

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Villa Victoria
Other names/site number YWCA Headquarters
Name of related multiple property listing NA
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & Number 905 Ponce de León Avenue
City or town San Juan State PR County San Juan
Not for publication Vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Diana López Sotomayor Nov. 17, 2014
Diana López Sotomayor SHPO/Director

Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date
Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of Commenting Official _____ Date
Title _____ State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. 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] 1.6.2015
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- Public-local
- Public-state
- Public-federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	Buildings
0	0	Sites
0	0	Structures
0	0	Objects
1	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ Single dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/ Civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

French Colonial

Materials (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Brick/ Masonry; Concrete/Wood/ Metal/ Cast Iron

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Description

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Villa Victoria is a French Colonial, early 20th century, one-story, wood, masonry and concrete building, located at #905 Ponce de Leon Avenue in San Juan. The building, which occupies a lot of 1,273 square meters, is one of the oldest dwellings in the upper class residential area of Miramar, housing the YWCA facilities since 1955. **Villa Victoria** retains most aspects of integrity to its exterior façade and placement in relationship to the main roadway.

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

Villa Victoria is a detached and raised, one-story (with basement), masonry and concrete building located at #905 Ponce de León Avenue. It is located to the north side of this avenue in the urban sector of Miramar (Santurce) in the municipality of San Juan, Puerto Rico. The building stands on the south end of the lot, its terrain sloping downwards from south to north. The building presents an austere French Colonial composition, lightened only at certain parts by intricate, cast-iron ornamentation. The façade is divided into 3 bays, defined by quoining at the corners and rusticated pilasters, marking the entrance and defining the central bay. The quoining and pilasters support a simple, continuous cornice, interrupted only by a pediment which crowns the central bay, supported by the rusticated pilasters described above.

The detached, raised construction - with its mosaic and cast-iron stairs and covered balcony centralized in the main façade - gives this house a local creole flavor not common in the Old San Juan area. This property definitely set a trend for future houses built during the early 20th century when Miramar became the first upper-class suburb in the capital. Houses similar in style but not in construction materials or techniques can still be seen scattered throughout Miramar.

The central entrance is accessed by an exterior flight of upward-sweeping steps, which lead into a projecting front entrance porch. This porch is created by an extension of the building base which projects forward at the central bay. Intricate, cast-iron colonnettes support a wood and steel sheet metal porch roof. The two flanking bays consist of a rectangular doorway with glass-panel French doors that open out onto balconettes of intricate wrought-iron. Each bay is articulated by a simple, molded surround.

Along the two lateral facades, the main body of the house built out of masonry is articulated similarly to that of the main façade. The east façade consists of three double-leaf doorways that open out onto a continuous wooden baluster balcony supported by slender concrete pilasters of more recent date. The balcony contains a series of six slender wooden colonnettes which support another wooden and sheet-metal balcony roof. The west façade simply presents three wooden and glass,

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double-leaf casement windows. At both these façades, the basement level is evident at its full height, each side containing randomly placed openings.

The rear façade presents a concrete, wood and sheet-metal two-story lean-to addition of spontaneous character built in the 1940's, as indicated in the property records.¹ The lean-to spans from the east façade balcony to the west quoining of the north façade. Various random openings with aluminum jalousie windows occupy this wall. During the 1940s also, the interior finishes of the home were completely remodeled and a new "hurricane-resistant" roof replaced the existing one. The stand-alone garage structure was built as part of the works to the home as part of the 1940's renovation works.

A low, solid concrete and stone wall bounds the property along Ponce de León Avenue. **Villa Victoria** was remodeled in the 1960's soon after it became the local headquarters for the YWCA of Puerto Rico. It is believed that during this time, the demolishing of the interior partitions took place, adjusting the interior spaces to the new use. The addition of the rear kitchen, bathrooms and garage - space within a lean-to concrete structure presents an adhesive alteration and is not visible from the principal vantage points. The east balcony was reinforced with concrete pilotes for fear of structural failure.

