

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

KATE CHOPIN HOUSE

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Kate Chopin House

Other Name/Site Number: Bayou Folk Museum; Alexis Cloutier House

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Main Street (LA Highway 1) Not for publication:\_\_\_

City/Town: Cloutierville Vicinity:\_\_\_

State: LA County: Natchitoches Code: 069 Zip Code: 71416

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Category of Property

Private: X
Public-local:\_\_\_
Public-State:\_\_\_
Public-Federal:\_\_\_

Building(s): X
District:\_\_\_
Site:\_\_\_
Structure:\_\_\_
Object:\_\_\_

Number of Resources within Property

Noncontributing

Contributing

1
\_\_\_
\_\_\_
\_\_\_
1

3 buildings
sites
6 structures
objects
9 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 1

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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**4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this \_\_\_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Certifying Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Commenting or Other Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

**5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I, hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Determined eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_  
National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Determined not eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_  
National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic: Domestic

Sub: Single dwelling

Current: Recreation & Culture

Sub: Museum

**7. DESCRIPTION**

Architectural Classification:  
Louisiana Raised Cottage

Materials:  
Foundation: Brick  
Walls: Wood (cypress)  
Roof: Metal  
Other:

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**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:<sup>1</sup>

The Kate Chopin House, formerly known as the Alexis Cloutier House and now known as the Bayou Folk Museum, is located on Spanish Land Grant B1701. It is believed that the house was built by Alexis Cloutier in the early 1800s following his acquisition of the property in the late 1700s. The exact date of construction is unknown, but the house is clearly designated on a State Land Office map dated 1813. The house measures 55'x 43' and is located on the northeast corner of an almost square lot measuring 144'x 152'x 152'x 152'.

The house is built in the Louisiana Raised Cottage Style. The lower story, an above ground basement, is constructed of hand-made bricks mortised together with clay. The upper story is constructed of heart cypress mortised with wooden pegs featuring joints known as "dovetail." All of the nails used in the construction of the house are hand-made square nails. The side-gabled, original roof is constructed of wooden shingles affixed with square nails, although it is now covered with metal. All of the materials used in construction were locally available. Slave labor accounted for the production of the bricks and nails and the construction of the building.

The front of the house which faces east, is dominated by the galleries or porch. Seven pillars support the first floor gallery, constructed of brick and wood. Six wooden posts support the upper gallery and a simple wooden balustrade. To the right is the wooden stairway leading from the first to second story. At the center of the upper story are two French doors opening onto the upper gallery. On either side of the doors are wooden windows each with four glass panes. Both sets of windows and doors have solid wooden shutters copied from four sets, complete with hardware, found in the attic. The upper porch has latticed trim. A brick and iron fence extends across the front of the property and a wooden fence surrounds the rest of the property.

On the southern side of the house there are three two-over-two windows with brick lintels and wood sills on the first story. The second story windows consist of three two-over-two windows with wooden sills directly in line with those on the first story. There is one additional, matching window on the enclosed gallery to the left. There are also two small attic windows. All windows have solid shutters. The northern side of the house is identically configured.

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<sup>1</sup> Architectural description draws heavily on: "Appraisal of Bayou Folk Museum," prepared by Paul B. Hartwig, Director, Division of Archeology and Historic Preservation, State of Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, April, 1979; National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, prepared by Mildred L. McCoy, Bayou Folk Museum, July 20, 1974; Bayou Folk Museum leaflets.

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On the rear, or western, facade of the house the upper gallery has been enclosed, although the date of the enclosure is unknown. The clapboard matches that of the rest of the house. The fenestration consists of a large, centered window, flanked by two six-over-six sash windows. Unlike the front of the building, the staircase leading from the first to the second story is centered. Seven wooden posts support the upper, enclosed gallery. The wood trim adorning the posts is not original; it was moved here from a local store. There is a simple wooden railing extending along the first floor gallery. A small kitchen chimney is visible to the left of the roof.

The interior plan of the house is such that there is no central hallway. All of the rooms open onto the front or back gallery. Two large front rooms are located on each floor separated by a double fireplace. There are three smaller rooms across the back of the first floor. The back of the second floor is divided in two and includes the stairway to the attic. The upper back gallery has been enclosed and divided into three rooms.

The first story flooring, originally dirt, is now concrete. The interior walls are brick. The interior walls of the upper story are of bousillage (mud and spanish moss reinforced with wooden pegs) which were covered with plywood in 1937. The wainscoting in the second story is original, as are the French doors opening onto the front porch and many of the home-made glass window panes. The original four fireplaces share a common chimney extending from the center rooftop, and the walls in all rooms, except for the enclosed rear gallery, are original. There are no inside stairs that lead from the first to second story. The only alterations to this structure, aside from the rear gallery enclosure, are the installation of a kitchen on the first floor and a bathroom on the second floor.

