

## Turning Traditional Christmas Ornaments

by Janice Levi

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Turning traditional Christmas ornaments with finials is something that many turners hesitate to try. I often hear comments such as, "I can't turn a finial that thin," "My ornaments end up looking clunky," or, "This ornament just doesn't look right," from those who do give it a try. With just a few simple guidelines, a turner, either beginner or advanced, can turn a beautiful heirloom ornament.

When selecting the wood for the globe of the ornament, a wide variety of native hardwoods, soft woods, or purchased woods can be used (mesquite, maple, sycamore, pecan, osage orange, elm, mahogany, holly, or even a year-old Christmas tree). Although you may also choose a beautiful exotic wood, some of them may be too heavy for the ornament globe.

When selecting the finial wood, choose a closed-grain hardwood (ebony, blackwood, bloodwood, purple heart, cocobolo, mesquite, hard maple, etc.). Open-grain woods such as ash, oak, or walnut do not work well for the finial.

**DESIGN:** The first thing to remember is that the finial is usually turned to complement the globe. The line of the finial should guide the eye toward the globe without stopping it abruptly with over-sized features. A delicate, uncluttered finial is always preferable to a clunky one that is too short or too long (Photo 1).

The color of the globe and finial blanks should be considered. A beautifully spalted globe looks good with a blackwood or ebony finial. Light colors draw the eye's attention and therefore, a light-colored finial will draw attention away from the globe. If choosing a light-colored finial, make sure you intend for the finial to "steal the show" (Photo 2).

Darker finials almost always look more pleasing, but the shade of the finial usually needs to coordinate with the colors in the globe.

Woodturners may be familiar with the Golden Mean and may use the concept in turning hollow vessels. The Golden Mean also works well for turning ornaments and finials. The ratio of 1:1.618 was first identified by ancient Greeks, and was used in pottery and architecture for attaining perfect proportion. When applying the Golden Mean to an ornament, it may be easier to calculate the ratio using a shortcut called the "Rule of Thirds." If a globe is 2" in diameter, the lower finial would be about 4" in length. The upper finial would be about 1" in height.

**PROCEDURE FOR THE GLOBE:** A 2"-diameter globe is a pleasing size. Mount the blank in your chuck (I mount the square stock into the chuck jaws, but only for small end-grain blanks; Photo 3). Use a ½" drill bit mounted in a Jacobs chuck in the tailstock, and drill a hole to a depth of about 2 ¼" (Photo 4). Tenons for both the top and bottom finials will be ½".

Use a spindle gouge or roughing gouge to turn the blank round (Photo 5). Draw a pencil line at the bottom of the ornament (about 2") and at the half way mark (Photo 6). Use a parting tool to part down at the 2" mark, leaving about 1 ¼" of material for plenty of support while hollowing (Photo 7).

Use a spindle or detail gouge to shape the ornament. Shape as much of the orna-



ment as possible on the left side. This is a large bead and the same process for turning a small bead is applied to turning the globe (Photo 8).

A variety of small hollowing tools are available from various vendors. However, I regularly use hollowing tools made from Allen wrenches (Photos 9, 10).

Before starting to hollow the globe, apply a light coat of thin cyanoacrylate (CA) glue to the upper inside edge of the 1/2" hole you just drilled (Photo 11). You will want to hollow the ornament to a wall thickness of about 1/8". A handy wall thickness gauge can be made from stiff wire (Photo 12). Insert the short leg into the ornament for gauging the thickness of the upper half of the globe (Photo 13). Insert the long leg for gauging the thickness of the lower half of the globe.

For hollowing the lower half of the globe, a 3/4" spindle or detail gouge can be used inside the globe (Photo 14). Be careful when inserting the tool to avoid a catch. Gently pivot the tool back and forth to remove the wood.

When the globe is hollow, use the spindle or detail gouge and shape the lower part of the globe (Photo 15). I use a parting tool on the lower portion. The 1" diameter of the finial will cover a number of rough cuts and tool marks. Just before parting off the globe, sand it through the grits up to 320 if you plan to enhance it with pyrography or color, and 600 if you will leave the globe plain (Photo 16).

**PROCEDURE FOR BOTTOM FINIAL:** Mount the square blank into small chuck jaws (Photo 17). Those used for holding pen blanks are a good choice. Higher lathe speeds make turning the finials easier.

Leave the bulk of the blank square to add strength while turning this long thin finial. Applying the Golden Mean, use a parting tool to mark the upper end of the finial and then to divide the blank into thirds. The finial will be about 4" long. Use a detail gouge or a skew to begin turning the last one-third down to a diameter of about 1/4" (Photo 18). Next, reduce the diameter of the last 1/2" to about 1/8" – 3/16". Take small cuts using the bevel as a guide to turn the point on the end (Photo 19).

Reduce the diameter above the point to a little less than 1/8" in the lower one-third of the finial (Photo 20). Keep the Golden Mean in mind, as well as proportion. Once the delicate features have been cut, don't go back to them as the thinned wood will easily twist off. Sand as you go, supporting the finial with your finger. Begin with 220 grit abrasive and sand through 600 (Photo 21). It may be necessary to turn off the lathe and sand the finial with the grain to remove any tool marks.

At the two-thirds mark, you may choose to add a feature that helps guide the eye upwards toward the globe (Photo 22). Do not make this too large or too cluttered.

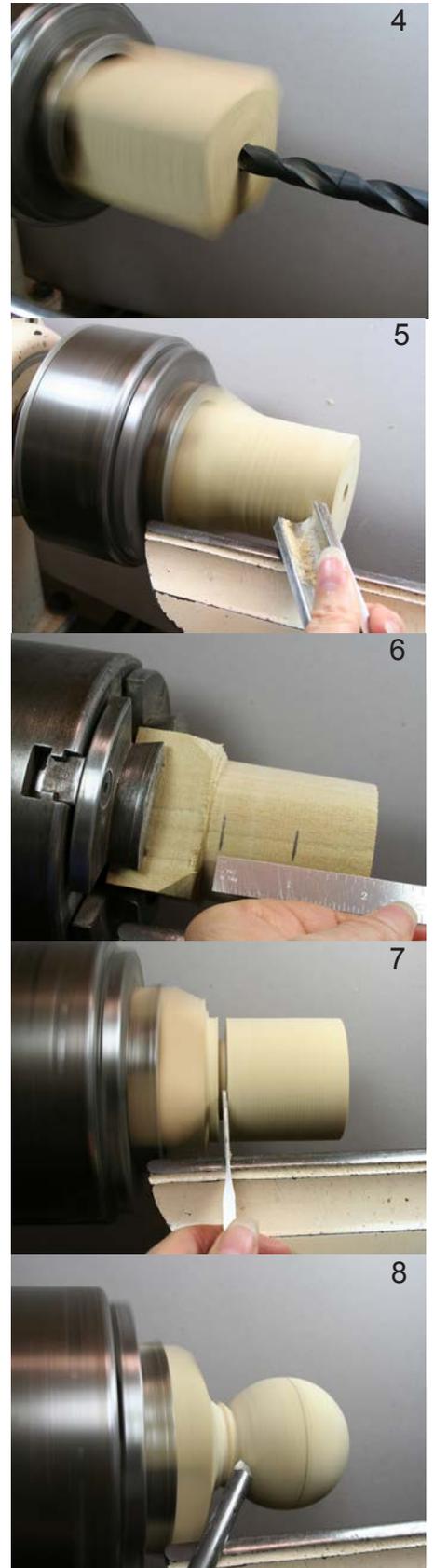
As you approach the thickest portion that will attach to the globe, be sure to undercut the portion that will join to the globe. Use a thin parting tool and reduce the tenon to 1/2". Undercut by angling the parting tool toward the right and part down to a bit less than 1/2" (Photo 23). This is to ensure the finial will fit properly onto the globe. Use calipers to make sure the tenon is 1/2" (Photo 24).

If the wood is a dense hardwood, you may only need to apply a wax finish at this point. Or, you may choose to apply finish to the completed ornament later. Part off the finial (Photo 25).

**PROCEDURE FOR TOP FINIAL:** Using the same wood as the bottom finial, select a design that will complement that finial, but in a much shorter size. I just loosen the chuck jaws and pull the blank out as far as possible.

You may choose to turn either the tenon or the top end first. There are pros and cons both ways. If you turn the tenon first, you can be assured of getting a perfect fit onto the globe, but you will have to drill the hole for the screw eye after the finial is parted off. If you turn the top end first, you can drill the hole for the screw eye while the blank is on the lathe. I prefer to turn the tenon first. I have a small Dremel drill press that I use for drilling the hole after the finial is parted off.

I use a combination of parting tool and spindle gouge to turn the tenon to a diameter



of 1/2" (Photo 26). The top finial will be undercut just as the bottom finial was. Check the fit to the globe often and, when you have a good fit, begin shaping the finial. It should relate in style to the bottom finial, but the features will be slightly smaller.

Leave enough area at the top of the finial to attach a screw eye. Sand and apply finish. Part off the top finial using a detail gouge, skew, or thin parting tool (Photo 27).

**ASSEMBLY:** Drill a tiny hole in the top finial to make it easier to insert the screw eye. I use a Dremel mounted in a Dremel drill press (Photo 28). Put a tiny dab of wood glue on the end of the screw eye before inserting it into the finial (Photo 29). Use wood glue to glue the top and bottom finials into the globe. After the ornament is assembled and the glue is dry, you may choose to apply a finish. Spray lacquer and acrylic are good choices. (Photo 30)

**TOOLS and SUPPLIES:**

3/8" spindle gouge	hollowing tools	thickness gauge
1/4", 1/2" skew	caliper	eye protection
Detail gouge	roughing gouge	dust mask
1/2" drill bit	Jacob's chuck	

Sandpaper (120-600 grit) finish of your choice  
 Chuck with regular jaws and small jaws

**EQUIPMENT:**

Ornament blanks, 2 1/2" X 2 1/2" X 3 1/2" (endgrain)  
 Finial blanks, 1" X 1" X 6 1/2" (endgrain)  
 Screw eyes

**RESOURCES:**

1. Screw eyes—Woodworks, Ltd. At [www.craftparts.com](http://www.craftparts.com) (\$2-4 per 100, 1/32 or 1/8" interior dimension; brass and silver); Divine Beads and Findings (Etsy), 9x3mm.
2. Allen Wrenches—Industrial supply houses (longer shaft for easy mounting into a handle)





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*See the gallery pages for examples of Janice Levi's finished ornaments.*

## WIT Exchange 2018

**Save the date!** Plan to join us for the WIT EXCHANGE to be held September 5-7, 2018, at Arrowmont Arts and Crafts School in Gatlinburg, TN. Come enjoy a unique experience of exchanging ideas, techniques, and creative processes. Each day will be a new beginning of turning, carving, embellishing, and sharing.

