

First Lady Visits Kyle

By Nicole Traynor, June 13, 2002



First Lady Laura Bush is back in Central Texas for a dedication honoring her favorite author—Katherine Anne Porter.

To preserve the legacy of this great American writer, Texas State University and the Hays County Preservation Associates agreed to a 99-year lease for the newly restored childhood home (1892-1901) of the author.

The Library of Congress recognizes the home, now known as the Katherine Anne Porter Literary Center, as a National Literary Landmark.

“This house now stands as a living memorial to one of our most beloved, and best storytellers,” Bush said at the ceremony.

A native Texan, essayist, journalist and writer of one novel, Porter is best known for her short stories. She is the winner of both the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award.

“The Katherine Anne Porter’s house really influenced her fiction, her strongest fiction, ‘Old Mortality,’ ‘The Old Order,’ ... basically, the landmark status recognizes the impact of place on American literature,” said TSU professor and writer Tom Grimes.

Departing Southwest Texas State University President Jerome Supple and National Book Award winner Tim O’Brien also attended Thursday’s designation ceremony.

“This house helped to shape a little girl with dreams into one of this nation’s greatest prose writers and possibly the greatest short story writer,” said Supple.

The Porter Home will now remain open for visits from other authors, teachers, and writers.

The first lady hopes the home will inspire young writers to set and achieve their goals—as it did with Porter.