The Chopin family lived in this house while managing a large plantation and general store adjacent to their home. The plantation lands have since been subdivided, and the original outbuildings are no longer extant. The kitchen was originally housed in a structure separate from the main house, but its location is unknown. The other outbuildings were a barn, stable, and cabin where the cook lived. All of the remaining Chopin land is included as part of the boundary.

There are three non-contributing buildings within the boundary. Directly behind the house is the Blacksmith Shop. Originally a log barn built in the late nineteenth century and covered with mud, it was dismantled, moved to this location, and remudded. It is currently used as an additional museum building. Adjacent to the blacksmith shop is a modern restroom facility. In the southeastern corner of the lot is the Doctor's Office building. This structure was moved to the property in 1938 and served as a doctor's office until the late 1950s. It is also used as an additional museum building. Brick walkways connect all four buildings. There are also six structures within the boundaries that are non-contributing: three wells on the south side of the main house; a woodtank at the rear of the Doctor's Office and

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another behind the Blacksmith Shop; and a bell tower located between the Doctor's Office and Blacksmith Shop.

Jonathan Fricker, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for Louisiana, inspected the property and noted that, despite a few minor changes to the house, Kate Chopin would no doubt recognize the building if she were to visit today. He states that the house's floorplan, interior details, massing, and fenestration are all original. The only major change to the Chopin House since the Chopin family's occupancy is the enclosure of the upper rear gallery. Other minor changes include: lattice trim on the upper gallery columns; rebuilt columns on the upper gallery that do retain the original design; and the removal of a wide, central staircase on the front facade of the house.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Fricker, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for Louisiana, to Jim Charleton, NPS Historian, 15 May 1992. Letter in possession of National Park Service History Division.

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally: X Statewide:     Locally:    

Applicable National Register Criteria:           A       B X   C       D    

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):           A       B       C       D       E       F       G    

NHL Criteria:    2

NHL Theme(s):  XIX. Literature  
                  B.   Fiction  
                      1.   Novel  
                      2.   Short Story

Areas of Significance:           Literature  
                                      Social History

Period(s) of Significance:       1880-1883

Significant Dates:

Significant Person(s):           Katherine O'Flaherty Chopin

Cultural Affiliation:            N/A

Architect/Builder:

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**State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.****HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:<sup>1</sup>**

The house on Main Street in Cloutierville, Louisiana is eligible for listing as a National Historic Landmark because of its association with Kate Chopin, a nationally significant American novelist and short story writer whose position in American literary history has been firmly re-established during the past two decades. This residence was occupied by Chopin and her family from 1880 to 1883 and served as her inspiration for many works. Louisiana Bayou folk culture provided the backdrop for many of Chopin's most noted stories, among them *The Awakening* and *Bayou Folk*, a collection of short stories. It was Chopin's experiences in Cloutierville that led her to record the history, folklore, and lifestyles of the people of the Cane River area. Despite the fact that Chopin wrote most of her work while living in St. Louis, the area in which she gained her material is the most appropriate for designation. Within the context of the National Historic Landmark Program, Kate Chopin is a nationally significant figure under Theme XIX. Literature. Subtheme B. Fiction. Facet 1. Novel and 2. Short Story; XXX. American Ways of Life. Subtheme B. Farming Communities.

There are two extant sites related to Kate Chopin. The first, and most appropriate, is the nominated Cloutierville house. The other is a rented house in St. Louis where Chopin lived for the last year of her life. Chopin's literary career did not begin until 1888, after she moved to St. Louis. Although Chopin did not write while living in Cloutierville, the influence of the area on her later work is without question. None of the houses in which Chopin lived during her active literary career are still standing, including the house in which she wrote *The Awakening*, one of her most famous works. The extant house in St. Louis was home to Chopin from the fall of 1903 until her death in August 1904. Her literary career following the publication of *The Awakening* in 1899 was limited; she wrote seldom, and only wrote one poem and one short story while living in the St. Louis house. Chopin's house in Cloutierville is the site that most accurately reflects her distinguished literary career, and is thus the most appropriate site for NHL designation.

Katherine O'Flaherty was born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1850. She was the second of three children born to Thomas O'Flaherty, an Irish immigrant, and Eliza Faris, of French Creole descent.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Portions of this historical statement were prepared by Gail Lee Dubrow, Assistant Professor of Urban Design and Planning, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Nissenbaum, "Kate O'Flaherty Chopin," *Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*, ed. Edward T. James and Janet Wilson James (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1971), 333.



