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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin 33, *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 Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje

Other names/site number Hacienda Candelaria, Ermita del Plantaje

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & Number State road PR-866, Sabana Seca Ward

City or town Toa Baja State Puerto Rico County Toa Baja

Not for publication Vicinity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
Diana López Sotomayor SHPO/Director

19 Mayo 2015
Date

Signature of certifying official/Title:

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): _____

José Salas
Signature of Keeper

6-30-2015
Date of Action

Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje
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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	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	Buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	Structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	Objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

Other

Materials (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick and stone masonry

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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.)

The site of the *Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje* (commonly known as *Ermita del Plantaje*) includes the currently abandoned ruins of a brick and rubblework 18th century Catholic hermitage in the Sabana Seca Ward of the Municipality of Toa Baja. This site is located in a 10,553 square-meter lot, in a verdant area between state road PR-167 and the Bayamón river's former meander. The ruins of the hermitage consist of a single nave cut across by a transept, and crowned with a dome at their point of interception. Measuring approximately 30 meters long and 10 meters wide, the building has lost its original wooden roof, doors, and windows, as well as the main (southern) façade. Nonetheless, the building's remains (walls and cupola) still conform to the original character and setting in which it played its historic role.

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

The *Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje* rests within a roughly rectangular-shaped strip surrounded by undeveloped land, just west of the natural course of the Bayamón River (Río Bayamón) (Figure 1 and Map 1). The property can be accessed from State Road #866. The nearest urban cluster is Levittown housing development (Map 2).

Figure 1. Map of the area showing the location of hermitage and the old meander of the Bayamón River.



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North of the *Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje*, an old cemetery gate and wall run parallel to the ruins. Oral history indicates that the space between the wall and the *Ermita*, was used for burials¹. The gate's brick archway's keystone has been lost, but its two columns are still present (**Fig. 2**). To the east of the ruin there is a thin line of trees that border the remnants of the (pre canalization) Bayamón River meander.

Figure 2. View of cemetery gate. (Photographer: Diana López Sotomayor)



The site incorporates six additional non-contributing resources associated to the property's 20th century use as a dairy farm. South-southeast of the hermitage, a water tower, two support buildings and two feeding troughs, close to a heavily wooded area. Further west, a small vacant concrete building completes the complex (**Fig. 3**).

Figure 3. Partial site plan. (Sketch: Marel Del Toro)



¹ Archeological research is necessary to verify this information and to locate the hermitage's cemetery.

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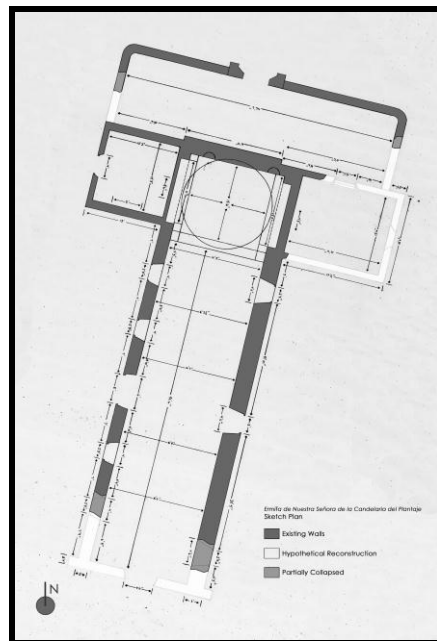
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Ermita de la Candelaria has lost some of its structural integrity. Gone are the original main roof, cupola lantern, southern main façade, all doors and windows and the east vestry. It consists of a single nave cut across by a transept, crowned with a dome at their point of interception. The ruins measure 30 meters long and 10 meters wide.² The nave's floor is made of compact soil. Viewed from the south, the hermitage's two side walls and the altar can be appreciated (**Figure 4 and 5**). The altar space is framed by an arch with a cornice. The still transept retains the altar and the western vestry (**Figure 6**).

Figure 4. View from the south. (Photographer: José Marull)



Figure 5. Sketch floor plan. (Sketch: Marel Del Toro)³



² Jaqueline López Meléndez, "Reconocimiento general de yacimientos arqueológicos en el municipio de Toa Baja, Puerto Rico", Volumen II, Septiembre 2005, Toa Baja – Inventario de Recursos Culturales 2005, Página H-20.

³ Original floor plan prepared in 1998 by E. González.

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Figure 6. View of the west vestry. (Photographer: José Marull)



The ruins boast fenestrations (three windows and one door) on the west façade, and two more (one door and one window) on the east façade (**Figures 7 and 8**). The loss of stucco finish has left the 18th century brick and stone masonry construction exposed.

Figure 7. View of west façade. (Photographer: José Marull)



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Figure 8. View of east façade. (Photographer: José Marull)



The dome, resting on a squinch, has a small circular opening on top (oculus) and a small square opening on its northern side, possibly for ventilation (**Figure 9**). The dome is 15 feet wide at its base; the oculus is perched 20 feet 11 inches from the ground. The hermitage’s dome is not visible from the outside because of the dense foliage growing on the building.

Figure 9. View of dome. (Photographer: Diana López Sotomayor)



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During the 20th century, access from the nave was blocked off by a low concrete wall, which has partially collapsed. The space was used for storage in the 20th century and the floor is strewn with debris. There are two corner niches on the north end wall. The one on the western corner is in good condition, while the eastern one is heavily deteriorated.

Indoor access to the remaining vestry is blocked. The only entrance to the west vestry is through an exterior doorway. The original wooden beams and brick roof were replaced with a 20th century concrete slab, which currently shows exposed rusted steel rods (Figure 10).

Figure 10. View of the exposed rusted steel rods in the vestry's roof. (Photographer: José Marull)



Concrete feeding troughs were unfortunately built along the exterior walls as cattle feeding stations: two at the base of the west façade, one on the east façade and one more along the north wall of the portico.

The property still retains important aspects of integrity. The location, setting and sense of place, including the relationship with the river and the rural scenery, and construction methods still evoke the collective memory of a time and way of life that is not forgotten. These character defining features allow the property to convey its significance as an early 18th century plantation hermitage.

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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** A commemorative property.
- F** 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

1718-1893

Significant Dates

1718, 1779, 1893

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

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.)

The *Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje* boasts statewide significant under Criterion A, for its unique relevance in the social history of early Colonial times in Puerto Rico. The site is the only known remains of an eighteenth century hermitage plantation in the island. The ruins are the only extant resource associated with *Hacienda Candelaria*, an early eighteenth century sugar plantation. Between 1718 and 1735, the hacienda was owned by Miguel Enríquez. An enigmatic and controversial *mulato*, Enríquez overcame being a descendant of slaves, and made a successful career as a privateer, only to become the richest man among the island's white colonial elite. Even though the hermitage's precise construction date is vague, it is known that it was consecrated in 1779 and closed in 1893, founding date of the nearby Cataño Parish. Though a private hacienda's heritage, for almost two hundred years it was open to the owners and to the local inhabitants as well. As such, the property witnessed and played a significant role in the everyday life of its various owners, numerous slaves, workers and locals that stepped inside its now ruined walls. The property is eligible under Criteria Consideration A, as the site derives its significance from its association with historic events: economic and population development and the early sugar cane industry along the island's coastal plains, the successes of privateering and contraband. The *Ermita* was an ever-present and silent witness to these changes.

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

Economic and Population Development in Toa Baja from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Centuries

El Toa is well known as a quit fertile and heavily populated valley in pre-Columbian times. At the time of the Spanish Conquest, there were several important indigenous chiefdoms (*cacicazgos*).⁴ These original inhabitants were violently taken from their villages, relocated in new settlements and virtually enslaved in a system called *encomienda*. The priorities of the *encomienda* were the extraction of gold and development of intensive agriculture.

One of the earliest projects of the Spanish Colonial Regime in Puerto Rico was the *Hacienda Real del Toa* (1510). In this *encomienda*, the Spaniards experimented adapting European crops to the Caribbean soils and weather (wheat, lettuce, onion, eggplant, garlic and spinach), while also growing indigenous staple crops.⁵ The success of the *Hacienda Real del Toa* stimulated population growth. In addition, the migrations that occurred in that early Colonial period contributed to the population development. One of the largest groups of immigrants came from the Canary Islands, Spain. It is precisely this group, the *canarios*, which introduced in Puerto Rico the festivities of the *Virgen de La*

⁴ Francisco Moscoso, "La conquista española y la Gran Rebelión de los Taínos." *Pensamiento Crítico* 12.62 (1989), 6. the Taínos society was organized in *Cacicazgos* or chiefdoms. This chiefdom system was profoundly altered with the Spanish conquest and colonization of Puerto Rico.

⁵ Eugenio Fernández Méndez, *Las encomiendas y esclavitud de los indios de Puerto Rico 1508-1550*. (República Dominicana: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1984), 18-19.

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Candelaria.⁶ From that perspective, due to its name ***Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje***, the historic property here considered references early colonial traditions imported to the Island during the sixteenth century.⁷

During the first half of the sixteenth century *el Toa* acquired economic importance. The successful agricultural activities in the *Hacienda Real del Toa* caught the Spanish elite's interest, and several wealthy members of the new Colonial society had *estancias* or *fincas* in the area. As for *el Toa*, it is relevant to point out that it was the place where the third sugar mill was established in the Island.⁸ From the mid sixteenth century to the early eighteenth century sugar cane cultivation persisted in *el Toa*.

