughtie, Betty Scarpino, Grace Parlman. Congratulations!

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Grants

In 2016 WIT established grant opportunities to help defray the costs to individuals, groups, schools, and local AAW chapters for sponsoring events that support WIT committee goals. A separate WIT grants committee processed grants on a quarterly basis. Late in 2017, the committee began offering membership grants requested by chapter presidents or liaisons which paid the first year AAW membership for never-before AAW members who also joined the chapter. In 2019, all grants were consolidated and handled by the AAW Grants committee. Because timeliness is frequently a factor, grant requests for events for under-served populations fell under the WIT grant category. These are handled by a WIT grant committee with recommendations to the AAW Grant chair. WIT also has a representative on the AAW grant committee.

EXCHANGE

In September 2018, WIT held the first WIT **EXCHANGE** at Arrowmont. The **EXCHANGE** was conceived as a participatory event with the goal of stimulating creativity by exchanging competencies, experiences, and ideas. All skill levels from absolute beginner to professional were welcome. Word pairs consisting of a noun and a modifier (each conceptual with many possible interpretations) were used as inspiration for one-day projects for groups made up of varying experience levels.

Because this event was unlike any other, it is described in detail here. After months of planning, 39 women gathered for the Wednesday through Saturday event. The first evening, the women were divided into teams of three with a beginner, intermediate, and advanced turner in each group. The inspirational words, 50 nouns and 50 modifiers, had been engraved on wooden tiles and placed in separate bags. Each team drew a word from each bag and used the pair as the inspiration for the projects to be worked on the following day. The next morning, each group received an identical package of wood: a 3" X 12" bat blank, a 12" X 12" X 4" platter blank, and 4" X 4" X 8" chunk of green wood. Teams had access to 15 full-size lathes, 15 small lathes, large and small power tools, carving tools, power carvers, micromotors, piercing equipment, paints, and other found and donated materials. As they worked, groups documented the work and processes with photos which were downloaded and converted to PowerPoint presentations at the end of the day. After dinner, the women gathered for the slide show and presentation and discussion of the creative process of each project. Following that, the women were divided into new groups and drew tiles for the next day's projects. This was repeated, giving everyone the opportunity to work on three projects in a different group each day. Committee members served as facilitators and acquired all the materials and equipment needed for the event. The fee paid by participants covered food, an **EXCHANGE** logo tee shirt, and defrayed some of cost of materials and facilities. The final evening there was a silent auction of donated materials and some art. Money budgeted from the WIT account plus the auction receipts covered a large portion of the expenses of the Arrowmont facilities.

In 2019, WIT had the second **EXCHANGE** at Arrowmont with 50 women. A third **EXCHANGE** was planned for 2020 but had to be cancelled because of the COVID pandemic.

Following the WIT **EXCHANGES**, several clubs hosted similar smaller events based on concepts from the WIT **EXCHANGE**.



2018 Exchange participants on left, 2019 on the right. Photos by Andi Wolfe

Virtual EXCHANGE

Since there could not be an in-person **EXCHANGE** in 2020, the committee decided to have a virtual **EXCHANGE**. The concepts were the same, but implementation had to be completely rewritten. Most women created their own groups although some were assigned by facilitators. Groups chose their words from a list of combinations of nouns and modifiers. There was no limit on size of material used. Time was extended from 24 hours to several weeks. This allowed pieces to be mailed or shipped, in some cases, intercontinentally. Facilitators hosted two Zoom sessions per week to answer questions and offer encouragement. One session dealt with photographing pieces. Another session dealt with using PowerPoint for making

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final presentations. These were delivered as five-minute speed talks, hosted by one of the committee members. Sixty-two women from seven countries participated in the first Virtual **EXCHANGE**. The committee sent logo patches and certificates to all participants.

There was a second Virtual **EXCHANGE** in 2021 in which 88 women from seven countries participated. The **EXCHANGE** was expanded to include women who were not wood turners but were artists or craftspersons in another medium. Participants registered online and were assigned groups. Words were drawn using a random generator. Again, facilitators offered twice-weekly Zoom sessions and the final presentations were PowerPoint speed talks.

PowerPoint presentations from both Virtual **EXCHANGES** are available online.

WIT Presents

With the pandemic and social isolation, WIT needed to re-think its activities. Deviating from skills-based turning demonstrations, WIT hosted the first online WIT Presents in March, 2020. Focusing on the work, inspirations, and personal journeys of women turners, a slide presentation is followed by a Q&A period, and often a shop tour. Eighteen women artists have been featured so far. All WIT Presents events are free and open to all. Past events are available for replay: http://tiny.cc/WIT_Events. WIT Presents is a continuing program.

In 2021, WIT conducted a session on mentoring at the Virtual AAW Symposium.