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One of the early tragedies of Kate's life was the accidental death of her father in a train wreck when she was four years old. Following this accident, Kate's maternal great-grandmother assumed responsibility for her upbringing and education. According to literary critic Emily Toth, Kate's great-grandmother "nurtured the young girl's questioning of societal values," a trait which eventually would shape the content of her literary work.<sup>3</sup> In 1860, Kate enrolled in the Academy of the Sacred Heart in St. Louis, from which she graduated in 1868. The education that she received at home and at the Sacred Heart Academy provided a solid foundation for her lifelong interest in music and literature.

Kate married a New Orleans cotton manufacturer, Oscar Chopin, in June of 1870, after which they moved to New Orleans where they lived for the following decade. There the social climate was generally tolerant of Kate Chopin's independent temper. According to Stephen Nissenbaum's profile in *Notable American Women*,

such a climate was ideal for a person of her gracious yet independent temper; it permitted her to indulge in her penchant for cigarettes, unconventional clothing, and long, solitary jaunts.<sup>4</sup>

Though Kate Chopin may have been reluctant to "play the role of housewife," she had six children in rapid succession from 1871 to 1880. When her husband's business failed in 1880, the family moved to a family-owned property in Cloutierville, Louisiana, where they remained for three years until the death of Oscar Chopin.<sup>5</sup> Although Kate Chopin did not begin writing until 1889, after her return to St. Louis, the landscape and people of Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, made a deep impression and ultimately would figure as the setting for much of her writing.<sup>6</sup>

Kate Chopin's years in Cloutierville had a profound and defining impact on both herself and her later writing. After her residence in the Cane River country, she "retained little of Kate

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<sup>3</sup> Emily Toth, "St. Louis and the Fiction of Kate Chopin," *The Missouri Historical Society Bulletin* 32:1 (October 1975): 34.

<sup>4</sup> Nissenbaum, "Chopin," 333.

<sup>5</sup> Lynn Sherr and Jurate Kazickas, *The American Woman's Gazetteer* (New York: Bantam, 1976), 82; Marion Tinling, *Women Remembered: A Guide to the Landmarks of Women's History* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986), 174.

<sup>6</sup> Per E. Seyersted, "Kate Chopin: An Important St. Louis Writer Reconsidered," *Missouri Historical Society Bulletin* 19:2 (January 1963): 90.

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O'Flaherty, the St. Louis belle, in her mental image of herself."<sup>7</sup> Total immersion in the French-speaking creole culture of Louisiana undeniably had its effect on her later writing. She learned the "peculiar geography"<sup>8</sup> of the area which later was to be the setting of so many of her 100 short stories, numerous poems, and two novels. Additionally, she learned much more about the worker culture of the Cane River than was usually exposed to women. Her tenure as the manager of the Chopin family plantation allowed her to "know more intimately the working people she was to describe in later years in her fiction."<sup>9</sup> Chopin was fascinated by the racial diversity in the Cane River area of Natchitoches Parish, and this fascination later surfaced in her writing.<sup>10</sup> Chopin had a broad understanding of the social and political problems facing the South during post-Reconstruction era, in part due to discussions with her brother-in-law, district attorney for Natchitoches Parish.<sup>11</sup>

Returning to St. Louis in 1883, Kate Chopin lived with her mother until her mother's death in 1885. Three years later Chopin wrote her first work, a piano polka. Soon thereafter she published her first short story, "Wiser than a God," in the *Musical Journal* (1889), and her first novel, *At Fault* (1890).<sup>12</sup> Although Chopin's first novel is considered by literary critics to be a rather weak work, it is notable as "the first American novel to treat divorce amorally."<sup>13</sup> Chopin published more than one hundred short stories in a variety of local and national magazines in the years that followed, most with creole culture as a backdrop.

Examples of the influence that Chopin's residence in Cloutierville had on her later writing are voluminous. Firstly, "certain Cloutierville people felt Mrs. Chopin had used them in

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<sup>7</sup> Peggy Skaggs, *Kate Chopin* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1985), 3.

<sup>8</sup> Barbara Ewell, *Kate Chopin* (New York: Ungar Publishing Company, 1986), 15.

<sup>9</sup> Helen Taylor, *Gender, Race and Region in the Writings of Grace King, Ruth McEnery Stuart and Kate Chopin* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 145.

<sup>10</sup> Taylor, *Gender, Race and Region*, 145.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Bonner Jr., *The Kate Chopin Companion* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988), 25.

<sup>12</sup> Nissenbaum, "Chopin," 334.

<sup>13</sup> *American Women Writers: A Critical Reference Guide from Colonial Times to the Present*, Vol. 1, ed., Lina Mainiero (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1979), 358.

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her books."<sup>14</sup> Secondly, the setting for her short stories "For Marse Chouchoute," "A Wizard from Gettysburg," and "A Rude Awakening," was changed from "Centerville" to "Cloutierville" in the anthology *Bayou Folk*. This indicates Chopin's lessening need to disguise the realities that had become her principle theme."<sup>15</sup> In addition, a central theme in her first novel, *At Fault*, set in Natchitoches Parish, is one of social change wrought in the South by "intrusions of a new technological order."<sup>16</sup> Chopin experienced a similar incident while living in Cloutierville when, in 1881, the Texas and Pacific Railroad "cut in two" the Chopin estate.<sup>17</sup> Thus, Chopin was a "handsome, inconsolable. . . Creole widow of thirty" and the inspiration for the heroine of her novel *At Fault*.<sup>18</sup> Yet another example of the lasting influence of the bayou on Chopin's work occurred in 1892, after she had left the area. In that year, a massive flood in Natchitoches Parish devastated the crops of a friend of hers, Albert Sampite. "Barely a month later, Kate Chopin created the character of Alcee Laballiere--a wealthy and handsome planter whose entire crop is destroyed by a cyclone."<sup>19</sup>

Lauded by her contemporaries for her earlier work as a "local colorist," Kate Chopin was personally attacked for her second novel, *The Awakening*. Chopin's literary reputation suffered as a result of the critics' discomfort with what has been termed her "sensual" prose style.<sup>20</sup> The moral controversy surrounding her masterpiece, *The Awakening*, the heroine of which committed adultery without being condemned for it, served as a lightening rod for those seeking to enforce conventional social mores. According to Emily Toth,

A storm of moral judgements greeted Kate Chopin when the book appeared, and St. Louis reviewers were especially vocal in their condemnation. The reviewer in William Reedy's *Mirror* called the heroine's love "sensual and devilish," a giving in to the "ugly, cruel, loathsome monster Passion." The *Globe-Democrat* called the book morbid; the *Republic* called *The Awakening* "too strong drink for moral babes...should be

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<sup>14</sup> Seyersted, *Kate Chopin*, 116.

<sup>15</sup> Ewell, *Kate Chopin*, 67.

<sup>16</sup> Ewell, *Kate Chopin*, 33.

<sup>17</sup> Seyersted, *Kate Chopin*, 44.

<sup>18</sup> Seyersted, *Kate Chopin*, 46.

<sup>19</sup> Toth, *Kate Chopin*, 211.

<sup>20</sup> Toth, "St. Louis and the Fiction of Kate Chopin," 37.

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labeled 'poison.'" Even Kate Chopin's close friend C.L. Deyo argued, in the *Post-Dispatch*, against the book's "positively unseemly" truths.<sup>21</sup>

Although there seems to be little substance to the myth that her work was banned from the city's libraries, there can be little doubt that Chopin was deeply hurt by the disappointing reception *The Awakening* received in her day. This may have dampened her enthusiasm for writing; she only published a few stories and poems after 1899.

This "bitter denunciation" of *The Awakening* all but "banished her best work from critical consideration for half a century."<sup>22</sup> In addition, according to Emily Toth, since Chopin was categorized as a local colorist due to "her great skill in portraying regional characteristics and dialects," the majority of her works were out of print between 1911 and 1964.<sup>23</sup> With only "scattered attention" until the 1930s, Daniel S. Rankin wrote her first biography, and saved her manuscripts that would be compiled by Per Seyersted in 1969 as *The Complete Works of Kate Chopin*. Although there were two Master's theses and one Doctoral dissertation chapter devoted to Chopin in the 1950s, interest in her writings (especially in *The Awakening*) began to burgeon in the 1960s.<sup>24</sup> The 1970s saw a continuation of this interest, especially since *The Complete Works* made available for the first time all of Chopin's writings.

*The Awakening's* heroine, Edna Pontellier, a young woman on a voyage of self discovery, finally found a receptive audience in the 1970s, as women readers in particular hungered for literature that addressed the tensions between selfless devotion to family and the need to express themselves as individuals. The dilemma faced by Edna Pontellier resonated for a new generation:

I would give up the unessential; I would give my money; I would give my life for my children; but I would not give myself. I can't make it more clear; it's only something which I am beginning to comprehend, which is revealing itself to me.<sup>25</sup>

The shift in identity experienced by *The Awakening's* heroine, from being a "mother-woman" always prepared to meet the needs of

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<sup>21</sup> Toth, "St. Louis and the Fiction of Kate Chopin," 37.

