



Vendor Spotlight: Ashwurks

By Laura Kirkpatrick

Donna Hopper grew up travelling Europe with her family in the back of a station wagon. Throughout their travels, they visited farmers' markets and ate the locally grown food. This was Donna's first experience with markets and cemented her love for them.



In 2009, she reunited with her high school sweetheart. Steve Hopper was a member of the Royal Canadian Navy and made furniture and cabinetry in his free time. As Donna spent more time in the workshop with him, she asked him to teach her how to make simple things out of the wood he was throwing away.

“He showed me how to make long grain cutting boards,” said Donna. “Then, I started exploring end grain. It was very labor intensive and took a lot of patience.”

By the middle of 2010, Donna was making cutting boards and giving them to friends and family. At the end of 2011, she did her first show. Then, someone suggested she try selling at the Halifax Seaport Farmers' Market.

“I sold out on my very first day,” said Donna. “I booked another day two weeks later, worked my fingers to the bone, and I sold out again.”



From that moment on, Donna was hooked and she became a regular vendor at the Market in January 2012. Her business, Ashwurks, sells wooden creations such as charcuterie boards, platters, cutting boards, wooden plates and magnetic holders.

Since 2012, Ashwurks has grown in the Market from a table to a new boulevard store which just opened February 4, 2017.

“Both of us are thrilled to have this opportunity,” said Donna. “I’m able to feature my creations and people can see Steve’s handy work in the store and the furniture that we’ve built.”



Donna’s business has evolved from a simple wood-working hobby to whatever her imagination can handle. And she’s not done yet.

“To own my own business and do something I’m passionate about is such a gift,” said Donna. “I have so many dreams and plans for future projects.”