Following damage caused by the passing of the *David* and *Federico* storms in 1979, a new roof was again installed at **Villa Victoria**. It is assumed that during these repairs the wooden structure (columns & roof) of the balcony were replaced with the elements that remain today.

In 1987, some additional repairs were completed at the building, including the installation of a wood paneled ceiling, new ceramic tile on the main upper level of the building and the construction of a concrete stair at the north façade to serve as a secondary access to the main level through the lean-to addition. The latest alteration dates from the 1990's and encompasses the addition of steel picket fencing on top of the existing masonry wall at the property line, as well as, new entrance gates.

¹ Tomo 232, Folio 39, Finca 9193. Santurce Norte. Registro de la Propiedad del Municipio de San Juan.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** Removed from its original location.
- C** A birthplace or a grave.
- D** A cemetery.
A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- E** structure.
- F** A commemorative property.
- G** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Social History

Period of Significance

1955-1964

Significant Dates

1955

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Villa Victoria is of statewide significance under Criterion A in the area of Social History as the property has served as headquarters for the Young Women's Association (YWCA) since 1955. The YWCA, with its commitment to the social, economic and educational mission, has been a crucial institution in the process of woman empowerment throughout the island. Since the founding of its local Chapter in 1946, the organization has served an important role in the development of self-supporting and professional women in Puerto Rican society. The period of significance of the property extends from 1955 (when it was acquired by the YWCA), until 1964, the fifty years cut-off date. Originally built as a single-family residence, **Villa Victoria** offers special significance within the Historic Miramar neighborhood, as it is one of few remaining constructions pre-dating the expansion and development boom in the area (**Fig. 1**).

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Villa Victoria within the History of the Development of the Santurce borough and the Miramar Neighborhood

The building sits within the Santurce ward, an area that marked the first suburban expansion from the walled-city of San Juan, along an important trade route which connected the Old City to the rest of the island. By the early twentieth century, the building was located within a large estate limited on the south by *Carretera Central* and the north by *Ensenada Cangrejos*, nowadays known as the Condado Lagoon. As recorded in 1903 in the City of San Juan's Property Register, the building was located within a large, yet unsegregated parcel (*finca*) along with 8 other buildings (thought to be wooden huts or *bohios*) and a manger (*pesebre*)². No record of the architect in charge of the building's design was found through the investigation conducted. The building's construction method, composed of brick units (*ladrillos de alfajía*) in a stacked pattern of construction held together by lime mortar, traditionally dates to Spanish times. The tile found in the entrance balcony is also thought to date back to the period pre-dating the US occupation of the Island, with a checkered black-and-white pattern composed of local gray-veined marble and slate tiles. In spite of these architectural elements suggesting a possible ninetieth century construction period, no documents dated earlier than 1903 have been found related to the present building.

In early twentieth century documents, the building's footprint is clearly indicated, most notably the PR Fire Underwriters Map of 1917³, which shows the building's placement within the site, type of construction (masonry with wooden doors and windows) and number of story's (one).

² Tomo 50, Folio 219, Finca 2125. Santurce Norte. Registro de la Propiedad, Municipio de San Juan.

³ Archivo General de Puerto Rico (AGPR). Mapoteca. The Porto Rico Board of Fire Underwriters. No. 9. General Plan of Santurce. FirstSection. August 30, 1917.

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Although the building has suffered several alterations throughout its lifetime, the architectural character and composition of the façade remains intact, offering an excellent example of a turn of the century building. The period that the building is thought to have been constructed in is significant, as major developments in the infrastructure of the area were implemented at this time.

According to an intensive survey conducted in 2006, and as reflected in the 1917 PR Fire Underwriters Map, 214 raised cottages (or *quintas*) were constructed in Miramar in the period between 1903 and 1920. Of these, 116 were built out of wood and zinc. The remaining 98 were built of masonry, **Villa Victoria** included among them⁴ (Fig. 2). Of these 214 *quintas*, only 22 remain to this date, 15 of which are built of masonry. According to the survey, two buildings in the area pre-date this time period of construction, a *quinta* located at *Calle Hoare* (previously facing *Calle Central*) and the *Colegio de Señoritas de la Orden de las Madres Hermanas del Sagrado Corazón de María* (1883) facing *Calle Central* and directly adjacent to **Villa Victoria**, separated by *Calle Hoare*.