Population growth created the conditions for the emergence of a new municipality called Toa Baja. In the year 1745, the governor of Puerto Rico, Matías de Abadía, authorized the creation of the new political jurisdiction.⁹ As the eighteenth century progressed Toa Baja became one of the most important sugar production regions in Puerto Rico. At the end of that period some highly significant plantations in the municipality developed, among these were: *Santa Elena*, *Media Luna* and *El Plantaje*.

El Plantaje: Lands for Investments of Privateering and Contraband riches

El Plantaje belonged, in the early Eighteenth Century, to the prominent Puerto Rican privateer Miguel Enríquez. He was a successful participant in the recurrent practice of maritime raiding. The Spanish War of Succession (1701-1714), triggered by the death of a childless Charles II, engulfed western Europe in multiple theaters of war, effectively threatening the balance of power both in the continent and in the colonies overseas. Pirates and Privateers attacks happened frequently in the maritime passages of the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean area.¹⁰ The British, French and Dutch colonies' illegal trade with the Spanish colonies became more widespread. Enríquez, a well-educated mulatto, and the earliest known owner of *Hacienda Candelaria*, was a savvy protagonist in this scenario of international turmoil and illicit profits.

Privateering and contraband trade made Enríquez one of the most important figures in Puerto Rico, during the first half of the XVIII century, specifically in the city of San Juan. The son of a freed

⁶ The devotion to the *Virgen de la Candelaria* is present in Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain, as early as the 16th century. Between the 16th and 17th centuries, the families from Canary Island settled in Toa Baja, celebrating her feast on February 2.

⁷ Gabriel Baldi-Lemmonier, *La Ermita de la Candelaria en la Hacienda El Plataje*. Thesis for the M. A., Center of Advanced Studies of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, 1999, 1.

⁸ Guillermo Baralt, *Azúcar y esclavitud en Toa Baja: la conspiración de los esclavos 26 de marzo de 1843* (República Dominicana: Editorial Corrupio, 1983), 18.

⁹ Debra E. Padilla Meléndez. *Toa Baja: notas para su historia* (San Juan: Model Offset Printing, 1984), 47.

¹⁰ Peter Earl, *The Pirate Wars* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005), 160.

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slave¹¹, he was in a privileged position, a powerful figure between 1704 and 1735.¹² With privateering commissions, issued by governors of Puerto Rico, Enríquez organized and financed privateer enterprises to capture foreign vessels involved in illegal commerce with the coastal towns in Puerto Rico. As part of this commission the privateer could sell captured ships and their products in the port of San Juan. However, Enriquez was also able to sell other merchandise under the pretense of being part of his bounty.¹³

As Enríquez' ships continued seizing foreign boats, *the Corso Negro*, became one of the wealthiest and influential men among Puerto Rico's white elite. When Enríquez acquired the tract of land (between 1718 and 1735)¹⁴, a large section was dedicated to sugarcane, while other areas cultivated plantain and yucca for the workforce's sustenance. Various properties were constructed in the plantation. Among them was a two story, stone masonry building with a brick tile roof that served as the manor residence which Miguel Enriquez named *Plantaje*. Shortly afterwards a small chapel was built near the residence where his friends and slaves could worship.¹⁵ By 1721, Hacienda Candelaria, had ten "*caballerizas de buena tierra*"¹⁶ or approximately 582.73 acres which extended east to west from the mouth of Bayamón River (including the point called Palo Seco) to the Toa River, and to the south it bordered with the lands of María de Amezquita, Campanilla channel and the sugar mill of the reverend father Cristóbal Pérez.

Enríquez' achievement and success generated envy and opposition from the class-minded prominent families, *criollo* elite, in the Colonial society of San Juan. Their opposition towards the privateer was reflected in their correspondence and complaints with Spanish government officials, accusing the privateer of contraband trade. José del Pozo, *treasurer of the Real Hacienda*,¹⁷ was a member of the group that insistently wanted to prove Enríquez guilt.¹⁸ The *oficial real* argued that most of the imported merchandise obtained by the privateering ships was illegitimate. The rivalry between Enríquez and the group of del Pozo was very profound as is evidenced in various records and documents where all sorts of accusations are made about the man and his properties, including the *Hacienda Candelaria*.

In 1721, the embargo against Enriquez was initiated. The authorities confiscated four sugar boilers, fifty slaves, cattle, horses and sheep among other goods. The embargo also included Enriquez's

¹¹ The documentation of the period indicates that his mother, a mulatto freed slave, was Graciana Enriquez. Although there is copious documentation in the Spanish archives about Miguel Enriquez, the name of his father is not mentioned.

Historians have speculated that Miguel Enriquez's father was a high cleric official of the Catholic Church.

¹² Ángel López Cantos, *Miguel Enríquez* (Puerto Rico: Ediciones Puerto, 1998).

¹³ The *Ordenanza the Corso* of 1674 was a royal legislation that authorized privateering expeditions to be carried by subjects to the Spanish Crown in the Hispanic American colonies. According to that decree Spanish privateers could the prizes obtained from ships that were attacking Spanish domains or practicing contraband trade in their shores.

¹⁴ Francisco Moscoso, *Agricultura y Sociedad en Puerto Rico, Siglos 16 al 18: Un acercamiento desde la historia* (San Juan: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1999), 109.

¹⁵ *Confesión de Miguel Enríquez, 6 de diciembre de 1721*.

¹⁶ Ángel López Cantos, 90.

¹⁷ The Real Hacienda was the Colonial institution that administered the collection of taxes in name of the King of Spain.

¹⁸ *Confesión de Miguel Enríquez, 6 de diciembre de 1721*. Archivo General de Indias, Escribanía, 140 A, N. 6, fls. 852-852vo

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house, the small chapel in the lot, and every other built resource within *Hacienda Candelaria*.¹⁹ By 1735, the legal process against Enriquez was completed. His houses, stores, warehouses, ships and the *Hacienda Candelaria* were held in the name of the Spanish Crown.²⁰ In 1742, Pedro Vicente de la Torre, a former employee of Miguel Enríquez²¹, acquired the *Hacienda Candelaria* in an auction. In the interest of demarcating the limits of his recently acquired plantation, in 1749, de la Torre requested the Colonial government of San Juan to determine the boundaries of *Hacienda El Plantaje*.²² In the last quarter of the 18th century Pedro Vicente de la Torre was reported to have two properties in Toa Baja – *Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria* and *San Pedro* - each having 100 slaves.²³ By 1796, Juana de Lara, de la Torre's daughter in law,²⁴ is identified as the owner of the plantation and the hermitage.²⁵ In 1812 the Spanish Colonial government assigned the largest subsidy, in Toa Baja, to the local parish priest and sexton of the *Hacienda Plantaje*.²⁶ When the next decade was coming to its end, this plantation was among the most profitable agricultural establishments in the northern region. At that time the owner, Enrique Buist, an Irish entrepreneur, was the biggest tax payer in the municipality of Toa Baja.²⁷ In 1829 Marcelino Geigel became owner of the property²⁸. The property was administered by the heirs of Marcelino Geigel until 1892, when it was transferred to Lorenzo Noa y Geigel²⁹.

The Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje: Part of Historical Process In and Around the Plantation

The hermitage, constructed for religious purposes, nevertheless speaks of different aspects of social dynamics of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Toa Baja and Puerto Rico (**Figure 11**). Church documents provide information about social structure and genealogies in the historic period studied. This historic site is a tangible testimony to the social and economic success of *Hacienda Candelaria*, the implicit social advances of having a plantation hermitage open to owners, laborers,

¹⁹ *Embargo de los bienes de Miguel Enríquez, 4 de diciembre de 1721*. Archivo General de Indias, Escribanía de Cámara, 140 A, CIH-carrete 188.

²⁰ Ángel López Cantos, 79.

²¹ In 1724 Pedro Vicente de la Torre, at the age of fifteen, arrived from Cadiz and was employed by Miguel Enriquez. In December 22, 1728 he married Ana de San Pedro y Castro, daughter of Fernando de Castro and María José Páez. Fernando de Castro, was as barber, surgeon and smuggler, was an avowed enemy of Miguel Enriquez. By 1734 Pedro Vicente de la Torre was reported as the most prominent and wealthy merchant in San Juan. Ángel López Cantos, 390 and 409 (note 118).

²² Minutes of October 1, 1749, *Actas del Cabildo de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico, 1730-1750*. (Puerto Rico: Gobierno de la Capital, 1949), 272.

²³ Francisco Moscoso, 162.

²⁴ Irma Picón, *La Ermita de la Candelaria* (San Juan: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 2001), 6, quoting Adam Szászdi, "Las usuras de Fray Iñigo," *Revista del Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña*, no.38, (Enero-Marzo 1968): 38. Juana de Lara was married to José de la Torre, son of Vicente de la Torre.

²⁵ *Visita Pastoral de Juan Bautista Zengotita, 1796*. Archivo General de Indias, Santo Domingo, 2519.

²⁶ Gabriel Baldi-Lemmonier, 50.

²⁷ Guillermo A. Baralt, 29.

²⁸ Gabriel Baldi-Lemmonier, 21. Marcelino Geigel had been partial owner of the property by 1822 as part an economic society with Enrique Buist. AGPR, Spanish Governors Fund, Municipalities, Toa Baja, Box 587.

