

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

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

For NPS use only

received NOV 28 1984

date entered DEC 27 1984

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

1. Name

historic Young Women's Christian Association, Independent

and/or common Y.W.C.A

2. Location

street & number 501 North Park Street n/a not for publication

city, town Helena n/a vicinity of

state Montana code 030 county Lewis & Clark code 049

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Y.W.C.A. Board of Trustees - Eve Seely - President

street & number 926 11th Avenue (Seely Address)

city, town Helena n/a vicinity of state Montana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lewis and Clark County Courthouse

street & number Broadway

city, town Helena state Montana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input 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 two and one-half story Helena Y.W.C.A. building is located on a steeply sloping lot at the corner of Park St. and Placer St. in Helena, Montana. The daylight basement reads as a full story at the east (rear) end of the building. Basically rectangular in shape, the Y.W.C.A. exhibits stylistic influences and decorative detailing common to both Craftsman and Classical styles that were popular during the period of construction. A wide, collonaded loggia/terrace is inset on the south facade. The loggia is finished with a balcony above, which is accessed from the second floor. Brick steps descend from the terrace to the street. A low brick wall flanks the steps and angles out along the sidewalk to mark the lot line. This low wall works well to tie the steps, terrace, and daylight basement wall together. The textured, earth tone bricks used for the building veneer were manufactured at the Kessler Brick Yard in Helena. Detailing includes simulated quoining fashioned in brick at the corners, a soldier course that wraps around the building between the basement and first floor levels, a brick belt course at the sill level of the second floor windows, and stacked brick window surrounds. The entry portico on Park St. is rectilinear in design and features brick-faced wooden columns which support a second floor balcony. A similar porch and balcony is attached to the east end of the building. The windows are predominately 4/1 double hung sash. The overhang of the gently pitched hipped roof is finished with decorative modillions. The overall massing of the Y.W.C.A. is Classical, with a symetrically aligned fenestration, a central, porticoed entrance and an inset loggia at the long axis, all neatly bound by the various belt courses and modillioned roof overhang.

The interior space of the Y.W.C.A. building includes an office, lobby, club rooms, reception rooms, dining room and kitchen, and 43 bedrooms. All are finished with maple, birch, and white pine. With the exception of the lobby, which is finished with smooth plaster work, all of the walls are of rough textured plaster. The basement of the building was originally used for gymnastic classes. The main stairway leading from the basement to the top floor is constructed entirely of concrete. The kitchen, boiler room, and storage rooms are located on the first floor. The lobby features three large sets of French doors which open onto the loggia/terrace and two sets of French doors at either end of the room which lead to the hallways. The lobby is finished in dark stained woodwork, panelled walls and, at the west end, is a large fireplace. The individual bedrooms are located on the upper floors and were originally furnished through the donations of members during the 1920's.

The Y.W.C.A. building has been well maintained over the years. It is in excellent condition and retains a very high degree of historic architectural integrity.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1918

Builder/Architect Frank Jacoby & Son/Chester H. Kirk

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Young Women's Christian Association, Independent building in Helena, Montana, is significant because it represents the civic efforts of a number of women within this community to establish an organization for the benefit of young working women in the city during the early 20th Century and because. The building is a fine example of Craftsman Style architecture that occupies a prominent corner close to Helena's commercial district.

The doors to the Young Women's Christian Association building opened to the young, working women of Helena, Montana in 1918. Designed by architect Chester H. Kirk and built by the local contracting firm of Frank Jacoby and Son, the Y.W.C.A. is a substantial, brick building that combines Neo-Classical and Craftsman style features. The Helena chapter of the Y.W.C.A. was organized in 1911. Representatives from most of the churches and synagogues in the community were elected to serve on the organizing committee. Before undertaking the specifics of establishing a local Y.W.C.A. chapter, this group first moved to furnish, through pledges, six barracks rooms for the Helena Salvation Army. The committee also decided to become an Independent Y.W.C.A. and not join the national organization. Today, Helena's Y.W.C.A. is the only Independent Y.W.C.A. in the nation, welcoming Christian as well as non-Christian members. This circumstance reflects the early involvement of many Jewish women in the founding of the organization. A building committee was set up in 1913. Mrs H. W. Child, as chairman of the fundraising committee, contributed much of her own money to the building fund. Other prominent women identified with the organization since its inception were Dr. Maria D. Dean, Miss Frieda Fligelman, Mrs. J.F. McNamee, Mrs. A.K. Prescott, Miss Elenor Cowperwaite, Mrs. Henry Sieben, Mrs. C.T. Perry. Mrs. Grace Richman, Mrs M.L. Gans, Mrs. J.E. Bower, Mrs. D.R. Wallace, Mrs. B.E. Wiley, Mrs. C.B. Nolan, Mrs. C.W. Barnes, Mrs D.B. Price, Mrs. Amelia Bridenbach, Mrs. J. Henry Longmaid, and many others. The first Y.W.C.A. boarding house in Helena was located on Fifth Ave. and managed by a Mrs. Spencer. Since the new building was completed on the corner of Park and Placer Streets, the Helena Y.W.C.A. assumed a prominent position in the community, both visually and socially.

The Young Christian Women's Association was founded in 1855 in England, and in 1866 in the United States. It was soon to become an interdenominational, interracial, and international organization dedicated to the concerns of young working women in urban areas. The role of women changed dramatically during the late 19th Century, as many of the traditional occupations with which women were identified - making clothes, baking bread, processing food, doing laundry, etc. began to move from the home to the factory. Young women who went to the cities for work needed decent, safe housing, places for relaxation, and good but inexpensive food. The Y.W.C.A strove to fulfill these needs as well as to provide classes for young women in stenography, the use of the typewriter and sewing machine, cooking, domestic science, astronomy, and physiology. Organized recreational sports, swimming, calisthenics, and child-care and day camps for children also were promoted by the organization for the public at large by the turn of the Century. The primary emphasis of the Y.W.C.A., however, has been improving the condition of working women. In 1919, the first national Y.W.C.A. industrial conference took place in Washington, D.C. The standards set at this meeting for women in industry included the eight-hour day, no night work, and the right to organize. During the 1930's the Y.W.C.A. was one of the first organizations to recommend national unemployment insurance after completing a series of studies on the effect of unemployment on women.

9. Major Bibliographical References

The Helena Independent, Helena, Montana, December 8, 1918
Young Women's Christian Association (Independent) uncement and Report of the General Secretary, Helena, Montana, June, 1913.
Minutes of Annual Y.W.C.A. meeting, Helena, Montana, November 2, 1982

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Helena, Montan

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	2	4	20	110	10	5	1	61	0	71	0	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

Thompson Placer Addition to the Townsite of Helena, Lot 15 (no block #)
T10N; R3W Section 30

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

state	n/a	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Josyphine A. Keeler - President of Board of Directors

organization Y.W.C.A Independent

date August 24, 1983

street & number 1301 Winne

telephone (406) 443-3936

city or town Helena

state Montana

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Marvella Shiffy

title SHPO

date Nov 19, 1984

For NPS use only

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

date 12-27-84

for *Alvina Byers*
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration