

Women in Turning Newsletter

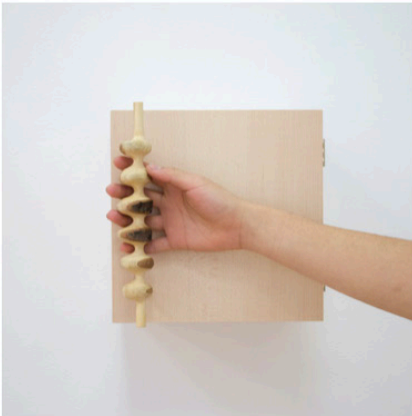
Spring 2025



History in the making by Katie Thompson

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF WOODTURNERS

The 23rd Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium is making more than just shavings this year, they are setting new standards for inclusivity in communal craft education. The 2025 symposium will be held September 19 - 21 in Loveland, CO and features an array of leaders in the woodturning field, all of whom happen to be women.



The symposium is presented by a group of volunteers from the Rocky Mountain Woodturners chapter of the American Association of Woodturners. Volunteer Kailee Bosch is an artist and designer based out of Fort Collins, CO and is helping to produce this year's event.

"In 2025 we are excited to highlight a selection of talented and diverse women turners who have been historically underrepresented in the field. We are just one of many smaller "regional" woodturning symposiums across the country that strive to create opportunities for woodturners on a more local level," shares Bosch.

Woodturners that attend the symposium will observe demonstrations of some of the most talented women woodturners from across the globe. Organizers say this is a reflection of the changing demographics of the woodturning craft welcoming the addition of many more woman artists who now take part.

"As with most other woodturning symposiums out there, we strive to have a diverse lineup and that includes having women demonstrators. But here is the thing, the field of woodturning (and the number of women in it) has exploded in the past 15 or so years, which is really exciting. Fifteen years ago we might have had a hard time composing a symposium of all woman demonstrators, but when we started looking at our list this year, there were a lot of women demonstrators that we wanted to invite. So many that we knew our whole lead demonstrator lineup could consist of women. This was exciting because to our knowledge there has never been an all-woman lineup for a woodturning symposium before, and it seemed like it was about time that there was," explains Bosch.

While providing representation for women is a focus for this year's demonstrator lineup, Bosch emphasizes that "Every year, despite the lineup, the goal of the event is to spotlight the amazing turners in our field and give participants inspiration to go back into their own shops and create work, continually growing the field. But this year in particular, we are excited to highlight and share with the community how impactful women turners really are."

RMWT Symposium, con't

The full lineup of demonstrators this year are Cindy Drozda (CO), Rabea Gebler (Japan), Nathalie Groeneweg (France), Ashley Harwood (SC), Kristin LeVier (ID), Merryll Saylan (CA), Janine Wang (OR), Andi Wolfe (OH), Sally Ault (CA), Emily Ford (UT), Jolie Karno (CA), Heather Marusiak (KS), Tib Shaw (MN), Margaret Stiles (CO), and Katie Stofel (TN).



While the lead demonstrators are selected by invitation, the regional demonstrators are selected through an application process. Program coordinators are also intentional about bringing in more diverse topics to be demonstrated as well.

“We do our best to make a symposium that has a little something for everyone, from the basics of turning (bowls, spindles, etc.) to sculptural turning and carving, and everything in between,” added Bosch.

The application process for regional demonstrators is open to all, however Bosch says that the impact of selecting the women-led lead demonstrator lineup is already showing effects, “Due to the great word of mouth we were getting from our all women lead demonstrator lineup, we had a lot of women apply. Through the blind jurying process, the regional demonstrators selected from applications also ended up being all women.”

The symposium schedule features 45 rotations with 15 presenters and begins Friday afternoon with demonstrations and an ice cream social. Saturday and Sunday feature more demonstrations including hands-on sessions, and a gallery where artists can display, give and receive critiques, and generally enjoy each other’s work. Sunday also features the infamous “Longest Shaving Contest” with the current record holder being Yann Mart at the 2023 symposium with a 39 foot-long shaving.

As the 2025 event is set to be a groundbreaking event, organizers want the emphasis on inclusion and diverse representation at the symposium to continue on in future events as well.

“We hope that by this symposium, being the first of its kind, we are setting a precedent for future symposiums. Not only ours but all of the other woodturning symposiums out there,” says Bosch, “Like I mentioned before, the inclusion of women in turning has come such a long way, and this is just another step in the right direction.”

However Bosch emphasizes that there is still much work to be done towards creating a more inclusive craft, “Often, if you show up to a woodturning event, there are an overwhelming number of older men. I am really hoping that our event can start to turn this around, and by having an all women lineup we will draw in more women participants. Hopefully this is an opportunity for them to feel comfortable and included in the field.

RMWT Symposium, con't



Our hope is that by showcasing women at our symposium this year and drastically changing the standard approach we start to set an example for other symposiums to have a much more diverse selection of woodturners, woodworkers, and artists of all ages, races and genders. We want the field to be as inclusive as possible and encourage its growth in many different directions.”



For more information or to register for the 2025 symposium visit the event website <https://rmwoodturningsymposium.com>. Attendees receive a discount on registration before June 20th, and additional discounts are also offered for teachers and students. You can also find the group on [Facebook](#) and Instagram as [Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium](#).

This article first appeared as [Women of Woodworking – 23rd Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium, Loveland, CO](#) on the [Women of Woodworking](#) blog.

Check out the [Women of Woodworking Instagram account](#).