YWCA: The international organization

The Young Women's Christian Association was officially founded in Great Britain, based on the general principles of Christianity, yet with no affiliation to specific church groups. The history of the association "tells of the realization of the pioneering interracial ideals of the founders for a global movement' of, by, and for women'"⁵ The First Congress, held in 1898 in London, was funded by the United States and England. Its Constitution was officially made known on the occasion.⁶

Mary Jane Lady Kinnaird, from Britain and Rebecca Morse from the United States were key figures in laying out the groundwork for the Organization. Mrs. Herbert Tritton, a pioneer in missionary work, was its First President. The beginnings and background, as well as the name of the organization, however, date back to the Crimean War in which civilian participation of the nations engaged in the conflict played a humanitarian role in relief efforts. Emma Robarts and Lady Kinnaird were two of the outstanding early volunteers in who recognized the need to provide lodging for nurses who moved to London to provide services to the war wounded.⁷

Several other civic women's organizations joined forces, and the movement grew during the final decades of the 19th century to include members from Britain, the United States, France, Germany, and Switzerland. London was the seat of the International Headquarters until 1930, when operations were transferred to Geneva.

⁴ Vivoni Farage, Enrique, "Reconocimiento Intensivo de Miramar, Puerto Rico". Proyecto auspiciado por la Oficina Estatal de Conservación Histórica, el Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción y la Escuela de Arquitectura. 31 de marzo de 2006. *Sección A Miramar I: de quintas y raised cottages, 1903-1920*.

⁵ Seymour-Jones, Carole. 1994. *Journey of Faith: The History of the World YWCA 1945-1994*. xvi

⁶ Ibid. 7

⁷ Ibid. 10

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The Caribbean Scene

The founding of new chapters in the Caribbean Region seems to have followed no particular pattern, other than the will of the individual groups to form part of the worldwide organization working towards providing young women with much needed services and opportunities. Jamaica, Surinam, the Bahamas, Haiti, Grenada, Barbados, British Guyana, and Trinidad preceded Puerto Rico in establishing chapters of the YWCA. Many of the islands had hostels for their visitors. Puerto Rico was the only seat of the YWCA within a Spanish-speaking island in the Caribbean. The World YWCA's bywords: "Unity within diversity" was appropriately applicable to the region, given the linguistic and ethnic diversity of the islands.

The Young Women's Christian Association in Puerto Rico

The YWCA in Puerto Rico, as it has done worldwide, has been a pioneer in recognizing and furthering the role of young women in modern urban society. Its history is marked by the farsighted vision and dynamic initiatives of civic minded citizens who deserve recognition for their work and contributions to the Island, beginning at a time of pressing social needs and changes. More than seventy years after initial steps were taken in the early 1940's to establish a chapter in Puerto Rico, the organization remains relevant in pursuing its goals.

During the time of the establishment of the YWCA in Puerto Rico (1946), the island was in the process of intense political and social change. Its economy was being transformed from an agricultural society to an industrial one that required training the work force in new skills. Multiple government economic initiatives were set in motion, and new sources of employment loomed as part of a more promising future.

Efforts were underway to improve prevailing conditions of poverty and dire need in the areas of food, housing and health. To cite but one example, the Federal War Emergency Program (established during World War II), set up Milk Stations for indigent children, many of them living in hard to reach rural areas throughout the island. The letters of First Lady Inés Mendoza de Muñoz Marín describe the urgency and the logistics that providing access to such services entailed.⁸

The YWCA is established in Puerto Rico

The history of the YWCA in Puerto Rico, part of which parallels the founding of chapters elsewhere, tells a story of a group of forward-minded women with a progressive vision of the future, enlightened by the stated principles of the worldwide organization. Human rights, gender and racial equality, and a strong work ethic were some of the important underlying values stressed by the organization. Its participants were defined by social awareness and aspirations, receptivity, civic action, integration and commitment to collaborative work. Their endeavor constitutes an excellent example of the recognition of women as valued dynamic and highly visible members of a changing modern society. Helping young women who were joining the workforce in unprecedented numbers achieve

⁸ "Asuntos políticos. 1940-1962." *Fondo Oficina del Gobernador. Tarea 96-20. Caja 134.* Archivo General de Puerto Rico. San Juan.

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their goals for a better and more meaningful life in an evolving environment was a major project that required ample leadership and social resources. It also required knowledgeable leaders willing to effect change.

Evidence of the efforts leading to the establishment of the YWCA chapter in Puerto Rico in 1946, exists in the correspondence and records on hand, safeguarded by the organization's archives. Letters from 1943 to 1946 document the ongoing contact and exchanges with the sponsoring New York City chapter. Many were written by YWCA officials who visited Puerto Rico in an advisory capacity at the request of proactive Puerto Ricans, such as Margarita Castro and Lydia Vientós, who led the initiative towards identifying benefactors, advisors and prominent citizens committed to the stated goals of the YWCA and provided their time and expertise. The visiting advisors played a key role in laying the groundwork and providing guidelines, as well as sharing their knowledge and experience. Some of these individuals were on the island on extended stay lasting months.

However, even with the crucial assistance of continentals, the guiding force in organizing the YWCA chapter, its Constitution and By-Laws in the island, was a selected group of well-educated, middle and upper middle class bilingual Puerto Rican women. On May 16, 1945, a group of forty eight these strongly determined women met at the Ateneo de Puerto Rico to organize what was in effect a steering committee, which they designated an "Interim Committee" in Spanish. The Ateneo de Puerto Rico, in Old San Juan, was then as now respected and admired as the oldest cultural institution and first academic entity of higher learning on the island. The committee was headed by Edith Rivera. One of their initial tasks was writing to the National Board of the YWCA in New York City requesting professional leadership for a one year period until a local executive leadership could be formed.

In 1946, the organization's headquarters was located within the walled city (Old San Juan) at Tetuán Street #1. By 1948, and in need of larger quarters, requiring lodging as well as office facilities, the YWCA moved its operations to a rented house at 1814 Fernández Juncos Avenue in Santurce. It included four bedrooms, available to young working women and students migrating from the interior and more remote rural sectors of the island. *Minutes of the YWCA of Puerto Rico* record that by the end of 1949, headquarters were moved to a rented residence on 532 Riera Street and Ponce de León Avenue, in order to provide additional boarding space. By 1953, headquarters again moved to what would eventually become the permanent home for the YWCA.⁹

As the association grew, attaining a constituency of over 1000 members by the late 1950's, its programs expanded to include classes in skills that would prepare its constituency for the job market. Courses in typing, and language skills were important offerings. At one point, in addition to English, classes in French and Italian were available. Sewing, needlework, handcrafts, drawing and painting, baking, interior decoration, swimming, exercise, conversational Spanish for English speakers, and even automobile maintenance were among the courses available. Sports, field trips, and social activities were also part of the program. True to the founding principles of the worldwide organization, conferences on vital matters such as human rights and health were part of the ongoing agenda at the yearly meetings of the Board Members

⁹ Complete archives of the *Minutes of the Board of Directors of the YWCA of Puerto Rico*, safeguarded at the current headquarters, include reports of the each of the special committees.

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A permanent home

The year 1955 marked a much-anticipated milestone in the history of the YWCA in Puerto Rico with the acquisition of the property on the corner of 905 Ponce de León Avenue and Calle Hoare, in the Miramar neighborhood. It was purchased from Don Jenaro Suárez, a physician and his wife, Ethel Natalie Wigmore (Fig. 3).

The house, known as **Villa Victoria**, had been a private residence up to the time of the purchase by the YWCA. Among its salient features was its prime urban setting in Miramar, one of the oldest original neighborhoods within the Municipality of San Juan. Located on high ground, therefore free from flood hazards, the choice of venue was wise for many other reasons, such as accessibility by public means of transportation, and high visibility. The location for the new headquarters in Ponce de Leon Avenue, a thoroughfare for institutional, educational and commercial endeavor, promoted the visibility of the institution and placed its constituency nearby the promising sources of employment for the self-sustaining women that the organization served.

In this dynamic urban context, once settled in its excellent new headquarters, YWCA was proud and well prepared to continue its work playing a key role in the future of the island. The letters and documents on file regarding the purchase of the property give evidence of the generosity, devotion, trust, and commitment shown by its founding members, and news articles of the time were keen to highlight the accomplishments of the organization.

By June 1955 formal acquisition of the property had taken place¹⁰. Original documents of the purchase, which include title search, deed, and powers of attorney are currently safeguarded by the institution. The mortgage for the purchase was personally guaranteed by two active founding members of the YWCA: Soledad Rodríguez Pastor and Irma Cuevas de Kearney, for what was at the time considered to be the very large sum of \$25,000.00.

The organizational process of the YWCA required and counted upon participants who were knowledgeable, highly respected, well-educated and well-connected members of the community. While difficult to measure the full impact of the YWCA of Puerto Rico on the community, it is safe to say that the outstanding professionals who worked towards establishing the organization provided exceptional role models to young women who sought to better their lot in life by means of education and jobs.¹¹ Having an impact is at the core of the YWCA'S mission, and the results of the programs and outreach of the association were evident as its membership increased to over 1000 members by the 1960's.

While other local organizations for women addressed various social, cultural, and civic needs, the YWCA was the most specifically inclusive and non-discriminatory, with its focus on meeting the needs of young women who migrated to the city in search of opportunities and training. In addition to

¹⁰ Tomo 232, Folio 39, Finca 9193. Santurce Norte. Registro de la Propiedad, Municipio de San Juan.

¹¹ The YWCA Archives do not hold statistical records of program services directly administered to young females attended through the property's period of significance.

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having its own headquarters, it was accessible and ever-present, with a program that included education in marketable office skills such as typing, as well as sports and recreational activities. The general public was invited and welcome at many of its events such as conferences, fundraisers and social activities.

Wide press coverage¹² chronicled the activities marking the expansion that took place during the decades of the 1940's, 1950's, and 1960's, and 1970's, thereby capturing the spirit of generosity and fervor of the YWCA's leadership as well as the receptivity of the community to its offerings. Pertinent subjects such as job orientation, the importance of learning new skills, and issues pertaining to women's health were part of the ongoing organizational agenda.

Distinguished and experienced educators such as Beatriz Lassalle, Josefina del Toro Fulladosa, Josefita Monserrate de Sellés, and Celestina Zaldondo provided expertise as active board members. Two of the participating teachers, Cristina McCall and Coloma Pardo de Casablanca were School Superintendents of the Municipalities of San Juan and San German, respectively. The platform of benefactors included the resources of practicing attorneys such as Nilita Vientós Gastón and James Beverley,¹³ as well as the presence and talent of concert pianist Elsa Rivera Salgado.

Highlights of the YWCA of Puerto Rico

The early years marked the course of the YWCA in Puerto Rico as the organization grew and its work and purpose became better known. The association was a valuable resource to its constituency and beyond, expanding awareness as to the needs, roles, and possibilities facing young women in a rapidly changing urban environment. Many of the tenets and principles upheld by the YWCA focused on strengthening the position of women in society, well ahead of the landmark feminist movements that came to the fore in the 1960's and continue at present.

Its educational program included classes in knitting, cooking, ceramics, stencil painting, and activities such as camping, dances, and movies as well as visits to Puerto Rican industries, which had been recently established and provided new opportunities for jobs and training. The expansion of this program, as has been previously mentioned, continued after the acquisition of permanent headquarters.