²⁹In the 6th inscription of the deed of property of the *estancia* named Plantaje, February 26, 1892. Land Registry of Puerto Rico, Department of Justice, Volume 2, Toa Baja, Finca 63, 72 vto to 73 vto. The heirs of Ynocencio and Ricardo Geigel y González Geigel – only heirs of Marcelino Geigel and Ascención González –transferred the property to Lorenzo Noa y Geigel, a dental surgeon and resident of San Juan, in payment of debt.¹

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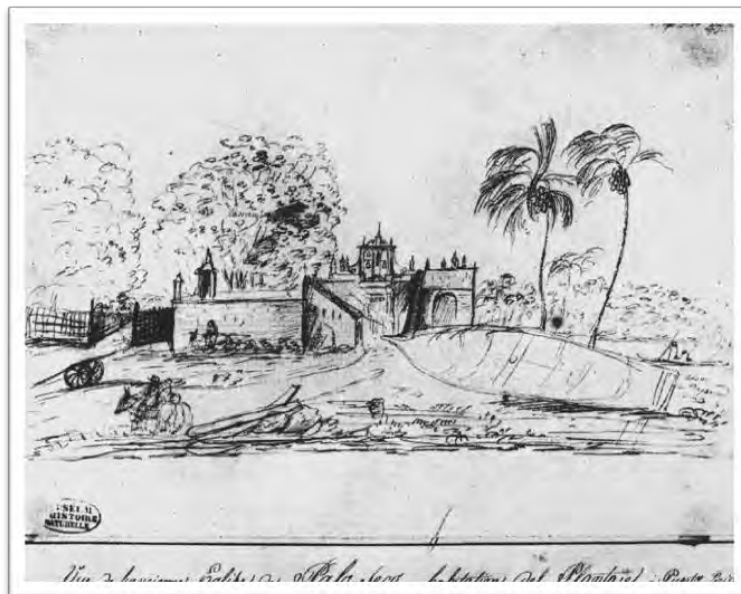
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slaves and other local folks, the economic and intrinsically related population growth, and its significance in the local community.³⁰

Once a year, on the second day of February, Puerto Ricans flock to the site on the day of the *Candelaria*, to commemorate the history of the property, reminisce about its distant and recent past, and recognize the efforts of those who have fought to preserve the site intact³¹.

Figure 11. Drawing by Augusto Plée, illustrates the hermitage in early 1820's.³²



From its consecration, in the year 1779, the hermitage³³ was deeply involved in the everyday activities of the plantation. The earliest reference to a pastoral visit to the hermitage is from the year 1796.³⁴ At that time, Juan Bautista Zengotita, bishop of San Juan, led the Catholic Church in Puerto

³⁰ In 1861 Pablo Benigno, bishop of Puerto Rico, was concerned about the state of the books that registered the sacraments offered in the hermitage. The first two books were from 1779 and the Bishop claimed that they have become useless because of the deterioration over time. Both books contained information about the baptisms celebrated in the hermitage and the burials that took place in its cemetery. Those hundreds of pages were too important for the Catholic Church to let them rot which led the bishop to order transcribing of all original entries in new books from the moment of the hermitage's foundation *Libro de defunciones de la Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria, 1779-1845*. Familysearch.org, f. 1.

³¹ Irma Mercado de Picón, resident of Levittown and local cultural activist, restarted in the latter part of the 1980s the festivities of the Candelaria in the grounds of the ruins of the hermitage. This activity was adopted by the municipal government of Toa Baja as a purification rite at the beginning of each year.

³² Ricardo E. Alegría, "Los Dibujos Puertorriqueños del Naturalista Fránces Augusto Plée (1821-1823)", separata de la Revista del Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, Núm. 68, julio-septiembre 1975, 18.

³³ Any new church or hermitage could only be authorized under certain conditions. It could only be built if it was six or more leagues away from the nearest church and if there were 30 head of households in the farm or ranch. Damián López de Haro, *Constituciones Sinodales de Puerto Rico of 1645* (Madrid: Imprenta Taravilla, 1989), 52.

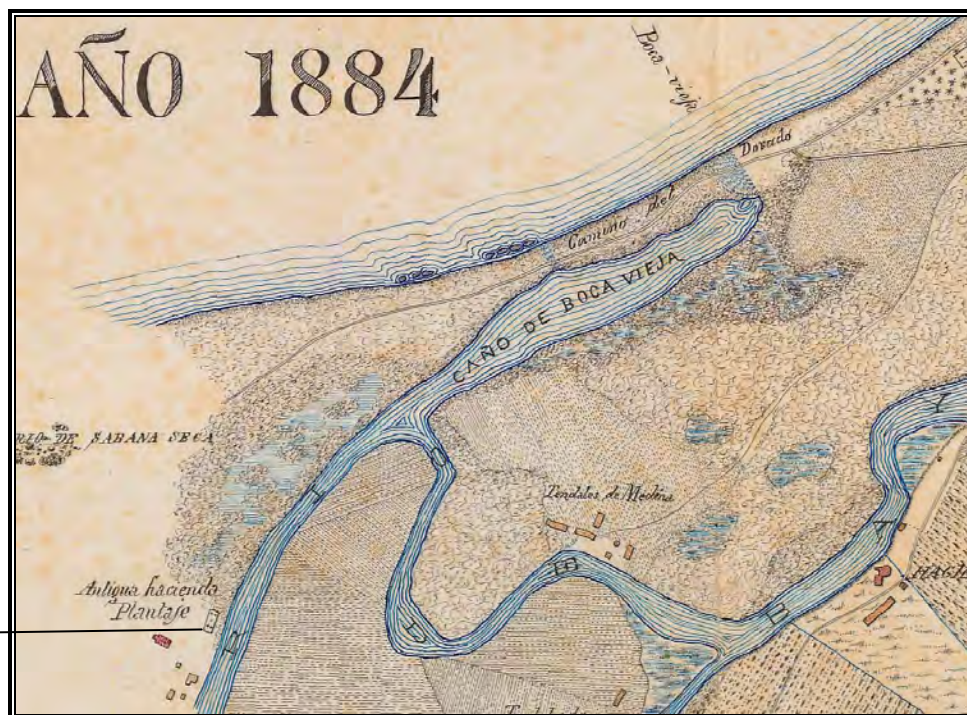
³⁴ A pastoral visit was traditional religious practice carried out by bishops. They, as religious leaders of the different ecclesiastic regions in Spanish Colonial America, traveled through the communities for the purposes of checking the status

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Rico. The first stop in his pastoral visit was at the historic site in question. In his *Visita Pastoral* he mentions inspecting the baptistery and various religious items: sacred oils, cups, ornaments³⁵, books of baptisms, marriages and burials. Zengotita gave specific instructions to the chaplain, which were recorded into the books, that the sacraments could only be given to the people from or related to the plantation.³⁶ This aspect is important because it reveals how the *Ermita* was seen as a component of the plantation, instead of a stand-alone religious temple for other communities or urban centers. This historic site was part of a private property, specifically a plantation, therefore it was its owner's responsibility to cover the expenses of the chaplain's salary and all obligations related to the functions of the hermitage (**Figure 12**). Meanwhile, a temple in an urban context would have to be administered and taken care off by the Spanish Government.

Figure 12. Segment of 1884 map of San Juan and its vicinity.³⁷



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of the hermitages, churches and parishes. At the same time, they verified if the Catholic sacraments were administered correctly and how the clergy was performing.

³⁵ Cristina Campo Lacasa, *Historia de la Iglesia en Puerto Rico* (Barcelona: Artes Gráficas Medianaceli, 1977), 173 quoting *Testimonio de la visita practicada por el obispo don Juan Bautista de Zengotita y Vengoa de su Obsipado de San Juan de Puerto Rico. Edicto General de la Visita*, 26 de abril de 1796, A.G.I., Santo Domingo, leg. 2.522.

³⁶ *Visita Pastoral de Juan Bautista Zengotita*, 1796. Archivo General de Indias, Santo Domingo, 2519, CIH-carrete, 75.

³⁷ Plano de San Juan de Puerto Rico y sus cercanías, Año 1884, levantado por el Capitán de Ingenieros D. Rafael Aguirre y Cavieces y los maestro de obra militares D. Armando Morales y Rildou y D. José Claudio y Biera. Puerto Rico, 30 de mayo de 1887. Documentación que forma parte del "Anteproyecto de un fuerte en el Alto del Olimpo de San Juan de Puerto Rico", Archivo General Militar de Madrid, Sección Ultramar del Ministerio de Guerra, signatura 5632.05.

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Baptismal records of the *Ermita de la Candelaria* preserve significant and valuable information about local history, social classes and social structure. One of the first records tells us that Juan Bautista, a *moreno* slave (african origin or descent) was the first person baptized in the hermitage. The ceremony took place in 1779 and he was described as a *moreno* slave who belonged to Pedro Vicente de la Torre.³⁸ Among the numerous baptisms celebrated in the hermitage, Felician's is worth mentioning. She was identified in July 11th, 1780, as the legitimate daughter of Manuel Francisco Molina and Antonia Camuy, both of them were free *pardos*.³⁹ That plurality was part of hegemonic economic and cultural stratifications of Puerto Rico's late eighteenth and nineteenth's century is evident in these religious records. An in depth analysis of these records would add to the data on demography of *morenos* and *pardos*, and the positions they held in the *Plantaje's* community.

At the same time, to mention of *agregados* family in 1825 denotes variations in labor force and production system in the *Hacienda Plantaje*. *Agregados* were tenants who had authorization to live in a landowner's property. In exchange, they paid with part of their crops. It is significant that *El Plantaje* was one of Puerto Rico's earliest nineteenth century plantations in which tenant families were subjected to the relation of exploitation and indebtedness of the *agregado*.

Records of burials and funerary ceremonies give us information about diverse aspects of the plantation's slaves history (**Figure 13**). For example, in November 2nd, 1779, the last sacraments were given to Simón, the legitimate son of María Gemana, a free *morena*, and of José a slave *moreno* property of Pedro Vicente de la Torre.⁴⁰ Once again marriage between different mixed racial groups, slaves and freed slaves is evidenced.

Figure 13. Historic photograph of the cemetery gate and wall and view of the hermitage's cupola and lantern.⁴¹



³⁸ *Libro de Bautismos de la Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria, 1779-1862*. Digitized in Familysearch.org, f. 2.

³⁹ *Libro de Bautismos de la Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria, 1779-1862*. Digitized in Familysearch.org, f. 7vo.

⁴⁰ *Libro de Defunciones de la Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria, 1779-1845*. Digitized in Familysearch.org, f. 2.

⁴¹ Jiménez Family Collection, Courtesy of José A. Picón.

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Among the numerous slaves buried in the hermitage's grounds, the high number of infant burials stands out as a testament of extremely poor living conditions. As an example, the legitimate son of José María and María Encarnación, both slaves of the plantation, died when he was only seven days old. The harsh working conditions of the nineteenth century sugar production, poor housing and the absence of health care contributed to a very short life expectancy.

The hermitage kept its social and religious importance until 1893. That was the year when *Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, new parish church for Cataño and Palo Seco, was founded.⁴² From that moment on, the Catholic Church stopped appointing chaplains for the *Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje*.

There is scant information on how the site was used during the twentieth century. In 1908, Domingo Jiménez Mena bought the lands where the hermitage is located and currently one of his descendants owns the lot.⁴³ Information for that period is scarce, but according to historian Generoso Morales Muñoz the site was part of a dairy farm and it served as food storage facility for cattle.⁴⁴ During the first decade of the twentieth century the hermitage suffered most of the physical damage it now shows (**Figure 14**).

Figure 14. Ermita *Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje*⁴⁵.



⁴² Archivo Histórico Nacional, Ultramar, 2098, Expediente 15.

⁴³ Gabriel Baldi-Lemmonier, 56. After his death in 1949, the property passed to his wife Julia González y Negro and his children (Laura, Julio, Ernesto, Félix, Fernando and Margarita).

⁴⁴ G. E. Morales Muñoz, under drawing of the hermitage in a page eighth page (not enumerated).

⁴⁵ Colección José Hipólito Orraca, CJHO #0536, Courtesy Fundación Luis Muñoz Marín.

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Regarding *El Plantaje*, it is important to mention that the lands in the immediate perimeter of the *Ermita* are the only ones in the modern municipality that have not been affected by urban growth. Most of the lands of the original *Hacienda Candelaria* are occupied by Levittown, a 1963 middle and low income housing development. Despite the modern urban development, the hermitage remains an important icon of Toa Baja's history. To this day it is the site for the celebrations related to *La Candelaria*, transcending the original religious rituals. Although still rooted in local folklore and religious traditions, the festivities at la Candelaria now combine cultural and recreational activities that have singled out the site, its history, and modern social relevance. The celebration of *Candelaria* today is oriented toward the commemoration of the history of the early settlement of Toa Baja, reclaiming – through a purification rite (dried branches and discarded Christmas pine trees are gathered for a bonfire in honor of the *Virgen de la Candelaria*) are a part of these cultural traditions.

The ***Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje*** is significant under Criterion A, at State level, for its relevance in the social history of early Colonial times, in Puerto Rico. The property is unique in its ability to convey the lifestyle of the island's early colonial period. The site is also representative of different layers of labor work relationships.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Primary Sources

Archivo General de Indias:

Escribanía de Cámara 131 B, 140 A. Santo Domingo, 2519.

Archivo General Histórico de Madrid:

Plano de la Plaza de San Juan de Puerto Rico y sus cercanías, levantado por el Capitán de Ingenieros D. Rafael Aguirre y Cavieces y los maestros de obras militares D. Armando Morales y Rildou y D. José Claudio y Biera, Puerto Rico 30 de mayo de 1887. Documentación que forma parte del “Anteproyecto de un fuerte en el Alto del Olimpo de San Juan de Puerto Rico”, Archivo General Militar de Madrid, Sección Ultramar del Ministerio de Guerra, signatura 5632.05.

Ultramar, 2098, Exp. 15.

González, E.

Plano de planta, Ermita de la Candelaria, Toa Baja, Puerto Rico, 5/5/98.

Familysearch.org:

Libro de Bautismos de la Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria, 1784- 1792.

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Fundación Luis Muñoz Marín

Photo #2005, Hardie Bros., San Juan, Puerto Rico, Colección José Hipólito Orraca, CJHO #0536.

Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje
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Jiménez Family Collection

Historic photograph of the cemetery gate, wall and view of the hermitage's cupola and lantern.

Printed Sources

Actas del Cabildo de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico, 1730-1750. Puerto Rico, Gobierno de la Capital, 1949.