The Women and Wood Art, 2009, Richmond, Virginia

by Barbara Dill

Turning Wood into Art The Jane and Arthur Mason Collection

April 3-June 14, 2009
Visual Arts Center of Richmond

Opening Reception with artist Todd Hoyer
Friday, April 3, 6-8 PM • Gallery talk by the artist 6:30 PM

Wood turning process demonstration with artist Todd Hoyer
Saturday, April 4, 12:30 PM + slide talk at 3 PM following film

InGrained: Women and Wood Art Symposium
May 29-31, 2009

The dialog between an artist and the wood on the lathe is a balancing act between precise control and the forces of chance, a collaboration of hand, machine, mind and matter. The allure of a turned wood piece resonates from the intersection of the material's inherent beauty and the turner's mastery of technique, concept and form. Subjects explored in the exhibition include material aesthetics, process and image, storytelling, design and tree life.

Organized by the Mint Museum of Craft + Design
Gallery Hours Monday to Friday 9-7 Saturday 10-5 Sunday 1-4

visarts.org

Front: Philip Mouthrop, *White Pine Mosaic Bowl*, 1993 (detail). White pine, resin, 9.75 x 11.75 x 11.75"
Back: James Partridge, *Untitled*, from the *Blood Vessel Series*, 1987. Oak burl, 4.74 x 11 x 8"
Collection of the Mint Museum of Craft + Design, Charlotte, N.C.



Visual Arts Center of Richmond |
1812 W. Main St. | 23220
804.353.0094 | 804.353.8018 fax | visarts.org

HOURS: Monday-Friday 9-7
Saturday 10-5
Sunday 1-4



Student + Faculty Wood Exhibition: April 3-29 in the Commons

"CUT!" Film Series: Films about Wood Saturdays at 2 PM Free!

April 4: *Hand and Eye: Touch Wood*
April 18: *African Carving: A Dogon Kanaga Mask + Japanese Prints: The Floating World*
May 9: *Tangible Spirits with Alison Saar + It's One Family: Knock on Wood*
May 23: *Cut Loose: New American Furniture Makers + Greene & Greene: The Art of Architecture*
June 6: TBA

Art & Coffee 2nd & 4th Tuesdays at 9:30 AM Free!

April 14: Nancy Hugo, author of *Remarkable Trees of Virginia*
April 28: Metro Modern: What is sexy in mid-century wood?
May 12: Wood Cut Prints with Dennis Winston

InGrained – Women and Wood Art Symposium May 29-31, 2009

- May 29 – Collectors talk with Jane and Arthur Mason, wine & cheese, 6:30-7:30 PM
- May 30 – Artist talks and demonstrations (\$20)
 - Virginia Dotson, Scottsdale, Arizona
 - Michelle Holzapfel, Marlboro, Vermont
 - Connie Mississippi, Santa Fe, New Mexico
 - Merryl Saylan, San Rafael, California
 - Betty Scarpino, Indianapolis, Indiana
 - Hayley Smith, Bisbee, Arizona
- May 31 – Free Community Day of studio workshops with VisArts wood faculty
 - Barbara Dill on multi axis turning
 - Doug Finkel + Tom Crabb: "If It Can't Hold Soup, It's Art"
 - Nick Pollok on the dovetail joint

The symposium and visiting and resident artists are supported by a grant from the Windgate Charitable Foundation.



Women and Wood Art, con't

The short version of how this symposium occurred is that I had gone to France in 2008 to participate in the Escalon retreat. My first articles about turning multi-axis spindles had been published in the American Woodturner in the 2007 Fall and Winter editions. A friend from Belgium, John Pirson, had seen these articles and had invited me to come over to the Escoulen Retreat. Rather than taking a piece of my work for the instant gallery, I boldly took my articles!

As it turned out, I was not formally invited to go to that conference and nobody seemed to care about the articles that I had written. This seemed strange to me because of the amazing positive feedback I'd gotten from those people who had been really interested in multi-axis spindle turning and who had found this information to be very helpful in their work. However, the weekend was amazing, and my partner and I were entertained by a local woodturner and his family before we went to Belgium to visit John Pirson.

I had been teaching at the Richmond Visual Arts Center (VAC) for years, so when we returned home, I approached the VAC with an idea that I had been mulling over. My vision was to create a symposium taught only by women who worked with wood. This symposium would be available to anybody who wanted to come, but it would be taught by women.

Jo Kennedy, the Executive Director, and her staff subsequently developed "Women in Woodturning," an event that presented workshops by a number of wood artists from all over the country as well as an exhibition of wood-turned sculptures. The Windgate Foundation provided a grant for the event and for the purchase of five large lathes. Jane and Arthur Mason lent the VAC some of their renown wood collection for an exhibit.

The women who were invited were Virginia Dotson, Michelle Holzapfel, Connie Mississippi, Merryll Saylan and Betty Scarpino. At the last minute, Merryll got sick and could not attend. I was given her slot and became one of the presenters, for which I am forever grateful. Of course, I was extremely nervous to be a part of that group. Arthur Mason approached me after my session and told me that he actually understood multi-axis spindles!!!



Presenters and attendees of the Women and Wood Art Symposium. Some familiar faces: Back Row: far left, Hayley Smith; second from left, Connie Mississippi; fifth from left, Barbara Dill; third from right, Paula Nicks; second from right, Dixie Biggs; far right, Pat Matranga. Front Row: second from left, Michelle Holzapfel; third from left, Jean LeGwin; center, Betty Scarpino; third from right, Virginia Dotson..