<sup>22</sup> Skaggs, *Kate Chopin*, 5.

<sup>23</sup> Toth, "St. Louis and the Fiction of Kate Chopin," 38.

<sup>24</sup> Skaggs, *Kate Chopin*, 5-6.

<sup>25</sup> Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (Chicago: Herbert S. Stone, 1899)

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others, to awakening to her own needs, resonated for those whose consciousness of women's struggle for independence was raised by the second wave of feminism.<sup>26</sup>

Because of studies linking Chopin's work to "romanticism, realism, naturalism, existentialism,"<sup>27</sup> and especially feminism, *The Awakening* has "become one of the most popular feminist literary texts."<sup>28</sup> In fact, feminist criticism in the 1970s became so voluminous and "effusive" that it has sometimes seemed to be turning Chopin's great literary work into a political tract.<sup>29</sup> Yet these literary critics are confident that *The Awakening* is a work of enduring meaning and that Chopin has found a lasting place in the literary canon.<sup>30</sup>

Although not totally successful as a novel, *The Awakening* is filled with striking passages, and its brilliantly symbolic fusion of psychology and setting raises it far above the level not only of local color, but also of traditional "realism."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Feminist readings of *The Awakening* can be found in Per Seyersted, in an introduction to *The Complete Works of Kate Chopin*, Vol. 1, ed. Per Seyersted (Louisiana State University Press, 1969), 21-33; Sandra M. Gilbert, "The Second Coming of Aphrodite: Kate Chopin's Fantasy of Desire," *The Kenyon Review* 5:3 (Summer 1983): 42-66; Carol Christ, "Spiritual Liberation, Social Defeat: Kate Chopin," in *Diving Deep and Surfacing: Women Writers on Spiritual Quest* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1980), 27-40; and Priscilla Allen, "Old Critics and New: the Treatment of Chopin's *Awakening*," in *The Authority of Experience: Essays in Feminist Criticism*, eds. Arlyn Diamond and Lee R. Edwards (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1977), 224-238. For a contrasting argument against a feminist reading of *The Awakening*, see Peggy Dechert Skaggs, "The Boy's Quest in Kate Chopin's 'A Vocation and a Voice'" *American Literature* 51:2 (May 1979): 170-176. A reliable overview of the literature can be found in *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism*, Vol. 14, eds. Dennis Poupard and James Person, Jr. (Detroit: Gale Research, 1984).

<sup>27</sup> Skaggs, *Kate Chopin*, 113.

<sup>28</sup> Elaine Showalter, ed. *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature, Theory* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 5.

<sup>29</sup> Skaggs, *Kate Chopin*, 8.

<sup>30</sup> "[Chopin's best works] demonstrate an independence and courage, a warm understanding, and more than a touch of artistic genius which entitle them, and their author, to a permanent place in American literature." Per Seyersted, in an introduction to *The Complete Works of Kate Chopin*, Vol. 1, by Kate Chopin, ed., Per Seyersted (Louisiana State University Press, 1969), 32-33.

<sup>31</sup> Nissenbaum, "Chopin," 334.

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Chopin's superb psychological insight, especially into the lives of women, her vivid descriptions of Creole and Acadian life, and her deep-felt concern with human relationships and social institutions will preserve her reputation long after the initial excitement of her rediscovery by contemporary critics has passed.<sup>32</sup>

Although the 1899 publication of her novel, *The Awakening*, gained her unfavorable press at the time, to a great extent, this work has been the basis for contemporary reassessments of her significance in American literary history. After having languished for many years, Chopin's reputation as a nationally significant literary figure has been fully restored as a result of two decades of literary scholarship focusing on the works of American women writers. With this reappraisal, literary critics have recognized that Chopin's work transcends the categories of local color or realist.

Chopin, along with Emily Dickinson and Edith Wharton, have been described as providing literary roots for the contemporary blossoming of literature that concentrates on "the immediate lived experience of women."<sup>33</sup> As a result of critical reassessment, *The Awakening*, which was Chopin's last major work, is regarded as "'a novel of the first rank'"<sup>34</sup> and Chopin is now considered to be a major American writer. Kate Chopin died as a result of a brain hemorrhage in August 1904 and was buried in St. Louis' Calvary Cemetery.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> *American Women Writers*, 360.

