

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

JUN 17 1980

DATE ENTERED

OCT 22 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET

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NAME: Historic: Faro del Morro or
Faro del Castillo del Morro
Common: Puerto San Juan Light

LOCATION: On Port San Juan, on summit San Felipe del Morro Castle
--within San Juan Historic District-- on the North shore of Puerto
Rico. On position 18°28.4' N - 66°07.4' W.

CLASSIFICATION: Unoccupied. Restricted access.

DESCRIPTION: Deteriorated condition; altered; original site.

The first Puerto San Juan Lighthouse was built in 1846 at location 18°20' N - 59°48' 50" W, 187 feet above water. The light was formed by five parabolic reflectors. The structure deteriorated so badly that a new location was chosen by mid 1860's. The new installation was built at its present location in 1876 as a 3rd order light. It had an exposed brick octagonal base which supported an octagonal tower (cast-iron) painted gray and white. The lantern was also octagonal crowned with a copper cupola. The original lenticular lens was built apparently by Lemonnier Y Cie. The earliest known characteristic was a fixed white light, with eclipses in 1' in 1'. It had no dwelling although it was serviced by three keepers.

During the course of the Spanish American War and the San Juan bombardment by Admiral Simpson, the cast-iron lantern and tower were destroyed. In 1899 The Navy Department rebuilt the tower as an octagonal reinforced concrete structure with a new lenticular lens. By 1905-1906 a crack, through and around the top of the tower, directly under the lantern caused its demolition. In 1908 it was rebuilt as a three-story square brick and masonry tower, with a cast-iron helical bar lantern. It was built around the old Spanish brick octagonal base. The new tower was painted gray.

Part of the old brick work was retained on the first floor which today encloses a vestibule, oil room, and a closet. On the second floor --the square tower-- are found the watchroom, a small alcove, and a small hall. The third floor was actually part of the lantern and lens room. The lantern was of cast-iron and bronze with wrought-iron plates roofing. It had a surrounding cemented gallery enclosed by a parapet. On each corner of the parapet small ornamental Spanish style guard houses were built. The new tower showed new wooden windows and doors following a pseudo-Spanish style.

In 1919 the illuminating apparatus was a 3rd order, lenticular, 1875 French Sautter, Lemonnier & Cie lens installed in 1908. The central drum measured 1m. and had 8 flashing panels, each made up of 6 rings

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elements and one bull's eye. It did not have prisms above or below the central drum. The apparatus revolved on a chariot activated by a clock-work system. The clock cord descended through the center column of the tower cast-iron winding stairway. The cord had a 200 lb. weight. The rotating machinery was protected by a cylindrical cast-iron and glass case. The iron pedestal was set on a concrete base.

In 1932 the original weight driven rotating apparatus was replaced by an electrical driven mechanism. By 1937 the structure's color was changed from gray to cream with brown trimmings. In 1962 the light was outomated and the resident personel discontinued.

The actual light is the same 1908 square brick tower with an octagonal brick base with the 1937 paint characteristics. It shows the same 1875 French lenticular lens.

SIGNIFICANCE: It is the oldest lighthouse, still in existence and use in the Island. It was built to guide the entrance into San Juan Bay and Harbor, one of the most important trading centers of the Spanish Empire since early 16th century. By late 1880's and early 1890's it became the central lighthouse of the group formed by Cabo San Juan and Arecibo lights, thus lighting the central northern shore section of the Island.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA: Area Nominated: 407 sq. ft. Boundary description: beginning at a point S 45°E 8 ft. from corner of parapet thence S 45°E 7.9 ft; thence S 7.9 ft; thence S 5°E 4.3 ft; thence W 10 ft; thence N 45°W 10.8 ft; thence N 7 ft; thence E 5 ft; thence N 3 ft; thence N 45°E 7.9 ft; thence E 7.9 ft to point of beginning.

see main P.R. map for USGS location

SUPPORTING MATERIALS: v. attached pocket #1 "Puerto San Juan Light". Enclosures are: Plan area nominated; c. 1898 photo; 1978 photos (6); Blue copies original site drawings (3); and, Alterations' drawings.