AAW's 39th International

Woodturning Symposium

June 12-15, 2025

Saint Paul RiverCentre in St. Paul, MN

Women in Turning, Special Interest Night

At the Minneapolis AAW Symposium. June 12–15, WIT is having a gathering on Thursday night, June 12. Details on exact time and place TBD. We will have a slideshow celebrating our WIT accomplishments over the past year and we'd like to include your group. **Send 2–3 photos with 2–3 descriptive sentences to Andi Wolfe (andiwolfe@yahoo.com) by May 15 (subject line: WIT slide show)** and she will put together a PowerPoint of our *WIT Year in Review*. Every AAW chapter is important. Every activity—big and small—is important in supporting women turners. Help present a rounded perspective for everyone to enjoy. We had about 85 turners from around the world at the evening WIT meeting last year! Celebrate your group, celebrate WIT! Hope to see you there.

Empty Bowls Project 2025

by Linda Ferber

My chapter, the Minnesota Woodturners, is the host chapter for the 2025 Symposium which will be held in St Paul, MN June 12–15. We have selected Fireweed Community Woodshop as the beneficiary of the Empty Bowls sale. We encourage everyone to consider donating bowls for this event—it is an excellent opportunity to support women learning turning. Per Fireweed's statement:

"Fireweed Community Woodshop empowers women and marginalized genders through the art of woodcraft. We seek to shift expectations of what a woodworker looks like through our staff, instructors, and board, and to create role models for people historically excluded from the woodshop.

"Our classes fall into three categories: craft, furniture, and handy person. Craft covers more traditional skills like basket weaving, bowl turning, and broom making. Our furniture classes focus on fine woodworking and include courses on joinery and chair making. Handy person offerings are geared toward gaining confidence in home improvement and carpentry skills including classes in tiling, framing, and powertools. Classes range from half-day workshops to multi-session courses over several days.

"Equity-based pricing and programming are core to our approach. We offer discounted BIPOC-centered classes, and every class features sponsored BIPOC seats where students pay a reduced fee at registration. Sliding-scale seats, suggested registration, and pay-it-forward are also available for every class at registration. Our goal is to get tools into the hands of people historically excluded from the art of woodworking.

"Fireweed Community Woodshop is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization located in Minneapolis, Minnesota at 1427th Ave SE.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

"Fireweed believes that woodworking education and practice should be as accessible as possible. We offer financial access for students to help lower some of the financial barriers to accessing courses."

If you are able, please donate a bowl for Fireweed Community Woodshop!

*"Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement."
– Golda Meier*

Wig Stand Initiative— Second Year Anniversary



One of us had an idea, shared it with other women turners who shared it locally, nationally, and internationally, and now, on our second anniversary of the Wig Stand initiative, 2,382 wig stands have been delivered around the US and Canada. Each one is crafted with TLC and is a true gift to the recipient. If you ever doubt that a pebble of good dropped into the container of life doesn't have an effect, think of this project. Many thanks to everyone who has participated and to Susan Chiarello of NJ for her idea. Keep the goodness flowing!

Richmond Woodturners by Margaret Turner

The Richmond Women in Turning (WIT) group approached the Massey Cancer Center about their interest in receiving some wig stands. They enthusiastically agreed to participate.

At the November 16 meeting of the Richmond Woodturners Pam Bozkurt, a new member to the Richmond club but a long time member of WIT through her participation in Central Florida Woodturners club, did a live presentation on turning wig stands. In addition, she provided the club members with handouts and resources for completing those wig stands. Her presentation can be viewed on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/pVEWqMjFaM0?si=3utZdhaycfkeTeyp>.

Following her presentation, 23 wig stands were made by turners for presentation to the Massey Cancer Center.

As the holiday neared and turners devoted time to making holiday gifts, the club decided to designate January as the wig stand challenge month with a gift card going to the stand maker voted best in show. Fifteen beautiful stands were submitted demonstrating the quality and artistic talent of our club members. The winner was Scott Synnott of Midlothian, VA. The contest yielded 15 more wig stands for a total of 39.

Bruin Country Woodturners by Mary Blanca Rios

The Bruin Country Woodturners chapter's WIT Wig Stand Project is officially underway, and we are excited to share our progress. This project aims to provide functional and beautiful wig stands to those in need, and we are proud to be part of it!

Though we're a relatively new group with many members still mastering the craft, we've made great strides in our first few turning sessions. So far, we've completed a detailed instruction sheet, hosted a live demonstration, and even produced several wig stand pieces. While we still have a way to go before making our first donation, the enthusiasm and dedication within the group is inspiring.

As we continue honing our skills, we're excited to keep pushing forward and making a positive impact in our community of San Jose, CA. We look forward to sharing more updates and completed wig stands in the coming months. Thank you to everyone who has been involved so far!

Bruin Country WT, con't



Women in Turning - Sharing Experiences

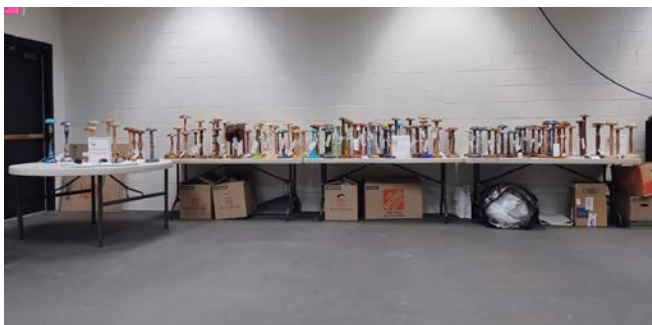
Arizona Woodturners

by Sarah Slocum

The Arizona Woodturners WIT group has been busy the past few months, gathering each month at the shop to try new techniques and challenges. We have made Beads of courage boxes, another kind of gnome, acorn ornaments, hollow ball ornaments, dirty pour lids and bowls, and kendamas.

