

Holiday season reigns at Christmas Cottage

By John Adkisson
Senior Editor

It was 2 p.m. on a pre-Thanksgiving afternoon, and Peggy Graham was doing what she loves best in a great place to do it.

Graham, who owns the Christmas Cottage at 1447 N. 27th St., was quietly painting the face of a ceramic doll in her old-fashioned shop warmed by a potbelly stove.

"They've always fascinated me," says Graham, nodding her head toward the hundreds of Christmas ornaments, dolls and knickknacks that line the shop's walls. "Christmas has always fascinated me."

That is apparent from the minute you walk into the Christmas Cottage. "God Rest ye Merry Gentlemen" and other seasonal classics are piped through the shop's two rooms and Santa's face can be seen everywhere.

Graham calls the Christmas Cottage a place for "sugarplum wishes and dreams come true."

She says she is intrigued most about

the "fantasy aspect" of Christmas and that interest helps her create ornaments for the shop, even during the summer months.

"Sometimes they're one of a kind, and sometimes I'll make a dozen or more of the same thing," Graham said.

Even at her home, Graham says, she likes to keep in the spirit of the season by keeping "a Christmas tree in the living room and another in the dining room."

The work of more than 25 other artists also is sold in Graham's shop. The works range from a giant doll house to a stuffed reindeer to miniature nativity sets.

"There is a lot of quality work," Graham said. "Someone new will want to show me their work almost every day."

Graham says the shop's biggest attraction is a collection of porcelain dolls, which she says are "some of the nicest pieces of work in town."

She said there was no typical customer at the store and just about "ev-



Staci McKee/DN

Peggy Graham, owner of the Christmas Cottage on North 27th Street, displays one of the many gifts available at her store. Graham said she handmade most of the items in the store.

ery type of person comes in here."

Graham renovated the cottage out of an old upholstery shop. She got the idea of starting a Christmas-only store when she saw similar shops in the mountains of Colorado.

After Thanksgiving, the Cottage will run in conjunction with the sale of Christmas trees at an adjacent Dairy Queen, which Graham also owns, she said. The stores also will serve ice cream treats, cookies and other holi-

day goodies to shoppers.

The Christmas Cottage, which opened Nov. 1 and will remain open until Dec. 20, is in its fourth year of operation. It is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.



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