



Friday
APRIL 11,
2003

UPLAND CLAREMONT

CITY NEWS

Dawn Grimes Myers works on one of her rock paintings of a Claremont building in the studio in her home.



WALTER RICHARD WEIS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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'Miracle' rocks artist's world, leads to connection to life

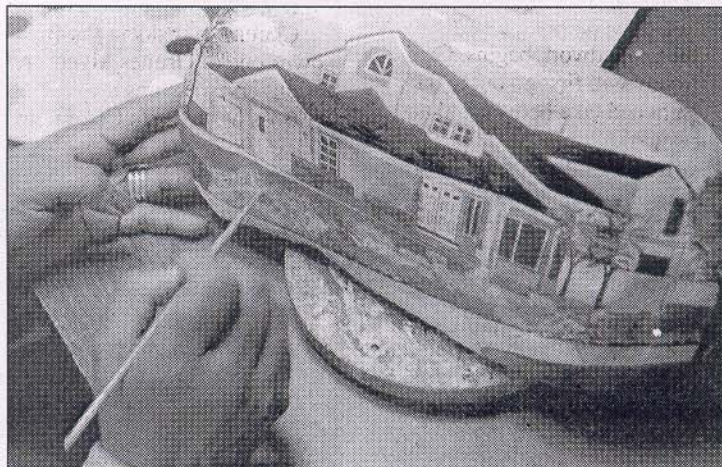
By **DIANA SHOLLEY**
STAFF WRITER

Some people are born knowing their passion; others spend their whole lives searching for theirs – and then there is Dawn Grimes Myers.



PHOTO BY
WALTER
RICHARD WEIS

She said she found hers guided by divine intervention. "I was out walking and found a rock that looked like a



Dawn Grimes Myers works on a rock painting.

church," said Grimes Myers, a Claremont resident, who used her hands to describe the stone. "It was long and high in one place. Here was the steeple. I

could see it."

Grimes Myers took the stone home and painted that church. As an artist she had painted on varied surfaces, but never even thought of stones.

She was pleased with the way her creation turned out and painted many generic buildings on stones, enough to bring to Upland's Open Air Market as a test market.

"They sold out within 10 minutes," she said. "People were running over to me and buying them. I knew I was on to something. Then people started asking me if I would paint their house on a rock. That was when the miracle happened. For the first time I knew I had found my niche. It was a connection – a spark."

That was five years ago and since then Grimes Myers has established Sketched In Stone, a business where she is commissioned to replicate homes, businesses, schools, churches or other architectural structures that are near and dear to someone's heart.

[CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE]



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Grimes Myers had always been interested in architecture and a teacher once told her she'd make a good architect, but art was her first love.

"Now I feel I have the best of both worlds," she said.

Upon accepting a commission the groundwork begins. Grimes Myers will first go out to the sight and take between 30 and 50 photographs of the subject. She will also sit down and talk with the commissioner about the project.

"I've known people who are moving say this is a way they can move and take their house with them," she said. "It's so much fun sitting and talking about the history of the house or business. That way I really get to know what the structure means to the person or that family."

It takes about a month to complete a project; sometimes what takes the longest amount of time is finding the right stone.

Grimes Myers is always on the look out for stones. She combs construction sites, vacant fields, local mountain trails and any place else a good rock could be hiding.

Once the perfect stone is found it is scrubbed with a toothbrush and mild cleanser and is left to air dry. Then the painting begins.

"There's no exact process. I just start. Everything is done free-hand," she said. "By the time I start painting I know the structure very well."

Grimes Myers is also extremely detailed oriented. She is aware of the color of the couch in the window, the bench on the porch, the stained glass window by the door and the trash cans on the side of the house. She sees every bush, tree, flower, roof pattern and hose placement.

"I always tell my clients if there's something they don't want painted, let me know, because I paint everything I see," she said.

Information: Dawn Grimes Myers or Sketched in Stone log onto www.sketchedinstone@hotmail.com

The stone is painted front and back and is weather coated.

Claremont resident Pat Boss owns one of Grimes Myers creations and treasures it.

Boss has lived in Claremont since 1963, but it was not her house that was commissioned. Boss's three children requested Grimes Myers to recreate Sumner Elementary School where their mother taught, in the same classroom, for 17 years.

The children presented their mother with the gift shortly after

"It means so much to me," Boss said. "I look at it nostalgically. Sumner was such an important part of my life, just looking at the stone brings back such fond memories of my time at Sumner."

Boss had first seen Grimes Myers artwork at Claremont's Village Venture. She was with her daughter Kathryn, admired the work and mentioned how amazing the pieces were.

"I love looking at my school on that rock. It's better than a photo," Boss said. "I consider it a family heirloom and will pass it down to my children."

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