

Possibly the most important thing I learned was the need for a basic understanding of calligraphy. Upon returning to Calgary, I joined the Bow Valley Calligraphy Guild which has helped to hone my skills under the tutelage of visiting instructors, such as Ewan Clayton and Christopher Haanes. Both are world-class calligraphers.

People assume that the chisel is the letter carver's most used tool, but I spend much more time with simple propelling pencils and sheets of layout paper. It takes me significantly longer to draw and redraw my letters, than it does to carve them. Once something is carved in stone, it may last many centuries, so I feel a responsibility to make it as perfect as I can. Unlike relief carving, mistakes are very difficult to hide.

My favourite stone is smooth black slate for its ability to take fine details, ease of carving, consistent colour, and durability. Unfortunately, this kind of slate is extremely difficult to get in Canada. I have also worked in sandstone, limestone, marble and granite. Each type of stone has its own personality which greatly influences the designs I make.

For carving, I prefer using Al-Orr tungsten-tipped chisels and a round hammer called a "dummy." The only power tool I might use in the process is a wet saw to cut the slabs to the size I need.

#### Studio tools



Rubbings and instructional carving poster in studio

Colin at work!



# My Graphite Sketchbook

by Ann Purdy

I LOVE letters! I also love the graphite pencil! As I am always drooling over Amity Park's sketchbook on her website <<http://www.amityparks.com/sketchbook>> I decided it was time to have my own. Not only am I having fun with sketching in my book, but as I draw more and more letters, I am developing a keener eye to the subtle details of each letter. I am also learning how to create better shading, using the various hardnesses of my pencils. Not wanting to limit myself to just sketching letters, I have also expanded my drawings to whimsical girls. Who knows where this will take me next?!



*Editor's comment: As I scanned Ann's work and put it together here, I had my fingers crossed that what you see will be a good reproduction and will show the charming subtleties of Ann's originals.*