

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received SEP 20 1983

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Biblioteca Carnegie
and/or common same

2. Location

street & number Ponce de León Avenue; Stop 1 1/2 *not for publication*
city, town Puerta de Tierra, San Juan vicinity of N/A
state Puerto Rico code 72 county San Juan code 0930

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<i>N/A</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Government of Puerto Rico (Education Department, Public Libraries Service)
street & number Tres Monjitas Industrial Park
city, town Hato Rey vicinity of _____ state Puerto Rico

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds, San Juan-Section I
street & number San Juan Judicial Center-2nd. Floor, Muñoz Rivera Avenue
city, town Hato Rey state Puerto Rico

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventario de Monumentos Históricos de Puerto Rico has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1978 federal state county local
depository for survey records Institute of Puerto Rican Culture
city, town San Juan state Puerto Rico

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This is a fine Neoclassical, 2-storied building with a rectangular plan. The south, or main facade has two terminal sections which laterally contain a doric portico supported by four columns and two half doric columns. Behind it are five great arches which span both floors. The hip roof is of red tiles. The exterior is painted light gray and white.

The floor plan is symmetrical on both floors. The first had a great hall that ran the full length of the building and is now divided into two, providing a vestibule area with book stacks behind. On each side of it there are reading rooms. The interior floor has been repaved with clay tiles and the reading rooms have been thoroughly modernized by eliminating moldings; carpets and hung acoustical ceilings were introduced. The vestibule and hall still retain most of their architectural details, with the metal book stacks installed as a free standing structure. Air conditioning ducts are ceiling hung and unobtrusive.

Access to the second floor is gained through two lateral staircases on each side of the stacks. The stairs still retain their original wooden balustrade, and the original paving is existent and partially visible under the sympathetic new material used for the 1966 restoration.

The second floor replicates the first, with an exhibit hall above the vestibule, reading rooms above the stacks and the west reading rooms underneath. The east reading room in the first floor is replaced by an auditorium in the floor above. The latter is significant in that it retains all the original architectural ornamentation.

The structure has not been properly maintained and is in fair condition.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1915-1916

Builder/Architect Ramón Carbia

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Biblioteca Carnegie was the first building built for the specific use of a public library in Puerto Rico. Its origins date to 1903 when the Biblioteca Insular de Puerto Rico was founded in Old San Juan. In 1914, Gov. Arthur Yager succeeded in getting a donation of \$100,000 from Andrew Carnegie, for the construction of a public library in San Juan. The building was designed and built by Ramón Carbia, a Puerto Rican engineer, in 1915. In 1917 the Government of Puerto Rico formally accepted the donation of the structure and moved the Insular library to these new headquarters, changing the name to Biblioteca Carnegie.

The library was originally controlled by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor with the approval of the Senate. In 1950 all the functions of said Board were transferred to the Secretary of Education, thus the public library services became part of the functions of the Department of Education.

The building itself reflects the influence of North American neoclassical tastes which became prevalent with the advent of US influence on the island. By its sheer size and very stately siting it is an impressive building, located on a strip composed of structures of majestic scale, several of which are being considered for National Register nomination.

9. Major Bibliographical References

La Gran Enciclopedia de Puerto Rico-Tomo 9-Arquitectura y Leyes.
Ediciones R. Madrid, 1976.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.09 acres

Quadrangle name San Juan

Quadrangle scale 1: 20,000

UTM References

Latitude 18°- 28' - 06'' North

Longitude 66°-06' - 34'' West

A

Zone	Easting						

B

Zone	Easting						

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The lot is almost rectangular, it is bounded on the North by Muñoz Rivera Avenue (225 ft.), on the South by Ponce de León Avenue (220.ft.), on the East by Casa de España (220 ft.), and on the West by Ateneo Puertorriqueño (210 ft.). See attached Map labeled Location Plan (scale 1: 2,000) where nominated property is colored in red

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Armando Morales Páres - State Architect

organization State Historic Preservation Office

date September 8, 1983

street & number La Fortaleza

telephone (809) 721-7000 Ext. 2232-2246

city or town

state

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

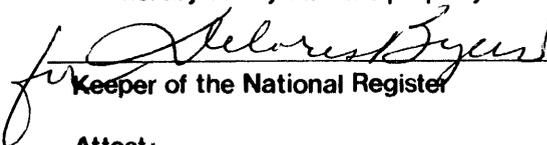


title State Historic Preservation Officer

date September 8, 1983

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register


Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 10/20/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration