

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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



1. Name

historic Young Men's Christian Association Building

and/or common Red Cross Drug Store Building

2. Location

street & number 314-320 6th Street ___ not for publication

city, town Racine ___ vicinity of congressional district 1st

state Wisconsin 53403 code 55 county Racine code 101

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" 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
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name George B. Gates, Jr.

street & number c/o Gates Building Co. - 314 6th Street

city, town Racine ___ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53403

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds, Racine County Courthouse

street & number 730 Wisconsin Avenue

city, town Racine state Wisconsin 53403

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Racine Architectural Survey -
title John, Johnson & Roy (continued) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1974 ___ federal ___ state ___ county local

depository for survey records Landmarks Preservation Commission - City Hall

city, town Racine state Wisconsin 53403

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 YMCA building at Sixth and College is a rectangular three-story cream brick structure measuring 90 x 100 feet. Located along a commercial street in downtown Racine, the YMCA building is flanked by narrower two- and three-story brick commercial buildings, many of which have been altered. Its trim is of red sandstone, limestone and red terra cotta. Oriel windows on the south and west elevations are of pressed sheet metal.

The first floor of the building was originally composed of cast iron and brick storefronts opening onto Sixth Street. Centered between the two oriel windows on that elevation was the main entrance to the building, a broad arch on short Romanesque columns. The surface of the arch was inscribed with "Young Men's Christian Association." The present altered storefronts are of enameled panels.

The second and third levels on the Sixth Street elevation contain two symmetrically placed, two-story oriel windows topped by overhanging closed pediments alternating with pairs of rectangular openings. A two-story tower with an ogival roof marks the corner. The west elevation has one small oriel window. The sheet metal of the oriels between stories is embossed with stylized sunbursts and other Queen Anne motifs.

Flush courses of red sandstone circle the building enclosing each upper story. The spandrels between the second and third floor windows contain panels trimmed with brick dentils.

The building has a thin cornice of embellished terra cotta. Small terra cotta gablettes in this cornice cap pilaster strips on the wall, enclosing the larger, more heavily-decorated Queen Anne terra cotta gables over the oriels. One contains a scroll with the letters "Y.M.C.A.," the other has the date "1886." A closed parapet ornamented with panels of denticulated brick tops the cornice.

Architect Chandler's original plans for the interior included a bowling alley in the basement; four stores and a gymnasium on the first floor; and reading rooms, classrooms, a library, kitchen, and large meeting hall on the second and third floors. By 1915 the 6th Street quarters were deemed outmoded and overcrowded, and a new YMCA building was constructed at Fourth and Wisconsin Streets.

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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1886¹ **Builder/Architect** John Gilbert Chandler, Architect²

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Architecture: The former YMCA building is significant as a fine illustration of Queen Anne decoration employed in a commercial structure. Primarily a domestic architectural style, Queen Anne characteristics were infrequently applied to other types of buildings. Otherwise a rather static commercial design composed of alternating tall rectangular openings and denticulated brick panels, the YMCA was "dressed-up" by application of Queen Anne gabled pavilions with canopied beveled corners and terra cotta decorative panels. Contrasts of color and texture in brick walls, stone courses, terra cotta panels and pressed metal elements make the YMCA building a striking visual landmark along the 6th Street business area.

The YMCA building was the first building built specifically for use by the Young Men's Christian Association in Racine. This Association was founded as part of the national YMCA movement in 1875. Initially the young men met in the empty Gorton Butcher Shop at 4th and Main, later moving to the Blake and Elliott block on the 400 block of Main. In 1881 they moved again, this time to the Lawton building at 5th Street and Monument Square. By 1885 it was decided that the YMCA should have its own building. Although a site at the corner of 7th Street and College Avenue had been donated for the building, construction actually began at the site of the former Blake Opera House when that was available. Cost upon completion in early 1887 exceeded \$30,000. Principal donors were J. S. Hart, M. B. Erskine, and E. G. Durant.

Racine architect James G. Chandler drew up plans for the structure. Born in Success, New Hampshire in 1856, Chandler moved with his family to Appleton, Wisconsin in 1861. Following a three-year apprenticeship with architect David R. Jones in Madison, Chandler opened a practice in Racine in 1879. Later, joining into partnership with Louis H. Park, Chandler was to make his reputation in school design. Known works include the L. Janes School, 1897, in Racine; the Weiskopf School in Kenosha; high schools in Delavan, Dodgeville, Shawano, and Eau Claire; and schools in Ableman, Beloit, Chippewa Falls, Cashton, Evansville, Wisconsin Rapids, Hillsboro, Jefferson, Menomonie Falls, New Lisbon, Prairie du Chien, Seymour, Sparta, Sturgeon Bay, Wonewoc, Walworth, and Wilton.

It should be noted that the YMCA building was built on the site of the Blake Opera House, which was destroyed by fire on December 28, 1884.³ An examination of the brickwork and stone capitals suggests that some parts of the Blake Opera House which remained after the fire were incorporated into the YMCA building as it was erected. The best example of this is a stone capital, located on a pilaster at the far east end on the first-floor 6th Street facade, different from all of the other gabled stone capitals, it greatly resembles the capitals used on the Blake Opera House.⁴

¹ "Magnificent Building," Racine Daily Journal, Dec. 10, 1886, p. 3; date (1886) on building.

² "Handsome Structure," The Racine Journal, March 10, 1886, p. 3.

³ Racine Daily Journal, December 28, 1884, p. 3.

⁴ As seen in an advertisement in the 1882 Racine City Directory.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Racine Daily Journal, Dec. 10, 1886; Mar. 10, 1886; Dec. 28, 1884.
Racine City Directory, 1882.
Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 21.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 0.21

Quadrangle name Racine South, Wis.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	6	4	3	5	7	5	0	4	7	3	0	5	6	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

Zone	Easting			Northing										

D

Zone	Easting			Northing										

E

Zone	Easting			Northing										

F

Zone	Easting			Northing										

G

Zone	Easting			Northing										

H

Zone	Easting			Northing										

Verbal boundary description and justification

Block 25 Original Plat of Racine; W 100 Ft of Lot 7, W 100 Ft of S 30 Ft of Lot 8, S 10 Ft of N-1/2 of W 100 Ft Lot 8

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert D. Long - Architectural Conservationist (continued)

organization Architectural Conservation Program date 1/17/80

street & number 730 Washington Avenue telephone 414/636-9280

city or town Racine state Wisconsin 53403

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Richard Henry

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

date 2/24/81

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 2/1/82

John Jackson
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

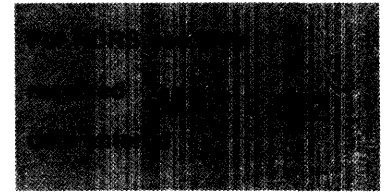
date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

Young Men's Christian Association Building, Racine, Wisconsin



Continuation sheet

Item number 6

Page 1

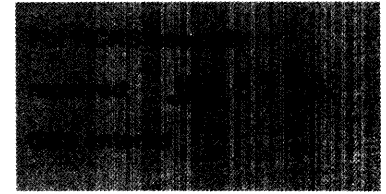
Historic Architecture of Downtown Racine - Nelson Peter Ross
1975 Local

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places
1975, 1979 State
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

Young Men's Christian Association Building, Racine, Wisconsin



Continuation sheet

Item number

11

Page 1

Diane H. Filipowicz, Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Division

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

September, 1980

816 State Street

608/262-2970

Madison

Wisconsin 53706