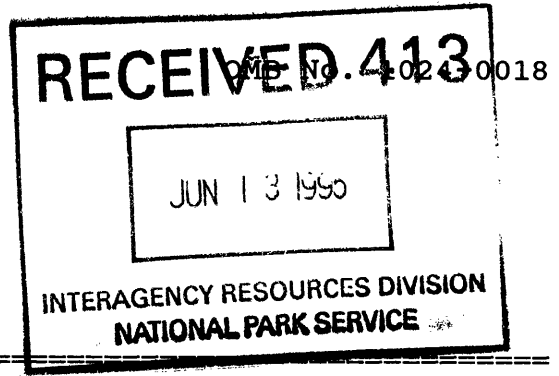


NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name Silva Bridge

other names/site number Bridge #71

2. Location

street & number SR 114, km. 4, Barrio Guanajibo not for publication  
city or town Hormigueros vicinity X  
state Puerto Rico code PR county Hormigueros code 067 zip code 00660

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally X statewide \_\_\_ locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Arleen Pabón PhD  
Signature of certifying official

May 25, 1995  
Date

Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

*Edson H. Beall* 7.19.95

Entered in the  
National Register

*Beall* Signature of Keeper Date  
of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</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 0

Name of related multiple property listing "Historic Bridges of Puerto Rico"

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic Functions

Cat: Transportation Sub: road-related

Current Functions

Cat: vacant Sub: not in use

=====  
7. Description  
=====

Architectural Classification Other/ Pratt Pony Truss in steel

Materials

foundation	<u>N/A</u>
roof	<u>N/A</u>
walls	<u>N/A</u>
other	<u>superstructure: steel</u> <u>substructure: masonry</u>

Narrative Description

Silva Bridge, which rises 12 feet over the Guanajibo River, is located on kilometer 4, route 114 (Photo 1 shows the bridge in 1989). Currently, the bridge no longer is used for vehicular traffic, but serves to carry a large diameter pipe. The structure is a Pratt Pony Truss in steel, single span, with a domed sheet deck on joists and elegant ashlar masonry abutments colored dark gray with red brick edges (Photo 2).

This bridge retains a high degree of integrity of design, materials workmanship, feeling, association and location. The structure's setting has been affected by the presence of a nearby modern bridge (#70) and by introduction of a pipe on the bridge floor. However, the bridge itself has suffered no significant alterations since the period of significance, although its condition could be affected if maintenance is not resumed soon (Photo 3: 1993). A description of the structure follows:

span number: 1	construction date: 1897
span length: 27.3 meters	superstructure: steel
total length: 27.3 meters	substructure: brick & stone
roadway wdt.: 4.70 meters	current condition: fair

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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

- 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.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance engineering, transportation, military

Period of Significance 1897-1944

Significant Dates 1897, 1898

Significant Person N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Eng. José María Sainz y Ramírez, designer

Narrative Statement of Significance

Silva Bridge, built in 1897, was named in honor of Francisco Silva y Cautiño an influential landowner and municipal officer of the town of Hormigueros in the 19th century. Designed by the Spanish Engineer José María Sainz y Ramírez to replace an 1848 wooden bridge, it was part of the main highway connecting the towns of San Germán and Mayagüez. This bridge, whose span was imported from Europe, is the only imported truss of its kind found under United States' jurisdiction and the only extant Spanish-era Pratt truss in Puerto Rico.

During the Spanish-American War of 1898, the bridge was site of a skirmish between a company of the Spanish garrison based in the town of Mayagüez and the vanguard of a U.S. Brigade advancing from the town of San Germán. On August 10, 1898, U.S. Independent Regular Brigade, under Brigadier General Theodore Schwan, were met with heavy gunfire on their northward approach, at about 400 yards south of the Silva Bridge. The seven companies of the vanguard of the 1,477 men brigade exchanged fire with 120 Spanish Infantrymen from the Sixth Company of the Alfonso XIII Battalion and 25 guerrillas under Capt. José Torrecillas, entrenched on the Silva slopes overlooking the highway on the north and northeast. For two hours, the exchange grew in intensity as artillery and cavalry units of the U.S. force became involved in the fight. However, the Spanish infantry having exhausted its ammunition, was forced to pull back and retreat to Mayagüez. The bridge featured prominently in the skirmish for it provided the only access from the main highway, for the U.S. Army across the Guanajibo River to reach the Spanish positions on the Silva slopes.

For further contextual information regarding bridge building in Puerto Rico, registration requirements, and property types, see related multiple property listing "**Historic Bridges of Puerto Rico**".

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Albino Plugues, Edwin. "Estudio, documentación y nominación de los recursos históricos-arquitectónicos del casco urbano y los relacionados con la industria azucarera en el territorio municipal de Hormigueros". Survey and Inventory for the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, San Juan: 1990.

Herrmann, Karl Stephen. From Yauco to Las Marias. Being a Story of the Recent Campaign in Western Puerto Rico by the Independent Regular Brigade, under the Command of Brigadier-General Schwan. Boston: 1900.

Pumarada O'Neill, Luis. Los Puentes Históricos de Puerto Rico. Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo, RUM, Mayagüez: 1991.

Rivero, Angel. Crónica de la Guerra Hispanoamericana en Puerto Rico. San Juan: 1972

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 # N/A

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency: **Puerto Rico Highway Authority**
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus**
- Other

Name of repository:

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10. Geographical Data  
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Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

Mayagüez Quadrangle, PR 7.5 minute series  
18° 07'25"N/ 67° 15'12"E

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is a rectangular shaped parcel measuring 27.3 X 4.70 meters, which is centered on the coordinates listed above. Included within this rectangular parcel are the bridge's superstructure, substructure and floor system.

Boundary Justification

The nominated structure includes the bridge's superstructure, substructure, floor system, any approach spans and the property on which they rest. These boundaries encompass, but not exceed, all of the property that has been historically associated with this bridge.

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

name/title Luis Pumarada O'Neill, Ph.D. (Revised and edited by PRSHPO)

organization Arqueología Industrial Caribeña date July 31, 1994

street & number 3-D-37 Villa Interamericana telephone (809) 264-4024

city or town San Germán state PR zip code 00683

=====  
Property Owner  
=====

name Public Works Department, Puerto Rico

street & number Minillas Government Center telephone (809) 729-1529

city or town San Juan state PR zip code 00907