The five-year celebration of the association's founding, in 1951, highlighted the appointment of the first Puerto Rican National General Secretary, referring to full time professional staff member Guadalupe Colón. The Worldwide YWCA sent Ruth Cowles, a board member from Trinidad, as its representative to the activities marking the event.¹⁴

¹² The Bibliography includes a representative list of articles chosen from the Archives of *El Mundo*, the leading newspaper in Puerto Rico during the years covered in the present narrative.

¹³ As former appointed Governor of Puerto Rico, James Beverley used his influence and expertise in behalf of the YWCA throughout his lifetime, and remained active in the association's fundraising initiatives.

¹⁴ The Puerto Rican Collection of the University of Puerto Rico Library at the Río Piedras Campus has ample documentation of the activities of the YWCA, some of which appears in the Bibliography of the present narrative. Press clippings and photographs from the EL

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That same year the YWCA appeared on the list of organizers from the leading civic organizations on the island for the Christmas Festival, an ambitious island wide undertaking organized by First Lady Inés Mendoza de Muñoz Marín, that included fundraising with the collaboration of the business community, the media, political figures and school leaders, to benefit children of scarce resources.¹⁵

A number of additional events stand out as milestones in the history of the YWCA in Puerto Rico. In 1957, the YWCA Third Area Conference for the Caribbean was held in Puerto Rico. The 1970's included the founding of "Y Teens", an activities program for young girls. In 1975, the commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of the YWCA in Puerto Rico was scheduled to coincide with the Celebration of International Women's Year. The Headquarters at **Villa Victoria** hosted a series of activities for the visitors. The main event took place at the Caribe Hilton Hotel and featured María Teresa Berio, a distinguished obstetrician, as keynote speaker on matters pertaining to women's health.

Historical Records of Villa Victoria

The earliest records found of **Villa Victoria** dates from an inscription in the property records dating to 1903¹⁶. The document describes a masonry and wood home with a galvanized iron roof constructed by Don Tomas George Waymouth. In the 1903 entry in the property records it mentions that the home is of "*new construction*". It also makes mention of 8 other homes (non-permanent wooden huts) and a manger (pesebre) within the land.

The PR Fire Underwriters Map of 1917¹⁷ identifies **Villa Victoria** as type B-2 located at number 72 *Calle Central*. The designation refers to a brick or concrete masonry building without having all of the doors and windows covered with ironwork. It is identified as having one story. The 1918 property records indicate the proprietor of the land where it stood being Thomas George Waymouth and his wife¹⁸. The 1920 census¹⁹, identifies Ramón Mora and his wife Teresa Nicolao de Mora as residents of **Villa Victoria**. The 1930 census²⁰ reflects a change, identifying Cecilio Rodriguez as residing at the home. As property records show, the land was subdivided in 1929 and a succession of heirs took place, the Waymouth Estate Company.

In 1940, the property was bought by Don Jenaro Suarez and his wife Doña Ethel Natalie Wigmore. As property records show, it underwent major renovations during this period of ownership. As described in the records new electrical and plumbing infrastructure was installed and a new roof

Mundo (newspaper) cover events and the expansion that took place during the decades of the 1940's, 50's, 60's and 70's, and capture the spirit, fervor, and dedication of the participants.

¹⁵ "Boletín Administrativo 989." 1948-1957. *Fondo Oficina del Gobernador Tarea 96-20*. Archivo General de Puerto Rico, San Juan.

¹⁶ Tomo 50, Folio 219, Finca 2125. Santurce Norte. Registro de la Propiedad, Municipio de San Juan.

¹⁷ AGPR. Mapoteca. The Porto Rico Board of FireUnderwriters. No. 9. General Plan of Santurce. First Section. August 30, 1917.

¹⁸ Tomo 50, Folio 219, Finca 2125. Santurce Norte. Registro de la Propiedad, Municipio de San Juan.

¹⁹ Archivo General de Puerto Rico. Censo de la Población de San Juan. 1920.