Secondary Sources

Alegoría, Ricardo E. "Los Dibujos Puertorriqueños del Naturalista Francés Augusto Plée (1821-1823), Separata de la *Revista del Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña*, Núm. 68, Julio-Septiembre 1975.

Badillo, Julia María. *Palo Seco: notas para su historia.* San Juan, Model Offset Printing, 1986.

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Moscoso, Francisco. *Agricultura y sociedad en Puerto Rico, siglos 16 al 18: un acercamiento desde la historia.* San Juan, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1999.

-----."La conquista española y la Gran Rebelión de los Taínos." *Pensamiento Crítico* 12.62 (1989).

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Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje
Name of Property

Toa Baja, Puerto Rico
County and State

Picón, Irma. *La Ermita de la Candelaria*. San Juan, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueñas, 2001.

----- . *Cuentos y leyendas de El Plantaje*. Quebradillas, 1990.

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)

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Less than one acre USGS Quadrangle Bayamón

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

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

- | | | | | |
|----|----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 1. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |
| 2. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |
| 3. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |
| 4. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |

OR

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map): _____

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | | | | | |
|----|------|-----------|---------|---------------|----------|----------------|
| 1. | Zone | <u>19</u> | Easting | <u>799606</u> | Northing | <u>2041952</u> |
| 2. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 3. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 4. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property)

Lot of ten thousand five hundred and fifty-three (10,553) square meters, as recorded at the Centro de Recaudaciones de Ingresos Municipales (CRIM) under the number 039-064-128-01.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the ruins of the hermitage and an abandoned concrete structures. The roadway is used as visual marker for the western boundary and is aligned with the lots boundary. The eastern, northern and southern boundaries include an area that was historically linked with the hermitage.

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Map 1. Regional Vicinity Map (Scale 1: 1,800)



Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje
Toa Baja, Puerto Rico
19Q E799605 N2041957 UTM

1:1,800
N
0 50 100 Feet

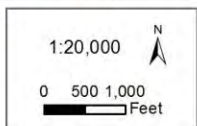
Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje
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Map 2. Site Map (Scale 1: 20,000).



Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje
Toa Baja, Puerto Rico
19Q E799605 N2041957 UTM



Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje
Name of Property Toa Baja, Puerto Rico
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

Revised by Archaeologist Diana López Sotomayor, SHPO, and José E. Marull, Senior Historic Property Specialist
name/title Original nomination -Dorian J. López León, Ph. D.
organization N/A date March 8, 2015
street & number 593 Ave Hostos Urb. Baldrich telephone 787-403-4745
city or town San Juan state PR zip code 00918
email dorianlpz@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

Photo Log

Name of Property Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje
City or Vicinity Toa Baja County Toa Baja State Puerto Rico
Photographer José E. Marull del Río Date Photographed October 2, 2013

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

1. View of the western wall. Three windows, one doorway and two concrete troughs can be seen. Looking approximately north.
2. View of the eastern side of the hermitage. Entrance to the altar area, one window, one doorway and one water concrete trough can be observed. Looking approximately southwest.
3. View of the west and east walls, nave and altar area. Looking approximately north.
4. Partial view of the dome as seen from the altar area. The oculus and square ventilation shaft can be observed. Looking approximately northwest.
5. View of the western entrance of the vestry. Looking approximately north.
6. View of the gate and cemetery wall in the back of the hermitage. To the east of the portico, along the cemetery wall, there is a concrete trough. Looking approximately southeast.

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
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Ermita Nuestra Senora de la Candelaria del Plantaje

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PUERTO RICO, Toa Baja

DATE RECEIVED: 5/22/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/12/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/27/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/07/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST: 6

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000398

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6-30-2015 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Remains of a once prominent Hacienda that relates to a turbulent period in the Spanish colony's history. This hermitage was a bastion of the Church for 100 years until supplanted by an official Parish. Open to All, despite it belonging to the plantation, was home church of slave & master alike. "D" potential

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N Y see attached SLR Y/N N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



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PUERTO RICO

Oficina Estatal de Conservación Histórica
State Historic Preservation Office

RECEIVED 2280

MAY 22 2015

**Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service**

May 19, 2015

Ms. Stephanie Toothman, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor (MS 2280)
Washington, DC 20005

**SUBMISSION: ERMITA NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA
CANDELARIA DEL PLANTAJE**

Dear Ms. Toothman:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Plantaje** to the National Register of Historic Places. The property is located in the Municipality of Toa Baja, Puerto Rico.

Should you have any questions on the nomination, please contact Berenice Sueiro, Historic Preservation Manager, at 787-721-3737, ext. 2002 or bsueiro@prshpo.gobierno.pr

Sincerely,

Diana López Sotomayor, Archaeologist
State Historic Preservation Officer

DLS/NPT/BRS/jvr

Enclosures