The concept of the WIT EXCHANGE is based on "process rather than product." We invite ALL skill levels.

Anticipated cost is \$300 for event registration and meals. Room accommodations can be made through Arrowmont or on your own at local hotels. Registration for event and rooms will open March, 1.

# Women in Turning - Sharing Experiences

## Schwenksville Meet & Mess 2017: A Women's Collaborative Art Retreat by Suzanne Bonsall Kahn

The Meet & Mess was conceived by Sandy Huse and me in order to provide an active hands-on learning experience for women who would like to be more involved with wood turning. I have been a participant at many collaborative learning experiences; ECHO Lake in Bucks County, PA, the WIT Retreat at Apple Ridge in Georgia, Empty Bowls turning workshops and numerous teaching and demonstrating engagements. For me, the shared experience of creative problem solving, exploration and risk taking always results in practical skill building and more importantly, community building.

Sandy and I weren't even quite sure other people would be interested in joining us for our free-form art play date. We didn't want too much programming. We didn't want too many rules. We didn't want to only work at the lathe. We didn't want to have to work too hard, either. Our vision was that every woman would bring something to the table – a potluck of talent – and, together, we would compose a feast. Within twenty-four hours of issuing a vague invitation on the Facebook WIT page (and to other furniture makers, painters & computer programmers), 15 women had signed up!

Without knowing it, we were embarking on the now quite trendy “Unconference” concept. Anne Scott Grasberger provided this Wikipedia definition:

“Typically at an unconference, the agenda is created by the attendees at the beginning of the meeting. Anyone who wants to initiate a discussion on a topic can claim a time and a space. Unconferences typically feature open discussions rather than having a single speaker at the front of the room giving a talk, although any format is permitted. This form of conference is particularly useful when the attendees generally have a high level of expertise or knowledge in the field the conference convenes to discuss.”

Call me crazy, but I'm thinking women are a bit more predisposed to this format.

Sandy (Los Angeles) and Natalia Cebollero Bertran (Puerto Rico) travelled the furthest, and arrived at Philadelphia International Airport within minutes of each other. We had a few days before the main event, so I took the opportunity to get the art party started early. First up, The Center For Art In Wood ([www.centerforartinwood.org](http://www.centerforartinwood.org)). We toured the current Windgate ITE International Residency exhibit, the Permanent Collection and were invited to have lunch in the Bresler Library. Of course, the well-stocked museum store was a hit, too. Albert LeCoff and the staff gave us a warm welcome. Next was the phenomenal Clay Studio ([www.theclaystudio.org](http://www.theclaystudio.org)). In addition to the pieces on exhibit, there was an interesting display and explanation of glazing media and technology. The wall of cups and mugs didn't disappoint, either.

The next day we headed to my new Dovetail Wood Arts studio in Kensington ([www.makenstudios.com](http://www.makenstudios.com)). Sandy and Natalia were able to test drive some brand new Robust Scout lathes; both making bowls with ease. I have been building out the workspace for months, and it was immensely satisfying to see it in action. I had also arranged for a visit from a local photographer, Carrie Biegler. She is the eye behind [www.strengthsourceproject.wordpress.com](http://www.strengthsourceproject.wordpress.com). She interviewed all of us, and took portraits. Her query, “Tell me about about an event in your life, or something that you have done, or currently do now, that makes you feel strong inside.”

Indeed, this was not your average woodturning symposium, and it was going exactly as unplanned as we wanted it to. We hadn't even started yet!

The final art calisthenics training was at the Wharton Esherick House and Museum ([www.whartonesherickmuseum.org](http://www.whartonesherickmuseum.org)). This was the first time most of the women met each other. We were treated to a private tour and had lunch on the porch, thanks to Anne Grasberger and others contributing food and drink. Sandy Huse was particularly happy since she got to see where her piece, “Kleine Voetjes,” would soon be on exhibit.

When we landed in Schwenksville Thursday afternoon, for the official start of the “Meet & Mess,” our creative energy was ready to burst. This is what happened:

- Replace a bandsaw tire...because, of course, they always go flying right before you need to use that machine a lot! Sure, while we're at it, let's replace the guide bearings, too.
- There's an arborist here??? Let's not only talk about chainsaw safety, use, and sharpening, let's have her climb a little, and cut down a huge limb of ash that we'll all use in the days ahead.
- Painting wood? The furniture makers may have been getting nervous, until they saw how Carol does it, honoring the material and bringing out character stories with every stroke of the brush.
- When do we get to turn something??? NOW, at least those who wanted to. Others went down to the pond to explore, or stayed outside with the embellishing crew. “But I'm a beginner,” she said...No worries. Part of the program is teaching people how to teach...new skills come in many forms.

## **Meet & Mess con't**

- Eat, Drink, Laugh
- If you want to understand off center multi axis turning, you're at the right place! Barbara Dill's in the house, and she'll even get started on our collaborative group project—I really do need a new banister, and it should be like nothing you've ever seen.
- Bowls, Bowls, Bowls-You have to start at the end to avoid a clunky base; the method works when you trust it. And the secret about natural edge bowls? They're actually a bit easier to hollow because of the interrupted edge. Tear out? Sharpen. Ridges? Body movement.
- Yes, of course you can go carve, or do pyrography, or get some food or take a walk in the woods again... Everyone was free to gravitate where their inspiration led them.
- Book Bindings. What was that about? For me, it was another kind of storytelling, of preserving ideas and honoring them. It was recycled papers and keeping track of time, and honoring it. It was Amy's way of showing us what a rock star she is, naturally!
- Fire Pit aka clean the shop, more food, more drink, the best dark chocolate ever ([www.sweetashleys.com](http://www.sweetashleys.com))
- Musings from a collector. Why do you buy what you buy? Why is it crucial to support artists? Why are collaborative works valuable?
- Table Saws. Even an old crappy one gets the job done safely if you understand the dynamics: rip, crosscut, material selection, splitters, fences, jigs, fixtures, sleds.
- Vacuum Chucking. Nancy says it's easy, no big deal. She's right, except it took a while to figure out that the chuck we were trying to use was leaking air, and it wasn't the uneven surface of the bowl...problem solving at its best.
- Time for something new... crayons in a glue gun anyone? Yes please. Using baking flour and water as a resist medium instead of clay or mud? Achieving a uniform consistency is much easier, the lines are crisper and you can burn more

"As someone who is relatively new to the woodworking world and younger in age (according to some), I am always timid to participate in group events based around any particular woodworking skills, or projects, because I am always so sure that everyone has more experience, and, thus, more to contribute than I can. All that to say, a women's-only event called "Meet and Mess" sounded too fun (and more relaxed than other woodworking events) to miss. I'm typically not one to be drawn to and/or deterred from anything based on "women only" or any gender separation but, knowing that my first collaborative art retreat would mean walking into a space filled with people, specifically ladies, who had been exactly where I am in my career, experience, and in my own self-conscious head, made me feel at ease. That ease allowed room for excitement to work its way in between the self-awareness. Through my eyes, the meet and mess was sheer inspiration, motivation, and warmth. Watching talented, experienced women bring such an array of skills and insights to one place for the sole purpose of sharing with others was truly amazing. I was taught so much technique/skill, pushed to try new things, encouraged as I tried those new things, and all the while being asked questions about the things I specialize in. Who knew a square-dependent furniture maker would be of any use to a room mostly filled with turners? I felt like a student, teacher, and friend all at once! It was a woodworking environment unlike any other I have participated in. Everyone was supportive, egos weren't present, and makers activity [abounded]. In the weeks since leaving the Meet & Mess weekend, I have a confidence and willingness to take risks that didn't exist before. I have tried so many new things on my own and am filled with new ideas to pursue."

"I was honored to be invited to the Meet and Mess collaborative! I'm relatively new to wood turning so was just drinking up as much information as I could. I was impressed with how freely everyone shared their talents, ideas, and friendship. I thought the woman-only event added to the experience because we already have a connection with many of the women through Facebook. It was inspirational to see what women can do! I left with more ideas than time, and hope to try every one of them soon, including torching a bowl!

I am so happy to have eclipsed the eclipse with you and the other artists at the Meet & Mess. This was the first time I've participated in such an event and was really thrilled to be invited.

I've never tried wood turning, but have wanted to for quite some time now. I thoroughly enjoyed the demonstrations, the comradery, and the chance to finally try my hand at turning.

I kind of liked it being just women; there's definitely a different air in a gathering of women vs a mixed group. My bowl is a prized possession that sits proudly in my china closet, and I take every opportunity to share it, and the experience with whomever wants to hear about it.

Thank you again for hosting such an awesome event."

"I think the event was great with women-only primarily because of what we have talked about on the WIT page...a lot of women are more comfortable not having to worry about looking less knowledgeable or experienced or just simply to have to fight to be heard in a crowd of men...they have dominated the craft, so stuff like this provides an environment that is less about competition & more about non-judgmental learning & rah-rahing. That being said, I think men could be involved if they were picked selectively...I like the idea less, but I'm willing to deal.

What I am most excited to have taken away from this are the new connections I have made with like-minded artists of different specialties. It was like a wine-tasting where you could go from taste to taste, and each sample gave a new perspective on ways of making, and how they all mesh together. And of course, how to ruin a perfectly good top-of-the-line glue gun."

"Although my mobility was somewhat compromised by a healing broken leg, I was delighted to be included in this event, even just for the one day I was able to attend. I have been involved in several other collaborations, usually of a longer duration, usually focused upon making as many objects as possible for fundraising. This one involved more demonstration and less actual hands-on work, mostly because I was unable to stand for long enough to operate tools. So, I spent most of my time either watching others demonstrate and discuss their methodologies, or sketching them while they worked. I enjoyed that it was an all-women event-- I am used to being one of a few women in male professions and environments, with all the pros and cons of those circumstances. It was delightful to be surrounded by so many accomplished, funny, and kind women, and conversations during meals were hilarious and thought-provoking."

"Thank you so much for including me in your weekend with all those amazingly talented women! I loved the informal way all that incredible information was shared with us - the demos were wonderful and so inspiring!"

• The setting mattered. As I walked down that hill towards the water and trees I felt like I was suspending one world and joining another.

• The shop itself was perfect. So many lathes and other great tools but laid out thoughtfully, with good flow. It never felt crowded even though we had a lot of people in there. Just as important was being able to go outside - see and do something different surrounded by trees - occasionally my brain needed that break (must have been the stress of trying to comprehend 3D space and multi axis turning).

• The participants shaped the event and they were great people. The lathe and wood were the focus but the addition of bookbinding and various methods of embellishing really made my creative brain swell and the effect lingers."

***Pictures for the event are on pages 10-12.***

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## **What is a WIT Event?**

There are several types of WIT events:

- Information gatherings intended to introduce non-turners to woodturning
- Demonstrations to new and experienced turners
- Hands-on workshops for new and experienced turners
- Exhibitions

The purpose of all WIT events is to educate women about woodturning, help them improve woodturning skills or exhibit their work. Events are also intended to bring new members into AAW and the local chapters. Events cannot be conducted for profit, nor should any individual personally profit from an event. Event demonstrators can be paid as long as the organizers are not also paid demonstrators.

To be recognized by the AAW-WIT committee as a WIT event, the event organizer needs to submit a registration application to the WIT committee. Applications must be approved by the committee for the event to be recognized as a WIT event.

Because of liability issues, hands-on events have requirements beyond those of other types of events. If these events are sponsored by a local chapter, it can be a win-win. It will help the chapter outreach in its search for new members and the event will be covered by the club's liability insurance. If events are held at a private residence or shop, the owner is required to have appropriate liability insurance.

Although AAW membership is not a requirement for any event attendees, we ask the organizers to promote AAW and AAW membership. For hands-on events, consider charging non-AAW members an additional \$20 and using the additional funds to purchase their temporary 3-month membership. Attendees will leave the event not only with what they've learned at the event, but access to many of the AAW new-turner resources available only to members.

## **What is a WIT event, con't.**

At the end of the event, the organizer is asked to submit the following attendee information to the WIT committee.

Name  
Email/phone  
AAW Member status  
Chapter (if any)

Pictures and articles about the event are welcome additions to the WIT newsletter.

WIT events may qualify for WIT grants. See <http://www.woodturner.org/?page=WITGRANTS>

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## **Huron Valley Woodturners – 2017 EOG/WIT Grant Recipient – \$350**

by Erica Perry

HVW club of Ann Arbor has used the grant award to encourage women clients and staff of the Eisenhower Center, an organization committed to the rehabilitation of clients with traumatic brain injury, to learn woodturning.

This funding provided the women with wood and easy-to-use kits to get them started in the creative process of woodturning. The items ordered included stainless steel pizza cutter kits, candlestick kits, bottle stopper kits in chrome, mandrels, and pen and mug kits. In addition, we purchased CA glue, epoxy, sandpaper and finishes.

In our recruitment process, first we printed up flyers to be posted on Eisenhower Center bulletin boards. Then we had one "Meet and Greet" orientation meeting for the women, and we provided two large pizzas, coffee, soda, and napkins.

We gave the women times that we would be available at Eisenhower Center's workshop, and created schedules. We then began the mentoring process using the following curriculum:

1. Learning how to hold the tools on green wood.
2. Learning how to make coves and beads.
3. Learning how to turn a bottle stopper.
4. Learning how to make a candlestick holder or ice cream scoop.
5. For some highly-motivated women, we bought advanced kits like pens and mugs.

Twenty-three women signed up for this set of workshops, five of whom were women clients at Eisenhower Center. We got great support from the Eisenhower Center administration for this project, with the manager, Charlie Morse, putting an hour of turning workshop on their schedule for each woman who signed up.

Charlie, a manager who has been at the Eisenhower Center for 20 years, told us: "This is a very stressful place to work because this client population can be very volatile, and profoundly depressed. We would have much greater staff turnover if we didn't allow our staff some time to de-stress, and this is a heaven-sent outlet for them. And for me, I had no idea that woodturning could be so much fun. I am actually thinking of creating a home workshop for myself to continue this craft."

Quetresia, an aide there, has told us: "I have always wanted to learn to use a lathe, and to have this hour actually written into my schedule makes me feel so grateful to my workplace." She also has asked if she can bring her 13-year-old son at some point.

Jen B, a woman client with severe TBI limitations, has told us: "This is the most fun I have ever had!!! Please don't ever stop this program!!" Her mother, Karen, who visits Jen every day, calls us "Jen's angels," and: "I am so impressed with what my daughter can do in this workshop."

Several women staffers have requested that we extend this set of "Learn and Turn" workshops to designated Saturdays in the future, which will be starting in December, 2017.

Lyn: "I am an accountant here at EC, and [I] cherish the opportunity to move out of my office [to] actually engage in learning how to put [a] tool to wood, and have something wonderful emerge. I hope this program continues!"

Brooke: "Because I have two little ones, I have to hurry home most of the time after work, so I have missed out on two weeks. I have requested that the HVW volunteers set aside Saturdays for continuing learning for me and several other staff members who have childcare issues during the week. I want to eventually participate in their annual Holiday Sales/Benefit in December, and actually see if some of the things I have created under their mentorship will be saleable! My husband thinks so!!"

Avia: "My dad was a woodworker but I never got the chance to learn from him. This has been on my bucket list for years, and who would have thought that my work could provide this artistic outlet for me. And it is really amazing to learn along-side of our TBI clients who can laugh when I make mistakes. I believe our relationship is strengthened as we learn together."

Unexpected consequences for the Huron Valley Wood turner volunteers have been how much fun we have had extending our clients. Though the six HVW volunteers have assigned days, we also come in on days off because we are excited to watch these

**HVW grant con't**

women progress on their projects. At least five of the women have indicated an interest in coming to our club meetings, and, eventually, participating in our Holiday Sale/Benefit with us.

Here are a few of our happy women turners!



Thankyou, AAW, and WIT, for this great opportunity to share our craft, increase our club membership, and have fun!!