Mary Schick led the charge again for the whole club with wig stands. There was a total collection of 150 wig stands at our last meeting and she has delivered them to E-Beauty. E-Beauty sponsored a free "Day of Beauty" for the clients of the Cancer Support Community of Arizona who are experiencing hair loss from chemotherapy. The clients arrived looking uncertain and stressed. After being fitted for a wig (from E-Beauty) and having it styled, they had their make-up done and got help with eyebrow and eyelash replacements. At the end of the sessions, they received a wig stand and looked happy and felt more like themselves."

We have lots of projects lined up for the months ahead and an eager group of women who want to learn and take on the challenges.



Prescott Area Woodturners

by Kathy Allen

The Prescott Area Woodturners WIT group learned to make wig stands at the local Yavapai College. Over a two-day period, our members went through the process of making a base, spindle, and top in a setting where everyone had a lathe to work on and could successfully make their first wig stand. We are glad to occasionally meet at the college to complete a large project such as this.

We recently developed a partnership with our local YRMC Hospital Foundation to donate the wig stands so they can be given to local women who need them. We're grateful we have had the opportunity to develop partnerships with both the local college and hospital foundation to benefit women in our community. Recently a few of our WIT members made the first delivery of wig stands to the Foundation. Many members of our club have joined our WIT group in making wig stands and we hope to deliver about 60 more to the Foundation in the near future.



Cape Cod Woodturners by Robin McIntyre

On February 1, 2025, seven turners met to work on small bowls. We turned collaboratively on our three lathes with everyone by learning from both watching others and also having hands-on time. Everyone planned to finish their projects at home and bring them to the next club meeting or WIT gathering.



Before our February 5 club meeting started, we shared a PowerPoint presentation of our 2024 “Year in Review” with members to spread the news and photos about what CCW WIT is doing.

On Saturday, February 22, four members met at Deb Chapin’s shop to work on a maple rolling pin as part of the Turn and Embellish series. We worked collaboratively on all phases of the project. Now everyone planned to repeat the project in their shop/borrowed shop space.



At our next WIT gathering on March 15 we worked on apples and pears using Richard Findley’s techniques. We have our first gallery exhibit in February 2026 and envision a beautifully turned bowl containing our fruit and maybe a rolling pin for “Welcome to our Kitchen” as one of our entries.

Front Range Woodturners by Debra Higley-Fieldman

On January 7th, 2025, Jessica Edwards of Front Range Woodturners (FRW) gave a class to FRW's Ladies of the Lathe in Dux Chucks. We cut, drilled, glued, and assembled the elliptical turning inserts for chucks, which are used for turning elliptical jewelry, small bowls, and other items. It is based on Jim Duxbury's dead offset chuck design at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXFrrri8710>.

Debra Higley taught a class on February 18th to FRW's Hands of Woodturning on octagonal spinning tops with captive rings and watercolor/decals designs, and accelerators for the tops. Both of these classes were at Rockler in Denver, which provides FRW and LOTL space (thanks).



Women in Turning Gallery - Springtime



Tina Crosby

Here are a few photos of some recent work I did for Mothers' Day and Easter. Eggs turned from various woods spindle work (approximately real egg size) and miniature vases with dolls house flowers.

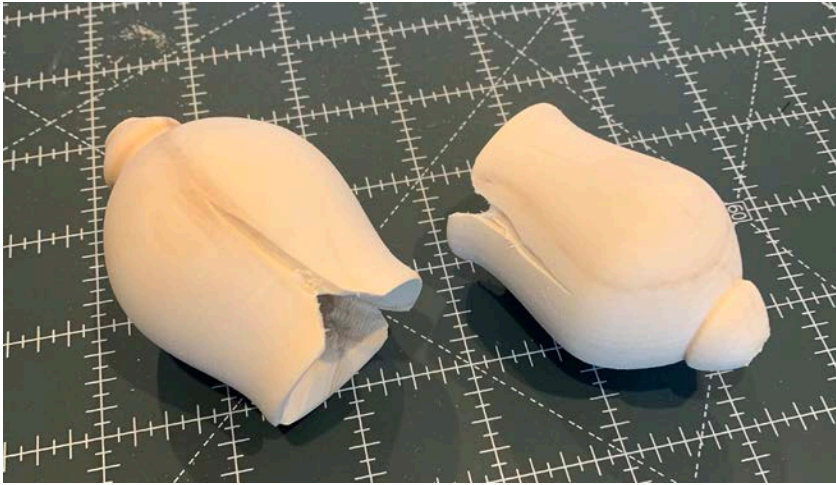


Jean LeGwin

Birth Control. Maple eggs with rose thorns, airbrushed.



Women in Turning Gallery - Springtime



Kay Liggett

I like to make wooden flowers in anticipation of spring. On a snowy spring day, standing at the lathe, I do my best to remember the shapes, colors, and textures of tulips. Woodturners typically turn tulips with four petals. You can find these on Youtube and Etsy. I'm not Andi Wolfe, but I remember that tulips have one set of three petals, and a matching set of sepals for six possibly visible petals. This February, I tried a variety of shapes to see what looked best.

The two unpainted tulips were turned from aspen mounted in a chuck. The hole for the stem is drilled all the way through the blank. I hollow the center first with either a spindle gouge or a termite hollower, then I shape the outside with a spindle gouge. This is the reverse of typical turning, but the hollowing is easiest with more material in the base. I cut the divisions for the sepals/petals with a V-cut carving tool. A power carver or hand tools both work. I do most sanding off the lathe so that the sandpaper can work to do shaping.

I was hoping to achieve a watercolor look with the coloring so I used water-based stains. It was most convincing with Intrinsic colors used over their own white base coat and allowed to flow a bit. If that didn't work, I used Golden Open Acrylics to mix colors. I also tried using multiple thin glazes of acrylic medium tinted with acrylic color. There is a lot of work to do in the color department!