<sup>33</sup> Elizabeth Janeway, "Women's Literature," in *Harvard Guide to Contemporary American Writing*, ed. Daniel Hoffman (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1979), 352.

<sup>34</sup> *Contemporary Authors*, Vol. 104, ed. Frances Locher (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1982), 82.

<sup>35</sup> Nissenbaum, "Chopin," 334.

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## Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- \_\_\_ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- X Previously Listed in the National Register.
- \_\_\_ Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- \_\_\_ Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- \_\_\_ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # \_\_\_\_\_

## Primary Location of Additional Data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- \_\_\_ Other State Agency
- X Federal Agency
- \_\_\_ Local Government
- \_\_\_ University
- X Other (Specify Repository): Bayou Folk Museum

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property: Less than one (1) acre

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting

A 15 3489330 507870

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point on the eastern side of Main Street, proceed south 152.0' along the curblineline of Main Street, then proceed west 152.0' to the rear of the property line, then proceed 144.0' north along the rear of the property line, then proceed 152.0' east to the point of origin.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary of the property includes the area of land and the structures currently known as the Bayou Folk Museum. It also consists of the house built by Alexis Cloutier, in which Kate Chopin lived, that was the integral part of his property. Portions of his original farm that were subdivided are excluded. The nominated property is that which has been historically associated with author Kate Chopin, and is that which is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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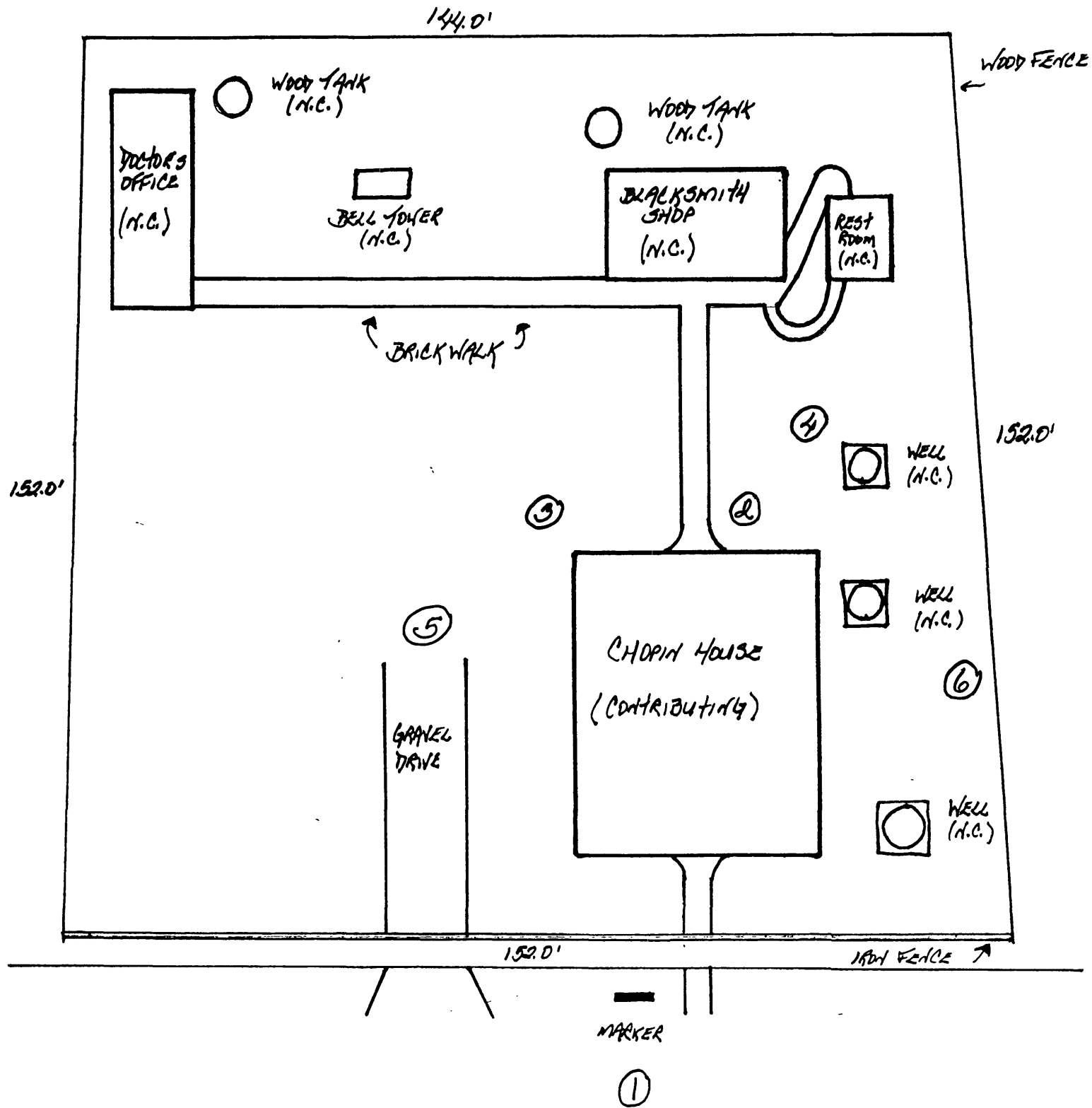
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