P.S.: we were so lucky to have Kathleen Duncan come and demonstrate piercing at our club over the Thanksgiving weekend, which marked the end of our grant period. Unfortunately, the women who had said they would come were out of town. or had the cold that was hitting everybody, including Kathleen. Feedback from our club members, however, was that they learned so much from Kathleen, and that her handout was wonderfully informative. I have shared it with the new women turners from this grant project.

# Pictures from the Schwenksville Meet & Mess 2017



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**WOOD CRAFT CENTER**  
Wood Carving • Wood Turning • Furniture

**The Dreidel Story**  
The original Dreidel was a regular round top that was used in the time of the Greek empire, where the story of Chanukkah takes place. The Greeks prohibited the learning of the Torah/Bible. The kids would gather to learn but as soon as the Greeks came, they would start to play with the Dreidels. Another story is mentioned that the adults would use a Dreidel with letters and they would spin and use the letters to represent the topic they were learning.

**The modern day game of Dreidel**  
The letters on the dreidel are explained as follows:

*Nun* = *Nix* = *Miscele*  
*Gimmel* = *Gadol* = *Great*  
*Hey* = *Hoyah* = *Was* [took place]  
*Shin* = *Shum* [in the Diaspora] = *There, Poy - Puh* [in Israel] = *Here*

The traditional Dreidel uses the letter *Shin* because the origin of the game came from Jewish communities in Europe. Traditionally when spinning for Chanukkah Oil (usually chocolate shaped like a coin in a gold wrapper) the letters apply as follows:

**Letter Yiddish English Game**  
*Nun Nixt Nothing* The player gets/gives 'nothing'  
*Gimmel Ganz Gets all* The player 'gets' the whole pot  
*Hey Halb Half* The player gets 'half' of the pot  
*Shin Shira!* Penalty The player 'sends' the amount of candy that is in the pot to the pot

Each player takes a turn spinning the dreidel and before he or she spins, each player puts one candy in the pot.



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**Editor's note:** I asked Eli Aviserra to tell me about holiday traditions in Israel. He sent me information about the tradition of the Dreidel. I thought others would also appreciate having this information.

# Opportunities for Women in Turning

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

### Regional & Club Events

**January 26-27, 2018.** Tennessee Association of Woodturners Symposium; Franklin, TN. Betty Scarpino is one of the featured demonstrators at this symposium. For more information: [symposium website](#).

**February 9-11, 2018.** Florida Woodturning Symposium; Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center. Featuring: Dixie Biggs and Miriam Carpenter. For more information: [symposium website](#).

**March 10-11, 2018.** Honolulu Symposium; Honolulu, HI. Featuring Ashley Harwood (demonstrations and hands-on sessions). For more information: [symposium website](#).

**March 10-11, 2018.** [Wilmington Area Woodturners](#); Wilmington, NC. Dixie Biggs: All-day demonstration and all-day hands-on session.

**Sally Ault demos & classes:** Central Coast Woodturners; San Luis Obispo, CA: Jan 20, 2018; The Greater Vancouver Woodturners Guild; Feb 3-4, 2018; Tennessee Area Woodturners; March 6-7, 2018.

Check out the [Ladies of the lathe Facebook page](#)! This is a page sponsored by the Front Range Woodturners, and you'll find information about their monthly hands-on classes for women. Their next hands-on class is January 21, 2018, at the Rockler Store in Denver, Colorado.

### Topsy Turvy! WIT for AAW's 2018 EOG Auction

Next year's AAW Educational Opportunity Grant Project is titled Topsy Turvy! The project for the 2018 EOG Auction gives our participants the opportunity to explore an easy exercise on the lathe to create a spin top. Participants are encouraged to submit a spin top for Topsy Turvy! There is a limit of one donation per person. The spin tops must be done on the lathe. Spin tops are different from a Trompo or Whipping Top-these are tops which are spun by winding a length of string around the body, and launching it so that it lands and spins. **Trompos or Whipping Tops are NOT to be submitted.** Tops can be carved, wood-burned or colored, but should be able to spin. We are including pictures of the spinning tops we will accept, and an image of a Whipping Top that we will NOT accept. The tops will be presented grouped together in a custom-designed display, and because of this there is a size restriction: tops can be no larger than 3.5" tall x 2.5" wide x 2.5" deep. To have time for professional photos and to take advantage of early publicity for promotion to potential buyers, **your contribution must be delivered by January 31, 2018.** Work should be shipped to: Tania Radda, 1519 W Augusta Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85021. Put your thinking caps on and let's make this another fun and successful project! Any questions about the project can be sent to Tania Radda, email: [radda@cox.net](mailto:radda@cox.net)

### AAW Educational Opportunity Grant

AAW's Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) program offers grants to selected applicants for woodturning education (\$1000 for individuals, \$1500 for chapters). The EOG fund continues to be strong, thanks to the wonderful generosity of donors and buyers at our Annual Symposium auction. Funds or lathes are available for worthy proposals. The AAW Board encourages you to take advantage of this educational benefit. To be eligible for a 2018 grant, applications must be received by **December 31, 2017.**

#### How to apply

You can complete the application form and review the guidelines at <http://www.woodturner.org/?page=GrantsEOG>. The committee will not consider applications that are incomplete or vague, so please take care when applying. Include details on how you will use the funds or lathes. Specific needs should be itemized. Explain your educational goal or experience desired.