After I insert the stem, I put a dab of epoxy in the hole and add a button to create the center. The little bulge below the flower improves the hold on the stem.

Of course, these are just dreams of tulips. Still better than the Lego version, though!

Women in Turning Gallery - Springtime



Betty Scarpino

Eggs



Women in Turning Gallery - Springtime



Christine Smith

The grouping was created in preparation for my turning class at John C Campbell for spring 2026. The theme was Springtime, table settings, embellishments and textures.

The chicken is turned from "Flame box elder" and stands 6" tall when sitting on the textured "basket" (It's a box).

The chicken is hollowed to fit over the egg holder and can keep Easter eggs warm for breakfast. The egg holder and egg stand 5" tall altogether.

Growing up with three siblings we all had our own "crochet chicken warmer," each in different colors. As a woodturner, I had to try to make one out of wood. It is a fond childhood memory recreated.

I turned a set of salt and pepper shakers out of spalted maple. Purchased rubber bongs keep salt and pepper inside the hollowed shakers. A box with finial could serve sugar at your table. (Flame box elder, turquoise powder filling to cover some voids and acrylic paints on the finial.

The spin-top (5" tall with the egg) is turned from maple and a "Black-eyed Susan" flower was painted on both sides.

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>

2025 Schedule

Arrowmont:

25–30 May: Janice Levi

15–20 June: Ellie Richards

27 July–1 August: Heather Marusiak

3–8 August: Sally Ault

21–26 September: Donna Zils Banfield

John C. Campbell Folk School:

4–9 May: Cheryl Lewis

22–28 Jun: Joy Cowan & David G. Jones

14–20 Sep: Dixie Biggs

9–12 Oct: Janice Levi

Peters Valley School of Craft

17–18 May: Julia Swyers

13–17 June: Terese Audet

25–29 July: Beth Ireland

8–12 August: Melanie Abrantes

22–26 August: Elizabeth Weber

4–5 October: Lisa Nguyen

Marc Adams School

7–11 July: Janine Wang

4–8 August: Jennifer Shirley

Midwest Pen Gathering

11–12 April: Linda Ferber

AAW International Woodturning Symposium:

12–15 June: Ashley Harwood, Rebecca DeGroot, Emma Cook

SWAT Symposium:

Sally Ault, Tony Street, Linda Ferber, Anne Ogg

Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium:

19–21 September:

Cindy Drozda, Rabea Gebler, Nathalie Groeneweg, Ashley Harwood, Kristin LeVier, Merryll Saylan, Janine Wang, Andi Wolfe, Sally Ault, Emily Ford, Jolie Karno, Heather Maru-

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 AAW 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.



[Registration](#)
[Demonstrations](#)
[Venue/Hotels](#)
[Events](#)
[Schedule](#)
[Vendors](#)
[About](#)



2025 Pacific Northwest Women in Turning Scholarship



With the help of a generous donor from the Seattle Woodturners, the Seattle chapter of Women in Turning (WIT) is now offering a Pacific Northwest WIT Scholarship (\$500), to be awarded annually to an outstanding emerging woodturner for use towards professional development opportunities. To be eligible, applicants must be women or otherwise under-represented woodturners who reside in the Pacific Northwest (including British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Northern California). The scholarship is intended to encourage woodturning as a lifelong pursuit, extend the accessibility of the craft, and contribute to the cultural vitality of the Pacific Northwest.

Deadline: August 1



Scholarship Criteria:

- Applicant must be a woman or otherwise under-represented woodturner;
- Applicant must be 18 years of age or older;
- Applicant must be a resident of the Pacific Northwest (including British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Northern California);
- Awarded to the applicant who best articulates their creative intent and the anticipated educational impact of the scholarship as well as demonstrates the highest quality of work (based in equal measure on technical merit, composition/design, originality of work, and clarity/effectiveness of ideas);
- Scholarship to be used for classes and professional development opportunities (e.g. residencies, mentorship, etc.);
- Scholarship recipient agrees to give a presentation/demonstration relating to their educational experience:
 - Recipient's resulting work will be promoted at a Seattle Woodturners meeting/event and will be featured on the club's website/social media channels;
 - The Seattle Woodturners will cover any costs associated with travel and lodging;
 - Recipient agrees to donate a signed art piece for the annual Seattle Woodturners auction;
- Applicant consents to the use of application images/content by the Seattle Woodturners in marketing materials promoting the scholarship, including:
 - Bio;
 - Headshot, photograph(s) of work, logo, or other image to be published with bio;
 - Applicable social media handle(s) and/or website address;
- Applications will be reviewed by a committee of representatives from the Seattle Woodturners and will include external artists and arts professionals;
- Scholarship committee representatives are not eligible to apply;
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.

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!

Videos from AAW Video Source & YouTube

[Jake Gevorgian – Jewelry Egg Container](#)

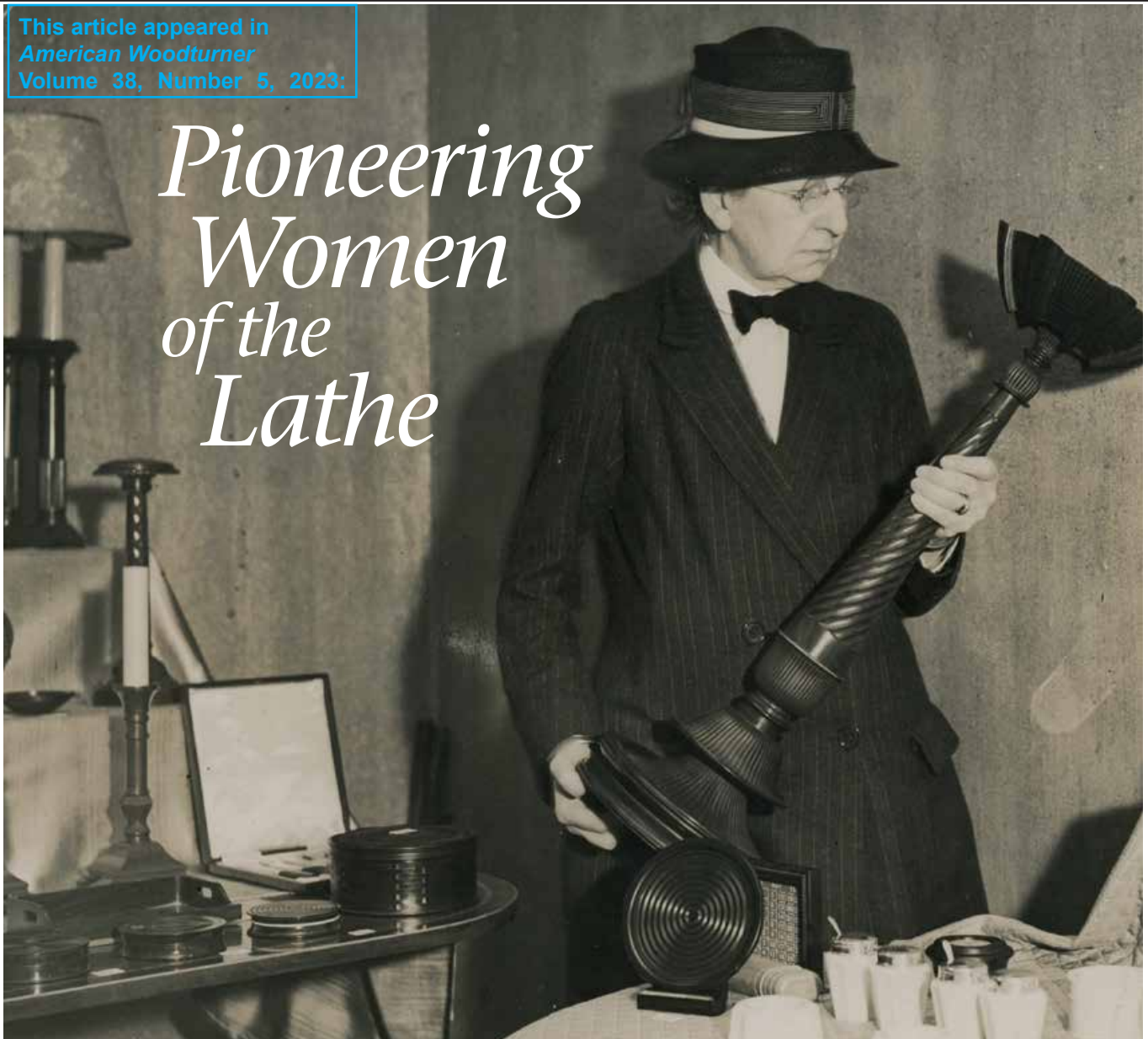
[Flowers for Mothers' Day – The Tiny Trailer Workshop](#)

[Nick Cook – Garden Dibble \(learn to use a skew\)](#)

Women in Turning - From the Archives

This article appeared in
American Woodturner
Volume 38, Number 5, 2023:

Pioneering Women of the Lathe



When the American Association of Woodturners (AAW) was formed in 1986, Betty Scarpino, Merryll Saylan, Bonnie Klein, Helga Winter, Virginia Dotson, and Maria von Kesteren were already vital forces in contemporary turning. In the almost four decades since, we have seen a notable increase in women turners, but women have been present in the ranks for at least 250 years, and almost certainly longer.

Historic records from the City of London between 1600 and 1800 reveal only one wood guild in which girls or

women were documented—woodturning, with twenty-one female apprentices listed. Starting in the 1500s, the ornamental lathe was taken up by the nobility in Europe and the United Kingdom. In stark contrast to the lathes used by turners who produced functional goods, the ornamental lathe could be likened to a Lamborghini in terms of intricacy and prestige. Its practitioners included Queen Victoria and Catherine the Great, among others.

Sister Lillian Barlow (1876-1942) holds the unique distinction of being the last

Shaker to practice the craft of chairmaking. She was also the first Shaker woman employed in that craft. As the celibate sect's population dwindled in the early 1900s, previously regimented gender roles eased. Sister Lillian, "a hard worker with little time for nonsense," stepped up when the future of furniture-making in the Community looked bleak. For thirty years, she was both a production turner and the manager of the Mt. Lebanon Woodworking Co., eventually handling all aspects of the business, including expanding the market for

Lady Crawford was a prolific ornamental turner. In this 1930s exhibition photo, she is showing a large lamp stand, probably made from lignum vitae.



Shaker chairs to the “outside” world.

As shown in the following short biographies, women of the past came to woodturning for a range of reasons—from filling a practical need to fulfilling a passion. Women of today still do.

To learn more, read “From ‘La Femme de Charpentier’ to the ‘Lumberjill,’” by Suzanne Ellison, found at blog.lostartipress.com/2016/04/24/from-la-femme-de-charpentier-to-the-lumberjill. Also visit ornamentalturning.net and turnersco.com.

—Tib Shaw, Curator, AAW Gallery of Wood Art

Lady Gertrude Crawford (1868-1937)

Born into British nobility, Lady Gertrude Crawford was a third-generation ornamental turner who reportedly learned to turn as a child. According to a 1928 newspaper article, her ornate turnings in ivory and wood had won every guild award from the Worshipful Company of Turners, and she was awarded the rank of master turner in 1915. In the guild’s 800-year history, Lady Gertrude was one of a very few women to achieve the status Freeman of London and the first “by the work of her own hands.” She exhibited often and later in life sold her work, including a cigarette box obtained by Queen Mary. Ever an innovator, in her sixties she started to turn a plastic material she co-invented.

Lady Crawford may well have benefitted from studying the *Handbook of Turning*, published in 1842, a thorough, readable, and very popular guide to ornamental turning. It was published anonymously but is generally attributed to another

remarkable woman, turner Mary Gascoigne. Learn more about Mary Gascoigne—and Lady Gertrude—at ornamentalturning.net.

Lady Gertrude was remarkable in other ways, too: already mechanically inclined, she was an early adopter of the motorcar. Not simply an avid motorist, she co-owned Borthwick’s garage and driving school in London with another woman. Making good use of her early training, she was the first Englishwoman to work in a munitions plant during WWI, and the first female chief commandant of the Women’s Royal Air Force, a position she promptly quit when she realized it was only a figurehead position. In her spare time, she bred Shetland cattle and ponies, was a Zoological Society fellow, designed a superior goat house, and patented a knife with a built-in spool of twine. Her name lives on in the Gertrude Crawford Award, bestowed by the Worshipful Company of Turners of London (turnersco.com). ▶



Lady Gertrude Crawford with her Holtzapffel ornamental lathe, fitted with an electric motor.

Images of Lady Crawford are copyright Nicholas Somers, published with permission.



A necklace designed and turned by Lady Gertrude Crawford.

Photo courtesy of Woolley and Wallis Salerooms Ltd.

**Kaija Aarikka
(1929-2014)**

Finnish textile design student Kaija Aarikka was on the hunt for the perfect button to complement a wool dress she was creating for her master's thesis in applied arts. Finding nothing that matched her ideal, she decided to make her own, and began turning. The buttons, as recounted by her daughter Pauliina, garnered more attention than the dress itself, prompting Kaija and her husband Erkki Ruokonen to establish a small button business.

Expanding their product range, she ventured into jewelry design, combining silver with vibrant wooden beads. Her new line echoed the dancing movement of traditional Sámi risku brooches, but in an entirely contemporary way. Candlestick holders, toys, gifts, and home decor items soon followed. Her joyful pairing of affordable colorful birch beads and natural wood items came to embody Scandinavian design for many, and Aarikka products are still retailed today worldwide.

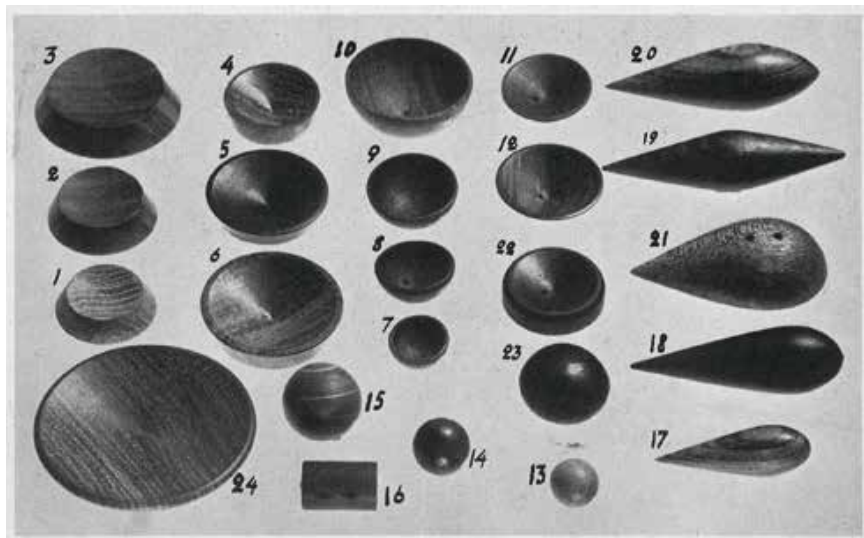
Kaija Aarikka's designs earned her two of Finland's most prestigious accolades: the Pro Finlandia, recognizing her artistic contributions, and the honorary title of Kauppaneuvos, in acknowledgment of her contributions to commerce. A retrospective of her sixty-year design career will be held in Helsinki in 2023/2024.

To learn more about Kaija's history, visit <https://museo.aarikka.com>; for more on her retrospective exhibition, visit tiny.cc/Kaija.



Kaija Aarikka and her husband Erkki Ruokonen in the early days of their business. Their daughter Pauliina took over as artistic director when Kaija retired. Aarikka, Pauliina recalls, "was 5 years old when I was born. There were always works in progress around the house, and heaps of buttons and wooden balls of various colors. To this day I still think the loveliest smell in the world is fresh sawdust."

Photo: Museo Aarikka



The original Aarikka line of buttons. Number 17 was the original design.

Photo: Museo Aarikka



Ruusukka pendant, designed by Kaija Aarikka in 1961. Birch, metal.

Photo: Susan Harstad



Mildred Blaine Garrett (1910-1986)

Mildred Blaine Garrett learned to turn in the small town of Richmond, Missouri, in the early 1940s. As family lore has it, she learned so that she and her new husband J.P. could furnish the house that she'd designed. (If the last name Garrett sounds familiar, prominent wood artist Dewey Garrett is her son.)

Mildred worked at the local high school, and she and J.P. received assistance from the shop teacher, who let them use the tools and the shop after hours. They made desks, dressers, caned chairs, and lamps. Clever with her hands and with a keen eye for design, Mildred turned lamps, as well as split turnings for wall sconces and cabinet knobs. At one point, J.P. mentioned that although he was frightened when Mildred was hit by a spindle flying off their little Sears lathe, she took it in stride. "Our father told me that he taught her to turn," relates Dewey, "but he sharpened the carbon steel chisels. She let him do the unpleasant and repetitious work, and she got the fun job!" ■



In 1981, when Dewey Garrett bought his first home and was learning to turn, his mother sent him this lamp pattern, along with walnut wood his father had harvested many years before.

Mildred Garrett's walnut lamp from the 1940s with one of son Dewey's sculptures, c1990.

Photo: Dewey Garrett

Women in Wood

“This exhibit is an integral element in Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts’ exhibitions programming,” Karen Green, Arrowmont’s gallery coordinator, comments. “The aim is to present artworks that feature women artists working in wood and their contributions to wood media.” The exhibit is on display in the Sandra J. Blain Gallery (Arrowmont, Gatlinburg, TN) from October 16—January 2 and was jointly facilitated by AAW’s WOOD (Woodturned Objects On Display) exhibitions committee and Karen Green.

Jennifer Shirley,
Watch Over Me,
2009, Dyed pecan,
walnut, maple,
12" × 17" × 4"
(305mm × 430mm × 100mm)



Photo: Randy Balthus

Dixie Biggs, *Ebb & Flow,*
2009, Bleached maple, ebony,
13" × 4½" × 7"
(330mm × 115mm × 180mm)



Katie Hudnall,
Pirate Stool, 2005,
Wood, metal,
upholstery, paint, finish,
16" × 16" × 12"
(406mm × 406mm × 305mm)

Photo: Taylor Dabney

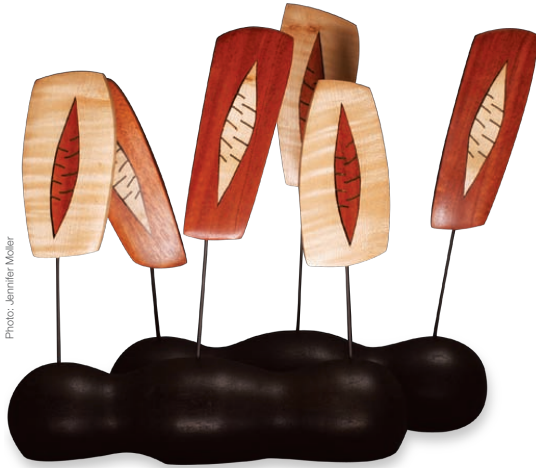


Photo: Jennifer Möller

Beth Ireland, *Jellystone Park*, 2009, Dyed poplar, mahogany, sycamore, 9" × 12" × 4" (230mm × 305mm × 100mm)



Photo: Jerry Anthony

Barbara Crockett, vessel, 2008, Spalted maple, 13" × 11" (330mm × 280mm)



Andi Wolfe, *Parturition No. 2*, 2009, Afzelia burl, 6½" × 5" (165mm × 127mm)

Photo: Jerry Anthony

Kimberly Winkle, *The Cat's Meow Tiger Stripe Pedestal Tables*, 2009, Poplar, maple, prisma, graphite, polychromed, 36" × 18" (91cm × 46cm)

Brenda Stein, untitled, 2006, Magnolia, 6" × 10" (152mm × 254mm)

Photo: John S. Cummings



Photo: John Lucas

From the Editor:

This year's Rocky Mountain Woodturning symposium is a milestone for Women In Turning. It will be the first regional symposium in North America to feature an all-women lineup. The *Women and Wood Art Symposium* (2009) described by Barbara Dill, was also a landmark event, featuring the pioneering women who helped to lead us into the modern age of woodturning as art. As Loretta Lynn said in her 1979 album, "we've come a long way, baby."

For the WIT session of this year's AAW Special Interest Night, we'll have a slide show highlighting the activities of the WIT groups in AAW chapters. This is a great way to share activities from your chapter. If your AAW chapter doesn't yet have a WIT group, please consider forming one yourself. It's a great way to bring women together for fun activities and learning experiences. If you don't know where to start, check out the [AAW WIT Liaison area of the AAW website](#). [Robin McIntyre](#), our WIT liaison coordinator, is always willing to help new liaisons get started.

Many thanks to the contributors for this edition of the newsletter: Kathy Allen, Tina Crosby, Barbara Dill, Linda Ferber, Debra Higley–Fieldman, Jean LeGwin, Kay Liggett, Robin McIntyre, MB Rios, Betty Scarpino, Sarah Slocum, Christine Smith, Katie Thompson, and Margaret Turner. 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.

“In the end, there is no ideal condition for creativity. What works for one person is useless for another. The only criterion is this: Make it easy on yourself. Find a working environment where the prospect of wrestling with your muse doesn't scare you, doesn't shut you down. It should make you want to be there, and once you find it, stick with it.”

–Twyla Tharp

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

Marie Anderson

Email: danmar12@yahoo.com

Dixie Biggs

Email: dixie@dixiebiggs.com

Linda Ferber

Email: lindajaneferber@gmail.com

Jean LeGwin

Email: jlegwin@ec.rr.com

Robin McIntyre

Email: robinmcintyre@comcast.net

Tib Shaw

Email: tib@woodturner.org

Andi Wolfe (Newsletter Editor)

Email: andiwolfe@yahoo.com

Linda Britt (ex-officio)

Email: lbritt@comcast.net

*Dream more,
learn more, care
more, and be
more.”
- Dolly Parton*

AAW

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

WIT Newsletter Editor: Andi Wolfe - andiwolfe@yahoo.com