




For Immediate Release
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Mrs. Bush's Remarks at Katherine Anne Porter House Dedication

As Delivered
Kyle, Texas

Thank you. President Supple, Mayor Adkins, Mr. (Paul) Porter, Tim and Meredith O'Brien,  [Photos](#)
distinguished guests.

Today we celebrate a great honor -- the designation of the Lone Star State's second National Literary Landmark, the Katherine Anne Porter House.

I was in Austin for Texas' first Landmark Award, the dedication of another "Porter" house that of William S. Porter, whom we know, of course, as O. Henry.

What a pleasure it is for this former librarian and Katherine Anne Porter fan to unveil the plaque on behalf of the Katherine Anne Porter board and the citizens of Texas.

Bill and Kate Johnson and the Burdine Johnson Foundation; Curt and Heidi Engelhorn and the Angel Foundation; Tom Grimes; and Preservation Associates, Incorporated, of Kyle; you and others - have worked for months and years to preserve this landmark and make this day possible.

Thanks to you, this house now stands as a living memorial to one of our beloved and best storytellers. Katherine Anne Porter captured the essence of life - and our imaginations -- in brilliant writings.



In many ways, the stories that come from her home place are love stories. They capture the elements of any true love: beauty and ugliness; hope and resignation; sorrow and joy. In reading these stories, we come to appreciate the Texas of her youth, and in writing them, the author must have come to terms with it.

Were it not for Katherine Anne Porter's enormous talent and those who worked so hard to bring her little house back to life, this homestead may never have found its way into the national spotlight.

There is so much more to this house than its remains. This is a corner of Katherine Anne Porter's imagination, and we are in it. This was a lifelong scene in her mind's eye, and how lucky we are to be trespassers here.

She called this porch a gallery- in her words, "a wonderful venue for repose and conversation and iced tea and tall frosted beakers of mint julep (for the men, of course)."

This porch may seem disappointing when compared to her written memories of it, but what matters more than these surroundings is the immortal spirit of the little girl who grew up here.

In Old Mortality, she wrote, "We are drawn and held here by the mysterious love of the living. The visible remains are nothing. They are dust and perishable as the flesh, but their living memory is enchanting."

And, twenty-two years after Katherine Anne Porter's death, we continue to celebrate her life and works with this National Literary Landmark designation, and this house will open the house to writers, teachers and students from the new Katherine Anne Porter Young Writers Program, who will study her works and try their own hands at the trade.

Who knows - maybe this house will be the birthplace of another Texas legend. Time will tell.

Congratulations to Southwest Texas State University, the city of Kyle, and everyone who helped bring this prestigious award home to Center Street. Thank you.

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