If you have questions, please contact Molly Winton, EOG Committee Chair, at [molly@woodturner.org](mailto:molly@woodturner.org) or the AAW office.

### WIT Grant Opportunities

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. For that purpose, WIT has established grant opportunities to help defray the costs to individuals, groups, schools, and local AAW chapters in sponsoring events that support AAW's WIT Committee goals. Grant applications will be evaluated and funds distributed quarterly. For more information and the online application, please see <http://www.woodturner.org/?page=WITGRANTS>.

**The next application date deadline is January 31, 2018.**



## Women In Turning Event in Eastern NC April 6, 7 & 8, 2018

**Beth Ireland** will be our demonstrator on April 6, 2018. She will teach how to make a tool, sharpening, and spindle turning - making a handle.

**Barbara Dill** will be our demonstrator April 7. Barbara will wow us with her off-set turning.

**Kathern Merk-Hazelrigg** will demonstrate carving.

**Scarlette Rouse** will turn, and we may have a spoon carver and one other professional demonstrator.

We will have access to 20 lathes and 2 band saws. Cost will be \$100.00. This will cover lunch, snacks, beverages, supplies, and to pay some for use of the space. If there are monies left, the group will decide what to do with it. We will eat supper out each night (dutch).

You can fly into Pitt-Greenville airport [www.flypgv.com](http://www.flypgv.com), and we'll pick you up. I have blocked some rooms at Mother Earth Lodge ([motherearthmotorlodge.com](http://motherearthmotorlodge.com) 252-520-2000) in Kinston, NC. Continental breakfast served. Rooms are \$119.00 plus tax for 2 queen beds. Scarlette Rouse can pick you up on her way to the shop each day. There are lots of restaurants within walking distance. Reservations will be made for Thursday April 5, at "The Chef and the Farmer" restaurant (they have a show on PBS).

For more info, e-mail Scarlette Rouse at [scarletterouse@gmail.com](mailto:scarletterouse@gmail.com). Everyone is welcomed to join us!!

## The Tennessee Association of Woodturners

presents its 30th Annual Woodturning Symposium **January 26th and 27th, 2018**, at the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center in Franklin, TN. The 2018 Woodturning Symposium features these leading woodturners and artisans: Betty Scarpino, Stuart Batty, Jimmy Clewes and Mike Mahoney. For more information and to register go to the TAW website [www.tnwoodturners.org](http://www.tnwoodturners.org) and click on the 2018 Symposium tab. There will be a WIT luncheon meeting in the Arabian Room on Saturday, January 27th.

*"When the whole  
world is silent, even  
one voice becomes  
powerful."  
- Malala Yousafzai*



### Turnabout: Women at the Lathe

It is a pleasure to share the work that will be shown in the upcoming exhibition, "Turnabout: Women at the Lathe," a blended invitational and juried exhibition celebrating both known and new voices in our field.

The exhibition was co-curated by artists Dixie Biggs and Sharon Doughtie, and by AAW curator, Tib Shaw.

Turnabout will premiere at the Appalachian Center for Craft (ACC), in Smithville, Tennessee, where it will run from January 15, 2018 – March 12, 2018. Next stop is 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: 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!

## WIT Region 3 Retreat 2018

by Lou Kinsey

Greetings!

If you haven't already heard – the first ever WIT Region 3 Retreat at Arrowmont was a huge success. So much so that we've already planned our 2nd Retreat, and here are the details!

Who: You – the women of WIT Region 3  
What: The chance to spend the weekend with some very special ladies  
When: March 1 – 4, 2018  
Where: Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Gatlinburg, TN  
Why: Because we all can learn, we all can teach, and we all can make new friends

If that's not enough to entice you to give it some serious thought, here are some thoughts from folks that attended the 1st Retreat:

*"Each of the women in the group, whether they were a seasoned veteran or a "newbie," all brought something to this dynamic collaborative. We, each of us, learned something from everyone." – Crystal Earle*

*"After participating in this event, I now feel more confident with choosing the right tools, sharpening them, using a chainsaw properly and safely operating the lathe. More importantly, I now have 12 resources that I can reach out to when I have a question, an idea, or to share photos of my finished projects." – Wendy Cummins*

*"Fourteen strangers gathered on Thursday. Fourteen friends left on Sunday" – Kimberly Glover*

Interested, but still unsure? Maybe, but you have some questions? Here are some finer details that may help:

**Sally Ault** has volunteered to be the lead instructor and demonstrator. If you haven't been fortunate enough to see Sally at a symposium, check out her work here: <http://www.sallyault.com/>. Sally won't be the only one there to help out as **Jean LeGwin** has also volunteered to assist. She's very excited to work with new turners – so if you've just ventured into turning – or would like bring a friend with you – Jean will be there to help. **Kimberly Glover** and **Lou Kinsey** will also be lending a hand where needed. Not to mention – everyone brings something to the table, and you'll find folks just helping folks – that's what we do.

Arrowmont's Woodturning Studio is equipped with lathes, both big and small, and a fine selection of tools for anyone who is coming by plane. If you drive, you are encouraged to bring your tools from home – especially if sharpening is not a strength. We'll fix that while you're here.

We will be taking over two of the Arrowmont dorms for our group – Stuart Hall and Teacher's Cottage. Don't worry, there's a place to lay your head when it's full of shavings at day's end.

While we are on campus, we will be having breakfast and lunch at the house, and a wonderful hot evening meal at the Dining Hall on campus. You are welcome to bring any additional goodies that you may want or need – your own coffee maker, snacks, water, etc..

