Bayou Folk Museum
Cloutierville, Louisiana 71416

RESTORATION OF THE
KATE CHOPIN HOME
Dedicated to the preservation of the history of the CANE RIVER COUNTRY
Bayou Folk Museum

RESTORATION OF KATE CHOPIN HOME
Cloutierville, Louisiana
Owner: Mrs. Mildred L. McCoy

Bayou Folk Museum is housed in a building that stands on property acquired by Alexis Cloutier in the late 1700's from Spanish Land Grant No. 1701.

An inventory recorded in the Natchitoches Parish Courthouse following the death of Alexis Cloutier's first wife, Francoise Lecomte Duprey, listing their mutual assets as of July 10, 1806 described an unfinished brick house with materials on the ground for completion. We know it was completed before 1813 because a finished home is clearly designated on a map placed on record with the State Land Office bearing that date.

To this home, in 1880, came Katherine O'Flaherty Chopin, her husband Oscar Chopin, and their six children. Oscar managed the Chopin Plantation lying on both sides of Cane River, his gifted wife Kate made herself a part of the Cloutierville community, learning to love the Cane River country, its people, its wonderful history and folklore. In 1883, after her husband's death the previous year, she returned to her native St. Louis. Yet Kate retained her memories of the simple people of this Cane River area and recorded them in her short stories, one collection of which, *Bayou Folk*, published in book form in 1894, serves as the focal point of the Museum.

Built by slave labor, the home is a typical Louisiana type structure, the lower story of handmade brick, the upper of heart cypress mortised with wooden pegs. No inside stairs lead to the second floor. Originally, the lower story was an above-the-ground basement with a dirt floor. Upper inside walls are of "bousillage" (mud and Spanish moss enforced with wooden pegs), now covered with plywood.

Only handmade square nails were used in the building. The wainscoting upstairs is the original, as are the French doors opening onto the porch, and many of the panes of glass. Four fireplaces share a common chimney extending from the center rooftop.

The entire contents of the Museum were acquired locally and were restored and refinished on the premises. In November 1970, Bayou Folk Museum received an official marker as a Louisiana Landmark. In May 1971, its owner received for her preservation efforts the Harnett T. Kane Award. On December 31st, 1974 Bayou Folk Museum was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in Washington, D.C.

Picture shows focal point of interest—Original edition of Kate Chopin's BAYOU FOLK accompanied with other personal effects of the Chopin Family.

Adjacent to the house is another structure which served the community for many years as a Doctor's Office and now contains the furnishings and equipment which belonged to several plantation doctors who served the Cane River Country during their lifetimes.
BAYOU FOLK MUSEUM
Located in Cloutierville, Louisiana, just off Highway 1.
20 Miles S. of Natchitoches - turn left and drive across bridge.
35 Miles N. of Alexandria - turn right and drive across bridge.

MUSEUM HOURS
Open Saturday and Sunday afternoons from 2 to 6 p.m.
Open other days by appointment.
Closed during December, January and February.
Bus tours accommodated on two weeks notice.

ADMISSION
Adults ............... $1.00
Children ............. .50

These rates are subject to change

For additional information contact:
MRS. MILDRED L. McCOY
Cloutierville, Louisiana 71416
Telephone - 379-2321 Cane River