

Margaret Louise Humphrey

June 22, 1905 — December 20, 1983

Margaret Louise Humphrey, professor emerita, died on December 20, 1983, after a long illness, in Charlotte, North Carolina, where she had lived since 1975. She was a member of the faculty of the College of Home Economics (now the College of Human Ecology) from 1933 to 1967. After retirement she taught in the State University College at Buffalo from 1968 to 1971.

Miss Humphrey joined the faculty of the Department of Textiles and Clothing in the fall of 1933, when the college was just settling into Martha Van Rensselaer Hall, the new building. For faculty and students who came to Cornell in the postwar years Margaret provided a link with the past as an excellent chronicler of events, frustrations, and achievements during the administrations of director Flora Rose, assistant director Mary Henry, and later, the college's first dean, Sarah Blanding. Margaret helped us to appreciate the work of the early builders of the college and to gain insight for future directions.

Miss Humphrey had other qualities. She had talent as an apparel designer that was widely recognized. Her keen insight was sought in the development of the professional program, and several advanced courses that she developed contributed immeasurably to the students' professional placement. She inspired students to develop their abilities to the fullest potential and as an able teacher helped them acquire the technical skills essential to careers in designing, retailing, or teaching. Views of her students' stunning apparel designs delighted many audiences, including our New York State citizens who came to Farm and Home Week.

She participated over the years in building the Cornell Costume Collection. From her private collection she donated valuable examples of Czechoslovakian national costume and costumes designed by Hollywood designers for well-known films. The Hollywood designs were collected during her sabbatic leave, when she worked as a practicing designer with Don Loper and other Hollywood designers.

Miss Humphrey received her preparatory education at the Ward-Belmont School, in Nashville, Tennessee. Her baccalaureate degree was from the University of Wisconsin in 1929, and her M.A. degree was from Teachers College, Columbia University, in 1933.

Margaret, daughter of Charles and Eva Humphrey, was born and reared in Ironwood, Michigan, where her remains are interred. She is survived by her brother, Charles, of Ironwood.