What's the bottom line? This all-inclusive weekend (housing, studio, meal, workshop) can be reserved 2 ways:

Thursday 3/1/18, noon arrival – Sunday 3/4/18, 5 pm departure - \$425.00  
Friday 3/2/18, noon arrival – Sunday 3/4/18, 5 pm departure - \$320.00  
Registration is open ONLY to WIT Region 3 currently. If any lathes are still open as of 12/15/17, the invitation goes to all 600+ women on the WIT roster, so don't think about it too long!  
To Register – email: [loukinsey@me.com](mailto:loukinsey@me.com) or call 870.450.2990. We promise – you'll be glad you came!

*"This journey has always been about reaching your own other shore no matter what it is, and that dream continues."  
- Diana Nyad*

# Women in Turning Gallery - Holiday Traditions

Ornaments by Janice Levi



# Women in Turning Gallery - Holiday Traditions

Ornaments by Joan Lech



# Women in Turning Gallery - Holiday Traditions



**Ornaments by Peggy Schmid  
decorated by Cindy Boehrns**



**Ornament by  
Sally Ault**



**Ornaments by Kathleen Duncan (L)  
and  
Ruth Schwaesdall RoBards (R)**



# Women in Turning Gallery - Holiday Traditions



## Cindy Navarro

Flame Box Elder; ca 6" X 3.5" . The handle is made from twigs that were drilled and brass rods inserted to hold them together. It was then covered with Milliput and allowed to dry, then carved with a micromotor and covered with jute cording. It is oiled and waxed with Liberon wax. It was made as a gift for a friend who loves this Japanese style.

## Video Resources & Miscellaneous Links

If you've ever wanted to know how to make ornaments, tops, yo-yos or other small projects, this section of the newsletter is where you will find links to instructional or inspirational videos. Just click on the highlighted link to open the video.

[Turning Tops on a Lathe - by Ernie Conover](#)

[Turning a Snowman - by Nick Cook](#)

[Turning a Christma Tree Ornament - by Brad Vietje](#)

[Turning a Snowman Couple - by Carl Jacobsen](#)

[Sea Urchin Ornament Part 1 - by Cindy Drozda](#)

[Sea Urchin Ornament Part 2 - by Cindy Drozda](#)

[Japanese Tradition - Turning a Top](#)

(this video is in Japanese)

### From the Editor:

**Information needed for the newsletter!** The WIT newsletter needs calendar items to help women turners know about upcoming opportunities and events. If you have information about exhibit opportunities, club demos, hands-on gatherings in the works, gallery shows, or any topic that is relevant to WIT, please send the information to me by email for inclusion in the newsletter. Use the subject line, "WIT March Newsletter information." I'm particularly interested in stories about events involving women in turning, especially regional gatherings of turners for workshops or hands-on experiences. If you enjoyed reading the "Sharing Experiences" section of the newsletter, please contribute your own stories for inspiring other women in turning. I would like to hear from the WIT Regional Ambassadors - tell us what is happening in your area. Reviews and reports about women who demonstrate at club, regional, national, and international events are also welcomed. These kinds of reports are often put out on online forums - mostly about male demonstrators. Let's spread the word about women demonstrators as well. You don't have to be an experienced writer - I am happy to edit contributions for readability.

**New feature for the newsletter:** I've added a new section to the newsletter to take advantage of the online distribution we use for every issue. Namely, a section with links to tutorial videos. Where possible, I will feature videos by women turners. If you know of good tutorials available online, please send me the information. Use the subject line, "WIT video tutorial." Also, be sure to check out the AAW Video Source Website at <http://aawvideosource.org/php/index.html>. The videos listed here are vetted by the AAW, which helps to ensure quality of instruction.

**This issue's gallery feature** is on holiday traditions and gift items. A big **Thank You! to Janice Levi** for the excellent article that describes her process for making beautiful ornaments. The next newsletter will focus on tops. This will give everyone who contributes to the "Topsy Turvy" project a chance to show off their contributions. I will issue a call for photos on the private Facebook group a couple of weeks before the next newsletter is scheduled to be published. If you are not on Facebook, you can submit photos to me any time before March 1, 2018, by sending them to my email. Use the subject line, "WIT March Newsletter Gallery submission." Include any relevant details in the text of your email. Large photos work better than small ones, especially if I need to do any photo editing. Try for a file size of 1 MB.

**Thank you! to all the Women in Turning who contributed articles or photos for this newsletter:** Sally Ault, Cindy Boehrns, Kathleen Duncan, Suzanne Bonsall Kahn, Lou Kinsey, Joan Lech, Cindy Navarro, Erica Perry, Tania Radda, Ruth Schwaesdall RoBards, Peggy Schmid, Tib Shaw. The Women in Turning Committee has also contributed to content of this newsletter, working diligently behind the scenes. I also thank Eli Aviserra for sharing the information about the dreidel.

*"Knowing what must be done does away with fear."  
- Rosa Parks*

## 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: <http://www.woodturner.org/page/GuestMemberLanding>

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 <http://www.woodturner.org/?page=MemberBenefits>. 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 at <http://www.woodturner.org/?page=WIT>. You'll find all our newsletters, committee meeting minutes, information about WIT outreach grants, and many other goodies there.

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*“A strong woman is a woman determined to do something others are determined not be done.”*  
- Marge Piercy

# AAW

# AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS