

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

SERVING WOODTURNERS WORLDWIDE SINCE 1986.

Member Profile: Elisabeth Ross

September 28, 2017

MEMBER PROFILE: Elisabeth Ross MEMBER #34000645

Elisabeth Ross became interested in woodturning, but in a very round-about way. Her husband operates a tree service and there was a whole lot of beautiful wood that was going to waste. She contacted the closest AAW chapter to see if the members would be interested in wood and they were, indeed. Out of that phone call, 2 Tree Boyz Wood was born. Today Elisabeth is deeply involved in woodturning as both a businesswoman and a new turner.



Elisabeth and her family holding pieces turned from wood they provided.

- **Hometown:** Buford, GA
- **Chapter Affiliation:** [Georgia Association of Woodturners](#)



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Wayne Miller, MA
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- **Number of Years Turning Experience:** New turner

What motivated you to join AAW?

I joined AAW as a Business Member to help establish credibility for my wood-selling business 2 Tree Boyz Wood.

Who, or what, was your greatest teacher/influence?

Mark Sillay (Tucker, GA). When we first decided we wanted to try to sell green wood to turners, I contacted the closest AAW chapter for help as I knew nothing about turning. One of their members introduced me to Mark, who is well known in our area as a turning teacher and wood seller. Mark has been an invaluable teacher and business mentor. My business would not be where it is today without his teaching. He is extremely generous with his time and knowledge and helps others however he can.

What was your happiest turning/selling moment?

My happiest selling moment was learning that my client Mark Doolittle (Joshua Tree, CA) had a piece in the del Mano Turning Wood 2015 show, which was made from a blank I had sold him. The blank came from an ambrosia maple cut out of my front yard. The funny thing is that we had cut that particular blank for a local client who changed his mind. I knew Mark liked turning large pieces, so I asked if he wanted to buy it.

What is your favorite wood/tool and why?

The prettiest tree I've ever sold was that ambrosia maple from my front yard, so I'll have to say ambrosia maple.

In addition to woodturning, what other crafts/hobbies have you enjoyed?

As a mom, I've dabbled in my fair share of kid art, which I enjoy doing with the boys. There was a time when I did cake decorating on a regular basis and even sold decorated cakes. At this stage of life, I am very busy as a homeschooling mom of three and small business owner, so I don't have much time for hobbies. I have recently started running, which is a great stress reliever. I participated in my second 5k run the day after the AAW Atlanta Symposium!

Has being a part of AAW affected your life and work? How?

I feel that being a Business Member has definitely given us the credibility I was seeking. Early on, I received a lot of criticism for trying to sell wood to the turning community without being a turner myself, so I determined I would do my best to immerse myself in the woodturning community in whatever way I could. I

Rick Rich, WA
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(Demonstration and panel topics to be announced.)

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enjoy learning from demonstrations at our local chapters, volunteering at turning events, and attending regional symposiums to network. Soon after I joined AAW, Phil McDonald suggested I join Women In Turning, which was a virtual chapter at that time. I have been able to support the WIT effort in a number of ways, and am honored to use my voice as a woman wood seller to encourage women to become involved in turning.

What is your favorite project or piece?

My all-time favorite piece is the Mark Doolittle piece I previously mentioned, although I feel a connection to each client piece I see. I enjoy my part in bringing tree service green waste to the hands of makers.

How has your local chapter helped you?

My local chapter was actually my first customer back in the fall of 2014, when they purchased cherry to be used at their Turning Southern Style symposium. One of the members of the wood committee later presented me with a bowl from that cherry, which I cherish. I have since joined that chapter, the [Georgia Association of Woodturners](#), which gives us a home base in the turning community. The Atlanta area turning community as a whole has been very supportive of our business by teaching us, opening doors for us to sell at chapters, buying wood for demonstrations, and advertising for us. We have received significant support from local turners Dan Douthart, Mark Sillay, Harvey Meyer, Michael Gibson, and Steve Pritchard.

Other information:

I had been looking for a business I could do with my school-aged sons, when my sister-in-law suggested I start selling green wood to turners. My husband owns a tree service and does residential and commercial trimming and removals daily, so we have lots of wood at our disposal. My husband was skeptical until I made \$150 the first day I sold logs. I sold my first load of logs in August 2014, and started selling online and in clubs in January of 2015. I am amazed at how our business has grown. We have shipped wood to forty states to date and had a booth at the AAW Atlanta Symposium. While our clients mainly deal with me, the whole family is involved. My husband Alex brings the wood home and does most of the processing. My sons Alex (11) and Will (8) seal the wood, or watch their 2-year-old sister, Lily, while my husband and I work with wood and clients, and accompany me to turning events. I love that I can contribute to the family income, teach my children valuable life skills, and expose them to the arts at the same time. Even though I'm working far from my career training as a school teacher, I find this path quite rewarding and look forward to the future.

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