Arayama inc.

NAME: Historic: Faro de Punta de las Figuras
Common: Punta Figuras Light

LOCATION: On Point Figuras, south shore of the easterly part of Puerto Rico, easterly side of Arroyo Port. On position 17° 57' 25" N - 66° 02' 53" W.

CLASSIFICATION: Unoccupied. Unrestricted access.

DESCRIPTION: In ruins. Altered. Original site.
It was built as a local light to aid navigation into Arroyo and Patillas Ports in 1893. Originally it was a 5th order light, one of only two built, and showed a fixed white light with a 12 mile range. The dilapidated building stands surrounded by a swampy, marshy, stagnant, gray sand shore. South of the lighthouse, dark green rolling hills and distant gray-blueish Central Mountain Range cliffs provide a rather surrealistic ambiance to a white painted structure built in a once malaria-infected area. The rectangular and proportioned neo-classic structure vibrates under a hot, deep sky and dramatically counterbalances the entangled, lush tropical vegetation.
In spite of its vandalization, it is an excellent example of the lighthouse system's characteristics. It closely followed the officially established arrangement of rooms within an approximate 18 x 8 x 5.7 mts. brick and stone structure built around the tower. The main entrance led to a vestibule of a five room 2nd class keeper's quarters including the engineer's and keeper's assistant room. The Spanish kitchen, remains of which still stands in situ, was located on the SE corner of the dwelling. A back door leads to a near patio where the brick cistern and well, with its original cast-iron work, still are in place. Some examples of its firewood beams, Genoa marble slabs, and original roof are preserved. But, undouted, its most distinctive characteristic is its decorative elements, particularly, the stuccoed high relief frieze formed by alternate circles and rectangles embracing the entire structure and terminating in a simply designed cornice and unadorned parapet. The frieze-cornice arrangement, without the high relief, is repeated at a smaller scale, in the octagonal tower. It had a winding cast-iron stairway that opened into a 5th order lantern: 1.6 mt. in diameter of cast-iron, copper, and glass. This had a cement gallery with a cast-iron balustrade.
The original illuminatin apparatus was a lenticular, 1892, 37.5 cms. diameter Barbier, Benard, & Cie. lens. It had 4 panels; 5 elements in each panel of the central drum; 5 prisms in each panel above the central drum and 3 below. It was held in place by a cast-iron pedestal.

In 1923 the light characteristics were modified. In 1938 the light was moved to another location and the structure abandoned and boarded. It was reopened during WW II and used as a lookout. After the war it was reboarded. Some years later, surrounding land was leased to the Army until 1963. Since the 1960's the lighthouse has been systematically subjected to devastating vandalism. The lens and lantern were apparently destroyed by vandals in 1969.

SIGNIFICANCE: It was built as an intermediate light to connect Caja de Muertos and Punta Tuna Lights and at the same time guide the entrance to both ports of Arroyo and Patillas. Architecturally, it is one of the best examples of particularly decorative elements not present in major structures.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA: Area nominated: 1 acre. Boundary description: begining at a point S 32° 43' E 65 ft from SE corner of dwelling; thence N 7° E 215.4 ft to a point; thence W 167 ft to a point; thence S 5° 40' W 92.4 ft to a point; thence S 85° 15' W 224.5 ft to a point; thence S 44° 45' W 175 ft to high water mark; thence along high water mark 25 ft; thence N 42° 40' E 165 ft to a point; thence S 84° 45' E 211.5 ft to a point; thence S 5° 40' W 51.1 ft to a point; thence S 82° 45' E 160.5 ft to point of beginning.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS: v. attached pocket #10 "Punta Figuras Light". Enclosures are: Quadrangle; plan area nominated; c. 1898 photo; 1978 photos.