



## WHAT IS THE POP?

What is the POP? The POP is not a 'club' within a club, but an opportunity for any AAW member to experience professionalism at any level within the woodturning field. To inquire or become involved, to receive POP emails and stay informed, simply sign up <http://www.woodturner.org/community/members/signup.pl>. The only requirement is being an AAW member. The POP Committee members are comprised of professional turners, teachers, authors, curators, educators and demonstrators whose experiences range back to the mid-1970s. Several have their own woodturning schools, most have taught at craft schools and demonstrated at AAW conferences, a few are authors of articles and books that everyone has read, many are makers participating in both craft shows and galleries, a few have curated woodturning exhibitions and private collections, and one is director of Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts where the AAW was founded. This group represents the leaders of the woodturning field and their experiences cover the entire field, from soup to nuts. The new POP mission statement is now on the AAW website, and can be found under the "Community" link on the home page.

The concept of "Professionalism" within the AAW organization is much more than the idea of creating and selling high-end work. It is more of setting standards of excellence in skills and personal development. An apt definition of professionalism is eloquently stated in the late David Pye's book, *The Nature and Art of Workmanship*:...to set oneself standards of behaviour in the belief that the manner of doing anything has a certain aesthetic importance of its own independent of the importance of what is done."



## POP's Got Talent

Deborah and Jerry Kermode  
Hartford Symposium Talent Show



## your POP committee

Trent Bosch  
Barbara Crockett  
David Ellsworth  
J. Paul Fennell  
Jerry & Deborah Kermode  
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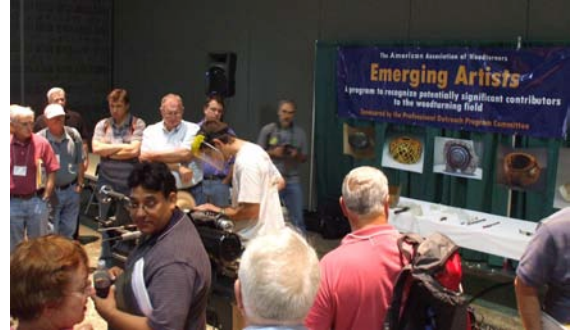
## POP LOGO CONTEST

Congratulations to David Nittmann who submitted the logo that was selected by the POP committee to be displayed on future POP correspondence as well as on the web site.

Submit items for this publication to:  
[bcrocket@columbus.rr.com](mailto:bcrocket@columbus.rr.com)

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM HARTFORD

## Successful Emerging Artist Program



We are pleased to report that our new event at the Hartford Symposium was very successful, with large crowds at each of the four demonstrations. The visitors liked the idea that they could stand around and close to each artist as he was working. The selected emerging artists Nick Agar (UK), David Belser (USA), Tucker Garrison (USA) and Pascal Oudet (France) were all pleased at the response that the attendees showed during each of their 1-1/2 rotations.

David Belser sums it up with his comments, "All in all it was a very positive experience for me. I had a number of people come up and talk to me afterwards about doing demos for various clubs and other opportunities.

Tucker Garrison adds, "I felt like the Emerging Artist program was a great success and I hope POP will continue it in the future."

by Paul Fennell

## A Critique of the Intimate Gallery Critiques

The new Intimate Gallery Critique was a wonderful chance for people to get an 'up close and personal' discussion from a master about their particular area of turning. For those of you not familiar with the program, here is a synopsis: Up to 15 people signed up on sheets at designated tables in the rear of the Instant Gallery to have their work critiqued by a master. We covered three turning styles on Friday and three on Saturday during lunch. Each participant brought his or her turning to the back of the room where people with like interests met with the professional of their choice. Those who took advantage of this opportunity seemed to be appreciative of the time they were able to spend with professional turners giving feedback.

The following discussions took place: David Ellsworth, hollow forms; Jacques Vesery, surface treatments; Betty Scarpino, sculpture; Curt Theobald, segmented work; Jim Keller, anything goes; Jerry Kermode, natural edge. Thank you to all of the above and to those attending for giving up some of their lunch time to make this happen.

Because this was the first year, we had fewer than the 15 possible attendees per table. For next year we plan better signage and more P.R. Please contact me if you have feedback or ideas, and plan to join us next year.

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# Instant Gallery Excellence Awards



Permanent Collection Award  
Peter Exton - untitles [Facet Study]



Permanent Collection Award  
Irene Grafert - "Organic Pleasure"



Excellence Award  
Steve Gleasner - "Rhapsody"



Excellence Award  
Dewey Garrett - "Ostroumkhov Box"



Excellence Award  
Rick Angus - curly soft maple bowl





Excellence Award  
Mark Nantz - "Amphora"



Excellence Award  
John Sauer - Tapper and Stand



Excellence Award  
Dixie Biggs - Yes, We Cayanne



Youth Award  
Amanda Reynolds - Pine Platter with Chickadee



Youth Award  
Ben Daffern - Walnut Bowl

# Every Bid From The Yorks a Thank You to Woodturners

By Dave Long

Elizabeth York (left) and her husband, Dr. James York, chat with Binh Pho during the 24th AAW national symposium held June 17-20 in Hartford, Ct. The Yorks are among the top collectors of Pho's work. The couple has been one of the top contributors to the AAW Equal Opportunity Grant (EOG) fund through extensive purchases of wood art at the six national symposiums



*photo by Andi Wolfe*

When the bidding hit \$20,000, the room fell silent.

People all over Oregon Convention Center strained to see who had pushed auction prices to such record heights.

When the auctioneer made his final call, "Going once, going twice, sold for \$30,000," the world of woodturning became fully aware of Elizabeth York.

That stunning moment at the American Association of Woodturners' (AAW) 2007 national symposium in Portland is part of an on-going thank you from Elizabeth and husband, Dr. James York, to world of woodturning.

"Woodturning and AAW have literally changed our lives," said Dr. York. "Without turning, I don't know where I'd be physically and emotionally. It has opened a new world for us. We've met so many wonderful and caring people. We've made many new friends, which doesn't always happen to a couple like us in their mid-70s. "Collecting is our way to give back to the other turners, the organization and helping wood art be recognized as a legitimate art form."

Since 2004, the Yorks have been among the most active collectors of wood art in the world. They have amassed a collection of over 300 pieces and counting. The price for that work is estimated to be in the mid-six figures, a good portion directly to the makers or the AAW's Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) fund.

Unlike many collectors who buy through galleries, the majority of the York's purchases have been made at AAW national symposiums. Many pieces are bought directly from makers at the Instant Gallery. Others come through the special displays hosted by AAW.

# Wood art akes place of 6,000 rare books

The EOG auction, held annually on the Saturday night of the symposium and the Professional Outreach Program (POP) Sunday auction of special pieces, is Mrs. York's domain.

Elizabeth is a diminutive woman with a pixie haircut, quick smile and given to friendly conversation. While her husband attends seminars on tool sharpening and bowl turning, she is systemically checking out every detail of objects that will be in the EOG auction, Instant Gallery offerings, POP auction pieces, and turned objects in the AAW's themed exhibit.

With a bid card in hand, Mrs. York is tenacious, seldom giving up on a piece she wants. "I enjoy the competitive part and I want the turner or AAW to get the most money possible," she said. "The EOG auction is our way of helping turners improve their skills and keep the craft going."

The piece she bought in Portland is a record for EOG auctions. The previous record of \$11,000 was for a Jacques Vesery-Bonnie Klein collaborative top in Louisville in 2006.

The work Mrs. York bought was a collaborative between the late Frank Sudol and Binh Pho who had been one of Frank's students. Sudol had passed away in early 2007, leaving a piece he had just begun. Pho finished the piece, the only collaborative they worked on. The Yorks are among the largest collectors of Pho's work.

"I've always been a collector, especially books," said Mrs. York. "Collecting wood art has been a wonderful learning experience. Everyone we've met has been so helpful and so open about educating us on what makes great wood art."  
". I turned 79 on July 3 and I'm learning something new very day about wood."

Much of the wood art is sitting on shelves where some of the more that 10,000 books the couple has collected once stood.

Mrs. York gave more than 6,000 rare books to Anderson (IN) University, a school of 2,800 students located 40 miles northeast of Indianapolis. The school is affiliated with the Church of God, and Mrs. York's family has a long history with that institution.

Many of the books were first-edition children's books by authors such as A. A. Milne (Winnie the Pooh), Beatrix Potter, (The Tale of Peter Rabbit), and Maurice Sendak (Where the Wild Things Are). The collection also contained numerous first editions by Robert Louis Stevenson (Treasure Island) and a large portion of works by Robert Frost.

As part of the gift she also funded a new addition to the school's library, which included space to hold this portion of the collection and a reading room. The school celebrated the finished project by holding the first annual Elizabeth R. York Children's Literature Festival in 2009. Mrs. York could not attend, however, due to open-heart surgery. She hopes to be on hand for the second literature festival, set for Sept. 25.

## Six years in Africa

The deep appreciation for woodturning and the AAW come from a traumatic set of events that left Dr. York wheelchair-bound for two years.

An outstanding athlete all his life, Dr. York was a varsity tennis player at Princeton University and continued as one of the nation's top age group players through his 50s. The Navy veteran also ran marathons, was a scuba diver and was always up for pickup basketball. Those athletic endeavors took a toll on his knees, requiring several operations.

In 1998 he was scheduled to have total replacement of his right knee. During the early stages of operation, the anesthesiologist put a needle in his spinal cord causing immobilization from the waist down. A long legal battle ensued with Dr. York winning a multi-million judgment. There was no amount of money, however, that could replace the loss of an active, giving lifestyle the couple was enjoying.

Being one of the top orthopedic surgeons in the country had rewarded Dr. York exceedingly well financially, even before the court judgment.

He was able to take early retirement from his New Jersey practice in 1992 at age 62. Along with traveling and spoiling their grandchildren, the couple volunteered at mission hospitals throughout Africa. Over a six-year period, Dr. York volunteered his surgical skills, as well as teaching at hospitals in Kenya, Cameroon, Botswana and Zimbabwe.

"A lot of the medical missions in Africa require a three-year commitment if you can't pay your own way," said Dr. York. "I was blessed to have the financial resources to pay our way. So we were in those countries for eight months a year working with various hospitals and church groups and then returned to the USA. The working conditions ranged from bad to horrible. But you found a way to get it done. You had to learn to be adaptable, inventive and make due with what you had.

"It was one of the most satisfying feels you can have went you see you are really making a difference in people's lives."

Mrs. York had the general roustabout role being everything from nurse to cook to stand-in mother for children under surgery. "I always took toy match box cars, lots of coloring books and crayons for the children," she said. "They had nothing. But, oh, they loved coloring and playing with those cars."

They had planned to continue their work in Africa for several more years before the medical negligence changed their world.

It took Dr. York nearly five years of intensive rehabilitation to regain the use his legs and the ability to walk with braces, a walker or a cane. "With a lot of prayers, the help of my wife and family and a lot of fine, dedicated people I was able to regain some mobility," said Dr. York.

## **'You can do this Jim'**

With that renewed mobility came both physical and mental challenges. How does a man in his mid-70s, who had been so physically active, adapt to a lifestyle of limited movement? How does he fill that void mentally from a life of finding answers to many challenging problems?

Some of the answers began in 2003 on a visit to Bob Harp, Mrs. York's brother who lives in Oxford, Ohio.

Harp, a retired business professor and Navy ROTC commander at Miami (Oh.) University, had been a long-time woodturner and member of the Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild. His shop is filled with all the toys for doing both turning and flatwork.

“Jim (Dr. York) had done some woodworking from time to time and always loved fiddling with machines and gadgets,” said Harp. “He still had the great eye-to-hand coordinator and the great hands surgeons possess. “When he and Betty (Mrs. York) came to visit, I told Jim ‘I think this is something you can do. It’s just a matter of finding a balancing point for you to stand or sit at the lathe.’ “

Over the next three days Harp introduced Dr. York to the basics of woodturning — lathe operation and safety, the array of tools used and various cuts needed to complete an assortment of projects.

“I kept telling him ‘You can do this, Jim. You can do this.’ After the first day it was like a whole new world opened up to him. “He ended up turning a couple of nice bowls and a platter. He was hooked.”

Harp went to the AAW membership guide and found connections to the Gold Coast Woodturners club in the Pompano Beach, FL, area where the Yorks reside. Dr. York was able to have contact with area turners but still had some recovery issues to work through before he could begin turning on a regular basis.

An epiphany came at the 2004 AAW national symposium in Orlando. At the Harp’s urging, the Yorks attended the event.

“I couldn’t believe the friendliness and approachability of everyone we met,” said Dr. York. “NASA scientists, engineers, lawyers, professors, truckers, farmers all mingled together, having a good time. There was no arrogance. We were sitting around a table and everyone was sharing information. I met other guys who had physical issues when it came to turning. They were all so encouraging on different ways to handle the physical part of turning. More importantly they were so upbeat about the mental aspect of things. They gave me us a positive outlook. It was really a life-changing experience for me.”

He came away from the symposium with his first lathe and a set of gouges. Now, six years later, one side of his three-car garage is a well-equipped shop with two large and one mini-lathe, a growing collection of tools and a stack of rosewood and Australia burls.

“Doc has developed into a pretty good turner, especially with his burl bowls,” said Harp. “He doesn’t go small either. He likes turning the big stuff.”

## **Happiness is a family reunion**

Dr. York gets help from neighbors and landscapers he employs to help mount large blocks of wood onto the lathe. “I turn a couple of hours a day or longer, depending how I feel,” he said. “These Aussie burls are so hard, it takes a long time to work them. I’m sharpening more than I’m turning.”

He does not sell his work, but gives it away as gifts to their four children and friends. He is unable to travel to Gold Coast club meetings, but club members often stop by to see how his projects are progressing.

One large very large bowl Dr. York turned went to Anderson University. In the future, most of the York’s collection may become part of a permanent display in the Anderson University art department.

“We’re meeting with some of the faculty from Anderson later this year about making woodturning part of the offerings by the art department,” said Mrs. York. “They offer classes in painting, glass and ceramics. Why not wood? We want our collection there to have it displayed properly and inspire students to see what can be done with wood.”

The Yorks have been major financial contributors to Anderson for many years. Mrs. York's father, a minister, was a graduate of the school, as are two of her brothers. She attended the school for two years, but left after her father passed away. She became a stewardess with American Airlines and taught at the airlines "stew school" in Dallas before marrying Dr. York. She eventually received a degree from Rutgers University while her husband had a practice in New Jersey. In 1997 the couple contributed \$2 million to build the York Seminary Village to house students working on their theology degrees. Several other buildings around the campus also bear the York name.

The 24th AAW Symposium held June 17-20 in Hartford, Ct., may have been the best one the couple has attended. They had 15 family members with them at the event.

The happiest moment for Mrs. York may have come when she learned two nephews, who took part in the Youth Turning Program, had won lathes and a set of gouges. It was hugs and smiles all around.

"It's been a great weekend for Mom and Dad," said their son, Chris, a hospital administrator in California. "They really love woodturning and all the people around it. Seeing them happy like this after what they went through is priceless."

*Dave Long spent 38 years as a sports writer with the Dayton (Oh) Daily News before retiring in 2009. He and his wife, Karen, have been wood art collectors for 22 years*

## GUIDES FOR EXHIBITING TURNERS

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The Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG) has published a series of Professional Guidelines that should have a lot of value for exhibiting woodturners. The Guidelines are a series of checklists, procedures, information sources, and forms that can be used by artists. Although SNAG authored them, they are not specific to jewelry. The Guidelines committee appears to have representatives from a variety of perspectives including artists, gallery owners, lawyers, curators, and production people. All the 19 items are available in PDF format, and some also in Word. Look over the list at: [http://www.snagmetalsmith.org/Publications/Professional\\_Guidelines/](http://www.snagmetalsmith.org/Publications/Professional_Guidelines/)

## POP MISSION STATEMENT

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The Professional Outreach Program addresses the needs of professionals within the woodturning field, including turners, writers, collectors, teachers, demonstrators, and gallery owners or managers. The goals are to improve services to the professional turner and to promote turned wood as a collectable art form.