Committee Members

The following women have served at various times on the WIT committee: Elizabeth Amigo, Marie Anderson, Sally Ault, Dixie Biggs, Linda Britt, Janet Collins, Kathleen Duncan (chair), Linda Ferber, Suzanne Kahn, Jean LeGwin, Betty Scarpino, Tib Shaw, Andi Wolfe, and Lynne Yamaguchi. Kimberly Winkle is the current chair of the committee. AAW and WIT are indebted to their contributions and service.

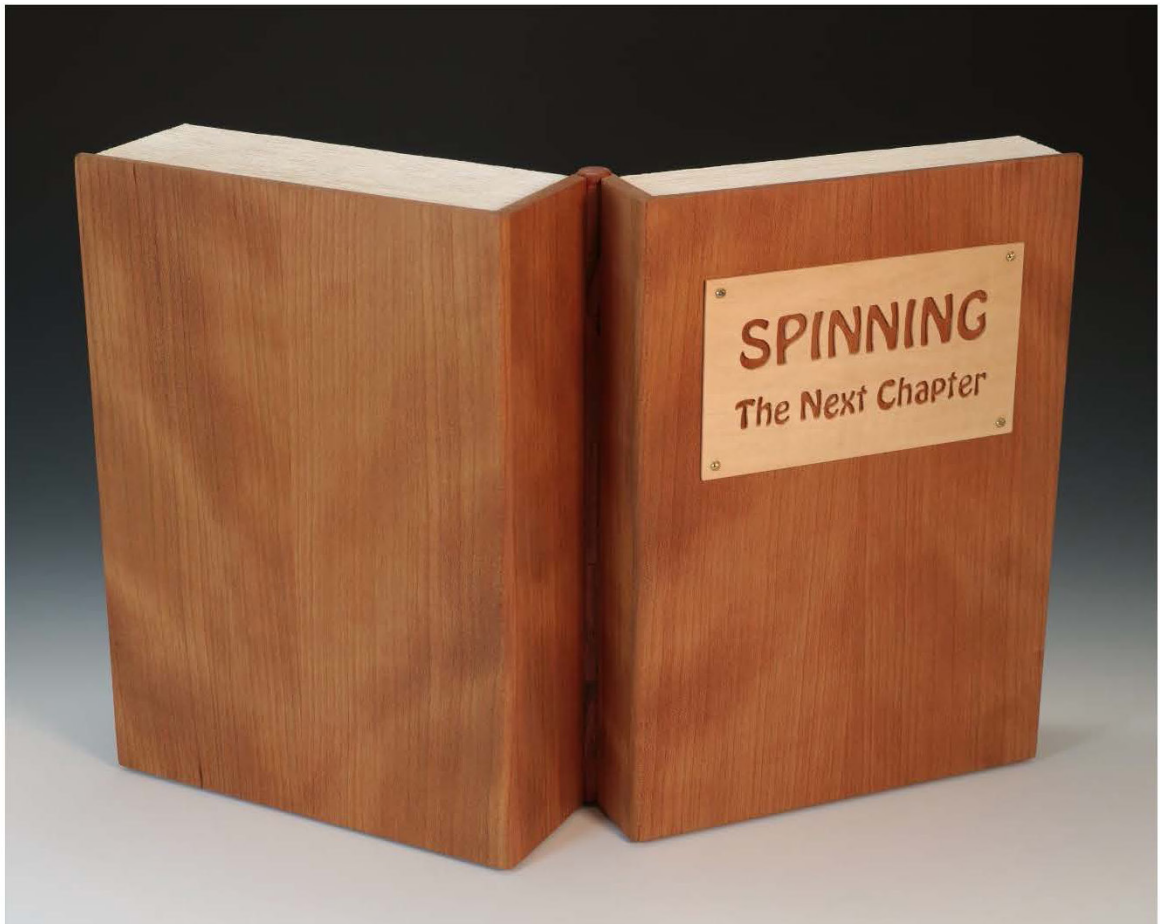
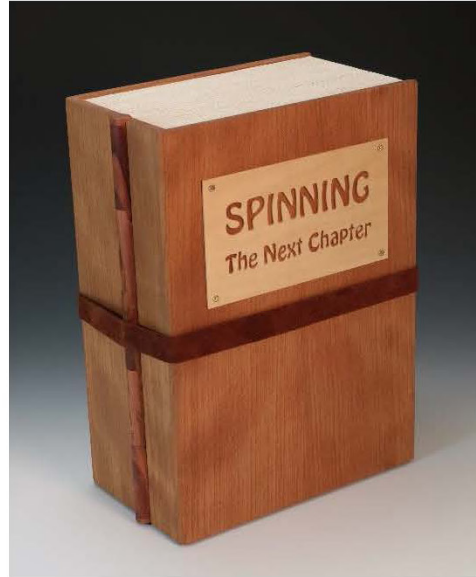
Spinning the Next Chapter

As you can tell from the preceding article, Kathleen Duncan's contribution to AAW in leading the WIT committee for the first seven years was over the top. To recognize her contributions, current and previous members of the committee presented Kathleen with a gift from the heart at the 2022 AAW symposium in Chattanooga, TN. We had to be stealthy to pull this off as a surprise, but we succeeded in doing so. After the WIT session on Thursday evening, we asked Kathleen to step into the back hallway so we could do a group photo. That is when we presented her with a collection of spin tops packaged in a wonderful box made by Dixie Biggs (see Dixie's photos at the end of the article). The symposium photos, courtesy of Andi Wolfe (left) and Matt Deighton (right) are below. Tops were contributed by Marie Anderson, Sally Ault, Dixie Biggs, Linda Britt/Steve Pritchard, Janet Collins, Linda Ferber, Jean LeGwin, Betty Scarpino, Andi Wolfe, and Lynne Yamaguchi. An illustrated note from Elizabeth Amigo was also included.



L: Kathleen, receiving her gift. Right: Past and current members of the WIT committee from L to R: Kimberly Winkle, Betty Scarpino, Marie Anderson, Sally Ault, Andi Wolfe, Linda Ferber, Linda Britt, Jean LeGwin, and Kathleen Duncan.

Top box for Kathleen







1. Janet Collins



2. Andi Wolfe



3. Linda Ferber



4. Betty Scarpino



5. Linda Britt/Steve Pritchard



6. Jean LeGwin



7. Dixie Biggs



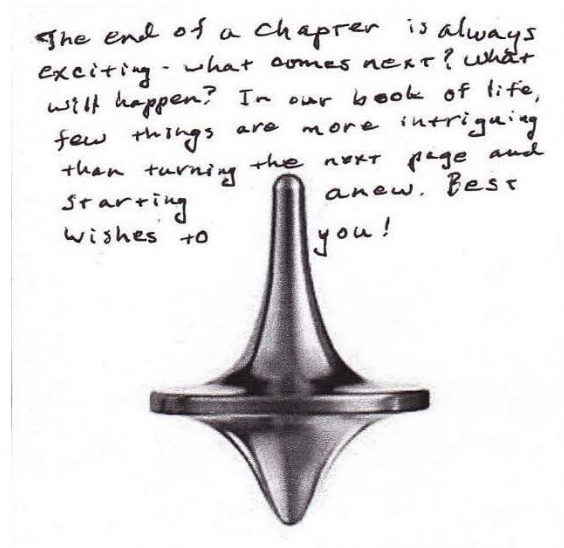
8. Sally Ault



9. Marie Anderson



10. Lynne Yamaguchi – *Drunken bowl....spins!!*



11. Elizabeth Amigo - The perfect sentiment card!

Project photos by Dixie Biggs



Tops in Tops

Simple spinning tops are one of the oldest toys known to humankind. They have been found in archeological digs all over the world: ancient clay tops have been found in Iraq (3500 BCE) and in China (1250 BCE.) The oldest known wooden top was found in the Egyptian tomb of King Tutankhamun. (Tut's tomb, c1320 BCE, also has the earliest known depiction of a lathe.)

Although often thought of solely as a children's pastime, tops are also central to gambling games like "Put and Take", the traditional Hanukkah game of dreidel, spinning *gasing* (large, heavy tops) in Borneo and Java, and fierce battling top competitions in Japan. Fortune-telling and divination through the use of tops is also culturally widespread.

Wooden tops are usually turned on the lathe, and although they are a fun beginner's project, tops can also engage advanced turners, whose specialty tops can fetch hundreds of dollars. Finding that perfect balance of weight, materials, proportions, and appearance can be elusive!

This display features tops made for Linda Ferber, who retired from her position as program director for the American Association of Woodturners in 2020. A secret message went out to our members, inviting them to send a top to Linda. To keep her new collection manageable, we asked that the tops be under 2.75" tall. Most met this limit!

The work shown here includes everything from a simple spinner made during a first lesson, to tops by professionals with work in museum collections here and abroad. In this way, the tops are a perfect reflection of how Linda sees the AAW: a place for everyone with an interest in turning to feel welcome and at home.



GUIDE TO TOP MAKERS



2 Emiliano Achaval



6 Sally Ault



8 Helen Bailey



10 Scott Barrett



13 John Beaver



14 Dixie Biggs



15 Kade Bolger



17 Jason Breach



19 Graham Brooke



24 Pat Carroll



27 Andy Chen



29 Jim Christiansen



30 Jason Clark



31 Gene Colley



36 Barbara Dill



38 Kelly Dunn

Photos by Tib Shaw



40 Guenter Etsner



42 Joe Fleming



43 Karen Frietas



44 Tom Gall



46 Dewey Garrett



47 Warren Gerber



49 Rosanne Gold



39 Melissa Engler Graeme



51 Troy Grimwood



52 Gary Gunenther



53 Andrew Hall



56 Phillip Hauser



60 Tim Heil



58 Kurt Hertzog



62 Burton Hovander



63 Paul Howard

Photos by Tib Shaw



69 Russ Johnson



73 Deborah & Jerry Kermode



76 Andy Kuby



79 Janice Levi



80 Cheryl Lewis



81 Kay Liggett



83 William Loitz



84 Rudy Lopez



87 Dale Lowe



91 Jeff Luedloff



101 Pat & Karen Miller



105 Brenda & Al Miotke



107 Leon Olsson



112 Bob Patros



116 S Gary Roberts



119 Jon Sauer

Photos by Tib Shaw



120 Betty Scarpino



123 Doug Schneider



124 Greg Schramek



125 Terry Scott



128 Tib Shaw



131 Tom & Marge Sloan



134 Christine Smith



135 Ken Staggs



142 Hy Tran



144 Tim Wadley



155 Walt Wager



146 Anne Warren



147 Scott Warren



148 Neil Wheeler



153 Larry Zahra

Photos by Tib Shaw

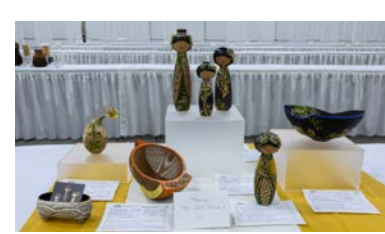


AAW 36th Annual International Woodturning Symposium

Chattanooga, Tennessee
June 23 - 26, 2022

Women in Turning at the Symposium, A Photo Essay by Andi Wolfe

Instant Gallery: artworks by Women in Turning



Women in
Turning at
the
Symposium





Above: For the Special Interest Night event on Thursday, WIT pioneered a hybrid format for our session. Robin McIntyre was our remote moderator, checking in via Zoom. Panelists in the room (L to R) were Janice Levi, Debra Higley-Feldman, and Daryl Gray. We also had participants watching the panel discussion remotely via Zoom. The focus was on mentoring and getting more involvement of women within AAW Chapters.

Middle: Ena Dubnoff received the Masters' Choice Award in the *Bridging the Gap* exhibit for her piece, *A World Divided*.

Below: Andi Wolfe received the People's Choice Award in the *Bridging the Gap* exhibit for her artwork, *Ambrosia*.

Women in Turning - Sharing Experiences

Cape Cod Woodturners WIT By Robin McIntyre

Six members of our WIT group gathered at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod on May 15 for an afternoon of turning, woodburning, and camaraderie. Everyone worked on different projects with mentoring for turners who needed some guidance. Despite masks, everyone was smiling and sharing problems and successes with their projects. We gave turnings to the Cultural Center for their gift shop as a thank you for hosting us.