²⁰ Archivo General de Puerto Rico. Censo de la Población de San Juan. 1930.

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was put in place that would withstand hurricane winds. On the first floor, new flooring, bathrooms, kitchen & pantry, living room and closets were installed, as well as, an extension to the back balcony was built (lean-to addition). In the basement level, six spaces were rehabilitated for use as office space, bathrooms and laundry area. A new entrance gate and sidewalks were built. A septic tank connection to the sanitary service was installed. A detached concrete garage structure was erected and there was leveling of the earthwork for the gardens.

On May 31, 1955 the property was purchased on behalf of the YWCA by Doña Irma Cuevas de Kearney and Doña Marianne Goettsch. During the 1960's, immediately following the purchase of the property by the YWCA, it is believed that the interior partitions within the first level of the building were demolished and rehabilitated as they exist today (Fig. 4). During the 1980's, repairs were performed following damages caused to the building by a storm (Fig. 5). These included the installation of a new roof and wood-slat ceiling, the installation of tile flooring and the reconfiguration of the bathrooms and the warming kitchen.

After over 60 years at its current headquarters at this historic sector of the city, the YWCA continues to have an impact on the lives of young women and girls through its leadership programs, sports and recreation, and study skills and values. The afterschool leadership program continues to be an important offering to young women aspiring to a better future.

Villa Victoria retains most of the aspects of integrity (location, setting, feeling and association) that conveys its significance (Fig. 6). The property is of statewide significance under Criterion A in the area of Social History, as the property has served as headquarters for the Young Women's Association (YWCA) since 1955. Through its commitment for social justice and equality, its educational programs and its promotion of strong values, the YWCA has been a vital institution in the process of woman empowerment in Puerto Rico.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (Insert bibliography here – cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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_____. *Fondo Oficina del Gobernador*. Tarea 96-20. Cajas Número 478, 1443, 847.

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San Juan, Puerto Rico

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Villa Victoria

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of Property

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- 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 #
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other (Name of repository)
- YWCA Archives

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.314565 (less than an acre) USGS Quadrangle San Juan Quadrangle

(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map): _____

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | Zone <u>19C</u> | Easting <u>808415</u> | Northing <u>2042959</u> |
| 2. | Zone _____ | Easting _____ | Northing _____ |
| 3. | Zone _____ | Easting _____ | Northing _____ |
| 4. | Zone _____ | Easting _____ | Northing _____ |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Lot of 1,247 square meters, as recorded at the Centro de Recaudaciones de Ingresos Municipales (CRIM) under number 040-038-058-06.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the entire lot historically associated with the building.

Villa Victoria San Juan, Puerto Rico
Name of Property **County and State**

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jimmarie Bou/ Architect
organization _____ date November 17, 2014
street & number 102 Calle Unión 710 telephone 678-325-9591
city or town San Juan state PR zip code 00907
email jimmariebou@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property Villa Victoria (YWCA Headquarters)
City or Vicinity Miramar (San Juan) County San Juan State PR
Photographer Jimmarie Bou Date Photographed June 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera.

Photographs

- Photo 0001. Frontal view (Main façade); looking northwest.
- Photo 0002. Detail of Entrance Stair; looking north.
- Photo 0003. Detail at Main Entrance; looking northwest.
- Photo 0004. Lateral Façade View; looking west.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Villa Victoria

San Juan, Puerto Rico

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N/A

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Figure 1. Villa Victoria, 1910 ca. (Source: PRSHPO)



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Figure 2. Villa Victoria, main façade, 1910 ca. (Source: PRSHPO)



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Figure 3. Villa Victoria's main façade, 1960s ca. (Source: YWCA's Archives)



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Figure 4. Villa Victoria's eastern façade, 1960s ca. (Source: YWCA's Archives)



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Figure 5. Villa Victoria's eastern façade, after 1979's storm damage; 1979 ca. (Source: YWCA's Archives)



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Figure 6. Villa Victoria, 2014.



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Site Map: Villa Victoria (outlined). Coordinates: E- 808415 N- 2042959

