

Frequently Asked Questions

How did you get started designing and creating jewelry?

About 16 years ago I saw something I wanted, but I didn't like the price of it *at all*! I said to myself, "I can make that!"

So the next week I went to a craft store and bought what I thought I would need. I had no clue what I was doing, but I came home with some beads, three pairs of pliers, wire, crimps, and a lot of determination.

Somehow, with a lot of fussing and cussing, I managed to put the thing together. It looked passably like the item I wanted, but didn't behave like it.

Altogether, I must have taken that little item apart and put it back together at least a dozen times over the next year. I still have it somewhere in my collection.

How long have you been designing and creating jewelry?

As described above, I made my first piece about 16 years ago.

I initially started making Anglican prayer beads and Catholic rosaries, but found this had a limited scope, so I branched out into jewelry about a year later.

I began as a "stringer", making beaded necklaces and bracelets, and after a year or two I taught myself to wire wrap.

Have you had any special training or classes?

I'm about 98% self taught, with the help of numerous books and web sites.

It helps to be a visual learner, because I can puzzle out diagrams and study pictures to figure out how something is made, and most of the time I get it right, or pretty close to right, anyway.

While living in Richmond, VA, I took jewelry classes at a wonderful school called the Visual Arts Center. I found those classes very helpful, although my instructors were primarily metalsmiths and I was on my own when it came to wire wrapping.

Also, one year I had the opportunity to attend a Bead Fest. I took several classes from recognized experts and spent a lot of time talking to other jewelry designers. That was amazing! Those types of events are an investment but well worth the money.

What advice would you give to a beginner?

Stay tuned....

What's the best advice you've received?

"Let the stone do the talking"....

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