Tennessee Association of Woodturners

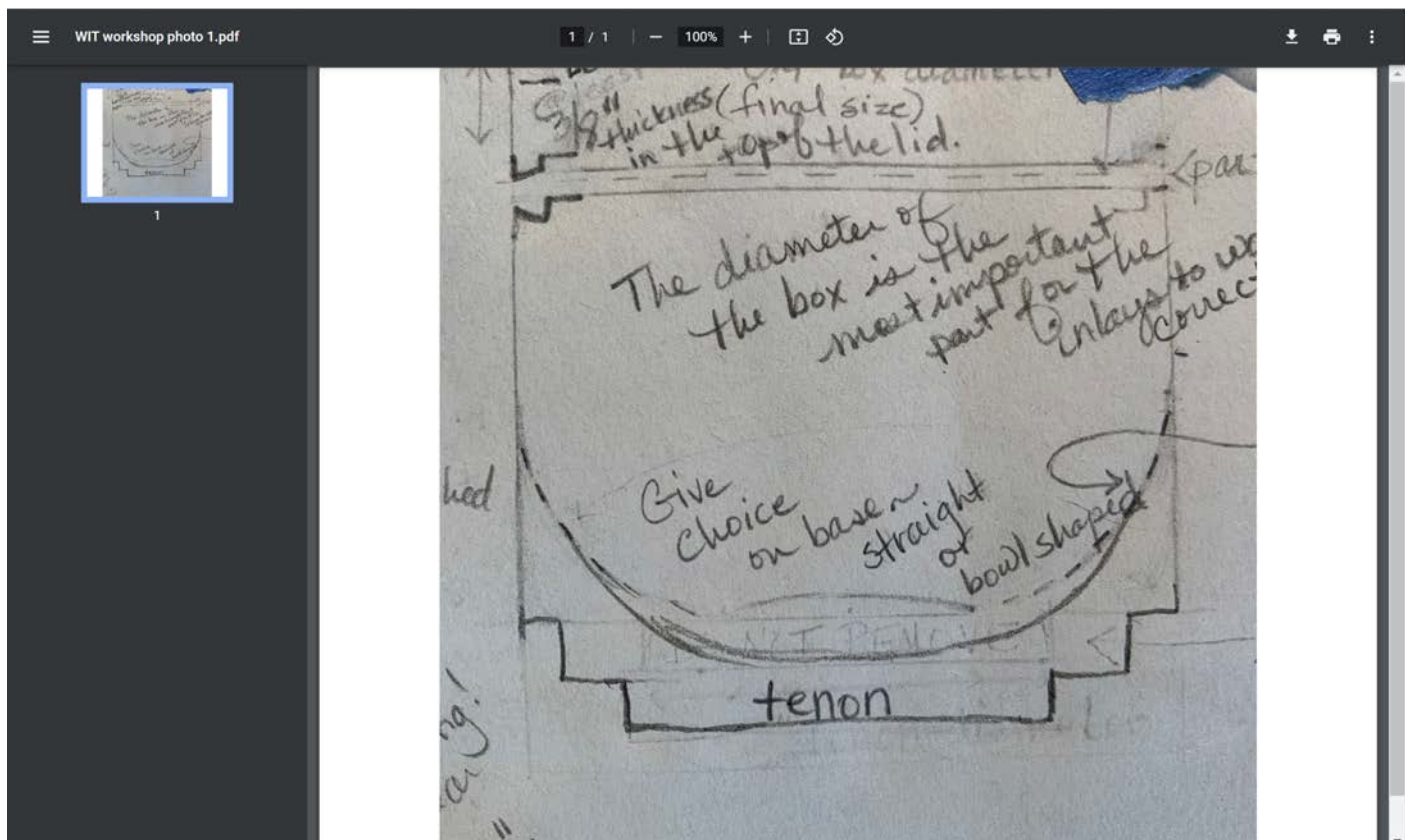
by Chris Price

The Tennessee Association of Woodturners and Women in Turning are hosting a workshop September 17th at the Clay Ladies Campus in Nashville, Tennessee.

Myra Orton will be the featured demonstrator. She will be demonstrating methods for turning a lidded box, and different techniques of embellishment, such as adding purfling (a detail that is typically added to musical instruments), and application of a spalted wood inlay as a medallion surrounded by pyrography detail. She will also demonstrate the use of abalone as a detail.

We will have 11 lathes available to us. Ten of them will be used by TAW/WIT members along with one potter from the Clay Ladies Campus. The additional attendee will be supported by the AAW/WIT/TAW as a new member. Three additional women have become members due to their interest in the workshop. The campus community is invited to attend as on-lookers and there will be several TAW members who will act as assistants.

The AAW/WIT committee awarded a grant to support the workshop.



Turn On! Chicago

by Marie Anderson

For the first time in four years, Chicago hosted our Biennial event, *Turn On! Chicago* (TOC), this past July. The symposium ran for 2 1/2 days, Friday through Sunday. Friday evening, 14 women met to get to know each other during the WIT Special Interest Group session. A one-hour meeting was just enough time for introductions and to learn a little bit about each participant. By the end of the hour, we had all made some new friends. One woman, Joyce, shared that she had come to *Turn On! Chicago* with her significant other without ever standing at a lathe. She did have an interest in woodworking in general and was surprised by all the things she saw in the instant gallery that could be turned on a lathe. She was encouraged by the entire group to take the next step – get to the lathe! Fortunately, in the next room TOC was hosting a hands-on Pens for Troops event. That was the perfect opportunity for Joyce to finally turn for the first time. There were three lathes open as Joyce was escorted into the room. Brenda Miotke and Julie Schmidt joined Joyce for support and encouragement in turning pens. Very quickly, Joyce donned her face shield and was standing behind a lathe with tool in hand under the supervision of mentor Frank Pagura (and her significant other), sharing the biggest smile you can imagine. By the time Joyce completed her pen, she had firmly caught the woodturning bug. Throughout the rest of the weekend, she kept that smile planted on

Turn On! Chicago, con't

her face. Joyce was not an AAW member but had such a positive experience with WIT and learning of all the other opportunities our organization offers, that she indicated she would be joining. Our WIT community is making a difference in the way others see and relate to women in turning.

The organizers of *Turn On! Chicago* this year invited 12 demonstrators. Three women, Beth Ireland, Cynthia Carden, and Marie Anderson combined to present almost a third of the total rotations. Their topics included turning design, carving, offset turning, architectural turning, miniatures, pyrography, inspiration, collaboration, and marbling on turning. These rotations were well-attended, praised, and, many attendees commented throughout the weekend that they helped to create a well-rounded symposium experience for all the attendees.



Left: Women at the WIT session; Right: Pens for Troops session.

Ripples—how far does your positive influence go?

by Robin McIntyre, WIT Committee Liaison Coordinator

You never know how far your positive influence goes:

All you did was compliment a beginner on her good posture at the lathe, which will help her tool control, and she felt good about your comment even though she's not yet happy with the shape of her turning. She doesn't give up because at least she can do "something right."

All you did was ask a fellow turner to join you in demonstrating at a street fair making tops and she got hooked on the joy of public demonstrating. She will be a club demonstrator two years from now.

All you did at a demo was give the bud vase to a high school student, who then investigates taking woodworking at her school. Plus she showed her parents, and her mom now might also take a turning class at a local studio so she can share her daughter's interest.

But those are just little things—YES, that's the point! Being truly present, listening, participating, getting photos of women turners and their turnings out there, stepping up to volunteer for a small job, contributing to a club or WIT project, bringing in your Show-and-Tell so all levels of turners are represented, partnering with another turner for a demonstration for the public or your club—all are important and valuable. You don't need to be the highest level turner, the most proficient mentor, or the ultimate leader. **Step up, show up, take that step forward. We can make the ripple of positive influence grow and impact others. How far? You never know.**

WIT Virtual EXCHANGE 2022: Teamwork, Creativity and Process

by Linda Ferber and Marie Anderson

The 2022 WIT Virtual EXCHANGE included 48 women from eight different countries working on 16 teams. Registration opened appropriately on the International Day of Women, March 8th. The teams were introduced to each other via two Zoom meetings during the week of March 30th. They received a pair of inspiration words (a noun and a modifier) using two electronic "picker wheels." One goal for the EXCHANGE is to build a strong support community among the participants. Our orientation meetings set the mood for the entire process and both Linda and Marie could see that this goal would easily be met. By week two the teams had chosen their team names, the revealing of which sparked questions and lots of laughter.

Virtual EXCHANGE con't

Woodturning is all about process. Creativity is all about Process. Teamwork is all about process. Building a supportive community makes woodturning adventures all about FUN! (Fun fact, for many of our participants, this is the first time they have ever participated in a collaborative project.) Some had to be convinced to join because they were very new to turning and didn't think they could (or should) participate in something like this. This EXCHANGE is for everyone at every skill level. The resulting projects were never intended to be gallery quality work (but many are).

The emphasis has always been on exchanging skills and pushing yourself to try something new. The EXCHANGE process took place over eight weeks. WIT Committee members Robin McIntyre and Andi Wolfe created enrichment presentations to assist the participants in building essential skills that they will use throughout their woodturning journeys. These presentations covered *Health at the Lathe*, *Photography*, and *How to Make a Speed Talk Using PowerPoint*. (The final presentations are [archived on AAW website](#).) We also facilitated team building, assisted with problem solving, and, in the true sense of EXCHANGE, the attendees offered solutions for many challenges that arose as teams progressed through their projects. These women alternated from leaders and mentors to learners, coaches to educators, and every position in between. They learned to trust and rely on each other and the community that was built, learned from the opportunities that trying something new always offers, and gained confidence as these challenges were faced and conquered! We hope you will agree these women knocked the challenge out of the park as you watch the archived stories of how they designed and built projects from just two randomly chosen words.

Here are some comments from participants of the 2022 program:

"The spirit of women working together is always magical and even more so when creating with wood and other materials. What a delight to learn new things, make new friends, and release such joy in our individual lives and into the world. The WIT Virtual EXCHANGE 2022 did all that and more."

"As a very new turner, I was hesitant to sign up. I thought, what can I add to this project? I decided to join anyway and I'm so glad I did. I learned a lot about myself, gained confidence and met some new friends who happen to be great mentors!"

"The EXCHANGE has given me a connection to other women which has helped me get through some isolation I was feeling. The creativity boost was a bonus!"

"The WIT EXCHANGE has fostered my creativity and helped me grow as a woodturner and artist. I started my first EXCHANGE as a complete novice, but with each collaboration I have gained skill and confidence. Moreover, I have developed lasting friendships and now feel welcome and included in the woodturning community. WIT has helped me see the potential within myself as a creative person."

We encourage you to participate, to experience the WIT Virtual EXCHANGE journey, and to become an active member of the community. Watch for registration to open in March 2023.