Name/Title: Jill S. Mesirow; Dr. Page Putnam Miller  
Org.: National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History  
Street/#: 400 A Street, SE  
City/Town: Washington  
State: District of Columbia  
ZIP: 20003  
Telephone: (202) 544-2422  
Date: June 24, 1992

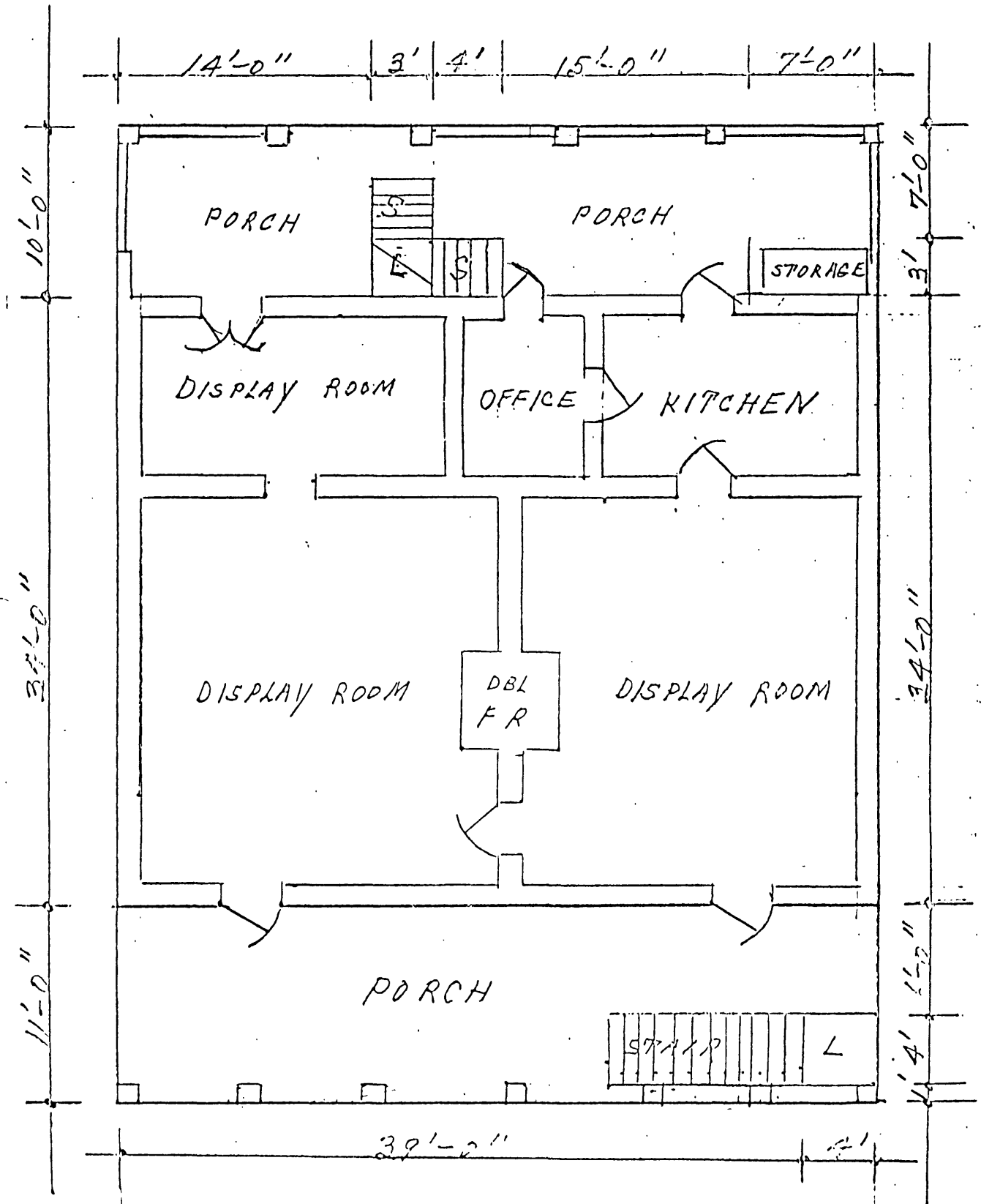
KATE CHOPIN HOUSE  
Cloutierville, LA

Sketch Map



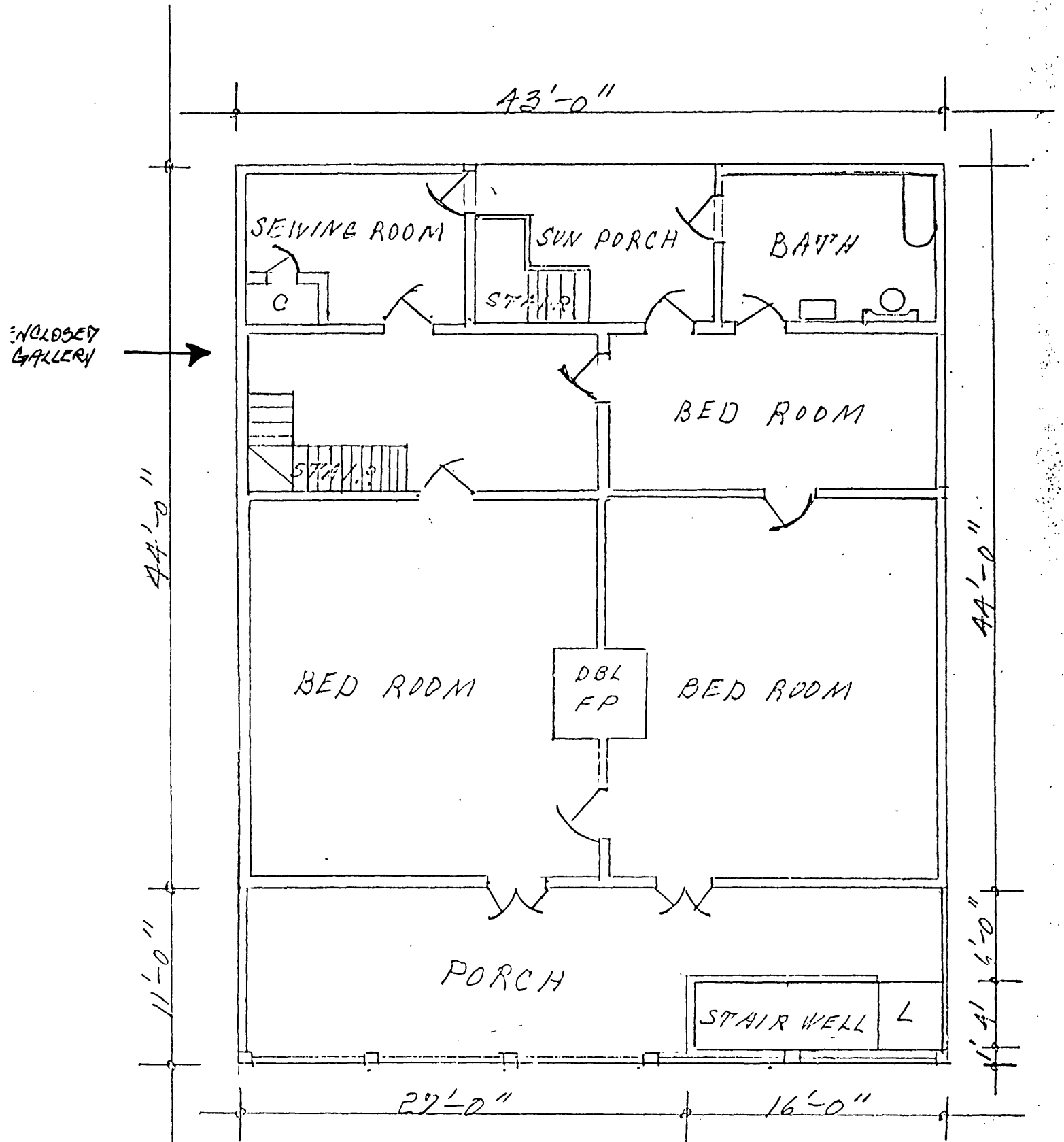
KATE CHOPIN HOUSE  
Cloutierville, LA

First Floor Plan



KATE CHOPIN HOUSE  
Cloutiersville, LA

Second Floor Plan



KATE CHOPIN HOUSE  
Cloutierville, LA

Attic Plan

