

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received JUN 14 1984

date entered JUL 12 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Parque de Bombas de Ponce (Ponce Firehouse)

and/or common Parque de Bombas de Ponce

2. Location

street & number Plaza Las Delicias _____ not for publication

city, town Ponce _____ vicinity of

state Puerto Rico code 72 county Ponce code 0760

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Firehouse

4. Owner of Property

name Municipality of Ponce

street & number Ponce City Hall

city, town Ponce _____ vicinity of state Puerto Rico 00732

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number Ponce Government Center

city, town Ponce _____ vicinity of state Puerto Rico 00732

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventario de Monumentos Histó-
ricos de Ponce has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1977 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Institute of Puerto Rican Culture

city, town San Juan _____ vicinity of state Puerto Rico 00901

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The basic plan of the "Parque de Bombas de Ponce" (Ponce Firehouse) is a typical rectangular moorish structure with influence of the Gothic Victorian style, measuring 65'-8" in width by 26'-3" in length. It is two stories high with a tower at each corner of the front facade (Marina Street). The building is located in the city's central "Las Delicias Plaza" and it is attached to the Cathedral of Ponce at its rear boundary. Structurally, it is a wooden frame building with a pitched roof covered with galvanized zinc sheets. Exterior cladding is horizontal 1" by 6" wooden siding. Doors and windows are wooden; windows of the fixed louvered type, long and narrow and crowned by an oversized fixed fan light.

The moorish and Gothic Victorian influence is manifested immediately for its rectangular plan with towers at its front corners (Photo #1); its decorative composite curved moldings which follows the contour of the roof overhang throughout the entire structure (Photos #1 & #2); its colorful paint application (the building is painted in horizontal bands following the exterior cladding alternating Ponce's official color, red and black; the interior is also painted very colorful, alternating vertical bands of red and orange that decorates the walls and a painted frieze (Photo #5) with fireman's motif culminates the interior wall decoration); and the use of long and narrow windows with fans at its top (Photo #4); among other details typifies a moorish style.

The building's layout is a large, central space, flanked by two lateral towers, two stories in height, which opens to the main central area. The main central area is used as garage facilities for the fire trucks, and the two lateral towers are used as living quarters and exhibition areas. An elegant central two-sided stairway with elaborated cast iron railing (Photo #3) leads to a mezzanine area used as administrative offices (Photo #5).

Some interior partitions were removed from the first floor when the structure was altered for its new use as a firehouse in order to accommodate the machinery. The building have been kept in good condition throughout the years.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) <i>cd</i> history

Specific dates 1882 **Builder/Architect** Lt. Col. Maximo Meana

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

In 1820, two great fires affected the city of Ponce; one destroyed great part of the center of the city; and the other gutted 80% of Ponce's port zone, paralyzing all commercial trade to the southern section of Puerto Rico. Because of this problem and public concern, in 1853, an official voluntary firemen service for the central urban area of Ponce; the Municipal Firemen Service Force, was created; its main commitment was to fight and prevent fires.

During the month of July of 1882, Ponce was the center of attention in Puerto Rico; an important Exhibition Trade Fair was being celebrated. The main exhibit pavillion, dedicated to agricultural and industrial exhibits, was commissioned to Maximo Meana, Lietenant Coronel of the Spanish Militia, and later, Mayor of the city. The moorish influence is manifested immediately for its basic rectangular plan with towers at its front corners. The active facade ornamentation, its long and narrow windows with fan at its top, its bright colorful paint application, among others, typifies a strong moorish influence. In 1885, the building was dedicated as Ponce's official firehouse; and in 1920, it was used briefly as the Mayor's office as a result of the earthquake that affected the city during that year.

Since 1885, the Ponce Firehouse have been and it is an important cultural institution in Ponce. Its color represents the city, its unique style represents a progressive and dinamic cultural center. The Fireman's Band plays every Sunday evening a "Retreta" (retreat) as part of a cultural program and tradition of the city of Ponce. Its extremely unique and different form represents the brave firemen of Ponce, and its history.

In 1943, the Firemen Services of Puerto Rico was created by legislation. Its main commitment is to extinguish fires, prevent fires, rescue services in natural disasters or emergencies, and to service the community.