This spring I participated in my third WIT Virtual EXCHANGE. Each collaboration has been a unique adventure into the creative unknown, but the rewards have been well worth the effort, and this year was no exception. As I have come to learn, one of the best parts of woodturning is the community that comes along with it, and I am so thankful to WIT for opening the door and introducing me to an incredible, inspiring group of makers. I have forged lasting friendships thanks to the EXCHANGE, and these friendships have encouraged, inspired, and challenged me to dig deep and explore how and why I create. I have learned about and experimented in so many new material techniques in these past few exchanges—carving, texturing, coloring, burning—and I am excited to see these processes become a part of my emerging artistic style. I have learned how to properly document my work with photography, an area in which I needed guidance. But perhaps most importantly through these collaborations I gained confidence in myself to persevere through the challenges in the creative process, to give and accept critique, and to work with others to find an elegant solution. A giant, heartfelt thank you to the WIT Committee for making these exchanges happen, and another to all the participants—especially my group members—who continue to encourage and inspire me. – Heather Marusiak

As a newer turner and one that had never worked on a collaborative art project, I was nervous to join the 2022 EXCHANGE. But right from the beginning I felt safe and welcomed by both the WIT EXCHANGE community and my team. It was really fun working with my teammates, Heather Marusiak and Jessica Edwards, and I think all three of us were sad when the EXCHANGE came to an end. The collaborative process opened my eyes to the importance of design and planning. Watching Heather experiment with adding color and texture to the final piece was both educational and inspiring. My part in the project pushed me to take on a challenge that I never would have on my own and allowed me to improve my turning and troubleshooting skills (major emphasis on the last). I walked away from the EXCHANGE with a new level of confidence and an Instagram page (thanks to Jessica for the tutorial). I am so grateful for the experience and for the great friends and amazing mentors that I made. – Alex Bradley

Women in Turning Gallery - Spin Tops



Catherine Gorrie – *Dancing tops*

The blue one is made from Silver Ash, approximately 70mm high and 45mm wide, acrylic paint and pyrography, finished with Renaissance Wax. The Pink one is made from Jacaranda, approximately 80mm high and 45mm wide, acrylic paint and pyrography, finish not applied.



Marilyn French-St. George

I made these as thank you gifts as I travelled the Pacific Northwest and Alberta a couple of years ago.

Women in Turning Gallery - Spin Tops

Nancy Rourke *A Top's Evolution*



Once upon a time I made a simple turned wooden top who loved to spend her time spinning. But then she began to wish that she were more colorful so I painted a stripe of color on her. Being more colorful made her so happy that she just spun, and spun, and spun all day long. One day after she saw a video of a ballet, she wished she could dance, too, instead of just spin. She practiced dancing so much that she actually became a ballerina who I named Dolly (Photo 1).

Dolly became such a good dancer that I decided she needed a stage to perform on, and I made her a little stage with a little dressing room under it for her to rest safely in when she was not dancing (Photo 2).

Dolly began to take ballet lessons and became so good that she was asked to join the Dancing Doll Spin-Top Ballet Company and dance with the other ballerina tops (Photo 3).

In time, Dolly became a prima ballerina and happened to see a different kind of top that could spin on a very tall tower-like stage without falling off (Photo 4)

She begged me to make one of these kind of stages for her to dance on. So I made one for her and Dolly practiced diligently until she was able to star in the ballet scene in which the heroine dies very dramatically without falling off of her elegant stage (Photos 5 and 6).

Women in Turning Gallery - Spin Tops



Linda Ferber

Top (L to R): Mushroom tops, walnut base with two flower-embellished tops.

Bottom: Musical tops with ash base.

Women in Turning Gallery - Spin Tops

Jean LeGwin



Above Left: ~3 X 3 inches; maple, milk paint, and acrylics.

Above Right: ~3 X 3 inches; maple and milk paint

Below: Various sizes; maple and markers.

Women in Turning - Safety Tips



Learn Resources Events Chapters Shop Communities Membership

Woodturning Safety

Safe, effective use of a wood lathe requires study and knowledge of procedures for using this tool. Read, thoroughly understand, and follow the label warnings on the lathe and in the owner/operator's manual. Safety guidelines from an experienced instructor, video, or book are a good source of important safety procedures. Please work safely.



AAW Safety Recommendations

- Use a full face shield whenever the lathe is turned on.
- Tie back long hair, do not wear gloves, and avoid loose clothing or objects that may catch on rotating parts or accessories.
- Always check the speed of the lathe before turning it on. Use slower speeds for larger diameter or rough pieces, and higher speeds for smaller diameter and pieces that are balanced. Always start a piece at a slower speed until the work piece is balanced. If the lathe is shaking or vibrating, lower the speed. If the work piece vibrates, always stop the machine to check the reason.
- Check that all locking devices on the tailstock and tool rest assembly (rest and base) are tight before operating the lathe.
- Position the tool rest close to work, almost touching the wood. Check tool rest position often and as wood is removed, turn off the lathe and re-position the rest.
- Rotate your work piece by hand to make sure it clears the tool rest and bed before turning the lathe "on." Be certain that the work piece turns freely and is firmly mounted. A handwheel on the outboard side of the headstock simplifies this process of spinning the lathe by hand before turning on the switch.
- Be aware of what the turners call the "red zone" or "firing zone." This is the area directly behind and in front of the work piece - the areas most likely for a piece to travel as it comes off the lathe. A good safety habit is to step out of this zone when switching the lathe to the "on" position. When observing others turn stay out of the area.
- Hold turning tools securely on the tool rest, holding the tool in a controlled and comfortable manner. Always contact the tool rest with the tool before contacting the wood.
- It is safest to turn the lathe "off" before adjusting the tool rest or tool rest base (banjo).
- Remove the tool rest before sanding or polishing operations.
- Never leave the lathe running unattended. Turn the power off. Do not leave the lathe until it comes to a complete stop.

Videos from AAW Video Source & YouTube:

[Eli Avisera: Spin Top](#)

[Ernie Conover: Tops & Yo Yos](#)

[Craft Supplies: Turning Spin Tops](#)

[Craft Supplies: Turning a Spinning Top with Glenn Lucas](#)

From the Editor:

Congratulations! to Kathleen Duncan for the successes of the first seven years of the WIT Committee. It has been a pleasure to serve with her and I wish her all the best for her future adventures.

When I started working on the summer newsletter, I wasn't sure what my theme would be. With all the recent gifting of tops to Kathleen and to Linda Ferber, it was a no brainer to focus on spin tops for this issue. The gallery focus on spin tops was fun. Thank you to Linda Ferber, Marilyn French-St. George, Catherine Gorie, Jean LeGwin, and Nancy Rourke for sharing photos of their tops. Check out the video links for tutorials and examples of how to turn spin tops. I especially like the video imagery of the Craft Supplies videos.

Many thanks to contributors of this newsletter: Marie Anderson, Dixie Biggs, Alex Bradley, Matt Deighton, Kathleen Duncan, Linda Ferber, Heather Marusiak, Robin McIntyre, Chris Price, Tib Shaw, and Andi Wolfe. Thanks also to Elizabeth Amigo and members of the WIT committee for all the help they give in copy editing and proofing this newsletter.

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, projects to share, please send them to me. The newsletter is only interesting if we have things to read about.

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.



Join woodturners from around the world for the valued Symposium experience you look forward to:

- More than 100 compelling presentations and demonstrations over three-and-a-half days.
- Learn from world-class demonstrators.
- Evaluate and buy the latest equipment, tools, and supplies at the Trade Show.
- Share your work in the Instant Gallery.
- Get inspired by the professional and member exhibitions.
- Collect gorgeous, unique works from the auctions and Instant Gallery.
- Make new woodturning friends!

Location

Kentucky Exposition Center, 937 Phillips Ln, Louisville, KY 40209

AAW International Woodturning Symposium June 1-4, 2023 Louisville, Kentucky

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](#).

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>

26-28 August: Andi Wolfe, Sally Ault, & Kailee Bosch, [SWAT Symposium](#), Waco, TX.

10 September: Andi Wolfe, [Buckeye Woodturners](#); Akron, Ohio.

1 October: [WIT Presents: ITE 2022 Fellows - Naava Milliken, Kailee Bosch, Katie Hudnall, and Janice Smith.](#)

5 November: [WIT Presents: Helga Winter.](#)

5-6 November: Linda Ferber and Emily Ford will demonstrate at [MPG+Small Turning Expo](#) (online event).

Arrowmont:

9-14 October: Kristen Levier, [Powercarving Stunning Wood Surfaces.](#)

16-21 October: Janice Levi, [It's never too early for ornaments.](#)

[John C. Campbell Folk School:](#)

18-24 September: Diana Friend; Ties, Bark and Cracks.

23-29 October: Dixie Biggs; Need Some Relief: Bringing Life to Your Work.

30 October - 5 November: Janine Wang; Imaginative Knobs and Pulls.

6 -12 November: Sally Ault; Build Your Skills.

30 November - 3 December: Kimberly Winkle; Sticks and Stool: Woodturning Basics and More.

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.

"There's power in allowing yourself to be known and heard, in owning your unique story, in using your authentic voice."
– Michelle Obama



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 60-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?](http://www.woodturner.org). 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, committee meeting minutes, 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)

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*“Normal is not something to aspire to, it’s something to get away from.”
- Jodie Foster*



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