

Crisp, Lucy Cherry ^[1]

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By William S. Powell ^[2], 1979

4 Mar. 1899–25 Nov. 1977



Photo courtesy of the Digital Collections at East Carolina University. "Lucy Cherry Crisp with her bust of George Washington Carver."

^[3]Lucy Cherry Crisp, museum administrator and poet, was born in Crisp, Edgecombe County ^[4], the daughter of Sellers M. and Annie Gorham Crisp. She was graduated from the North Carolina College for Women in Greensboro ^[5] with a degree in music and continued her education at Columbia ^[6] and Boston universities ^[7] and at Radcliffe College ^[8]. She taught piano and was supervisor of music in the public schools of North Carolina for a time and for a number of years contributed a weekly folk column, "Byways and Hedges," and a Sunday column, "Tar Heel Art," to the Raleigh News and Observer ^[9]. She also wrote feature articles for many state papers and was the author of two volumes of poetry, Spring Fever ^[10], in dialect, published in 1935, and Brief Testament ^[11], published in 1947. Other poems by her were published in periodicals and anthologies. She served briefly as religious counselor at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana ^[12], and for a few years was director of the Museum of Art, Science, and History in Florence, S.C. During World War II ^[13] she was director of the United Services Organization Club ^[14] at Greenville ^[15], N.C. In 1947 she became the director of an art museum in Raleigh ^[16] under the patronage of the North Carolina State Art Society ^[17] and continued in that position until 1955. This museum was the forerunner of the North Carolina Museum of Art ^[18]. While director of the museum, Miss Crisp edited North Carolina News of Art, a monthly bulletin, and in 1956 completed "A History of the North Carolina State Art Society." She served as secretary to a state art commission created in 1951 by the General Assembly ^[19] to purchase art and to establish procedures for governing the North Carolina Museum of Art ^[18]. She also assisted in assembling the staff, purchasing equipment, and training volunteers for the new museum that opened in 1956.

After leaving Raleigh ^[16] she served as director of the Greenville Art Center. She was a member of the Presbyterian church, of the American Association of Museums ^[20], and of the Society of Mayflower Descendants ^[21]. She was buried in Falkland Cemetery, Pitt County ^[22], in the community where her family had lived for several generations.

References:

Lucy Cherry Crisp MSS (East Carolina University Manuscript Collection, Greenville)

Ola Maie Foushee, *Art in North Carolina* (1972)

Greenville *Daily Reflector*, 27 Nov. 1977

William S. Powell, ed., *North Carolina Lives* (1962)

Additional Resources:

Lucy Crisp Cherry Papers, East Carolina University: <http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/special/ead/findingaids/0154/> ^[23]

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"Lucy Cherry Crisp with her bust of George Washington Carver." Photo courtesy of the Digital Collections at East Carolina University. Available from <http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/1311> ^[3] (accessed April 10, 2012).

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Authors:

Powell, William S. [30]

Origin - location:

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Pitt County [32]

Wake County [33]

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