

YMCA-TIMELINE:



From the 1888 Northwest Magazine.

YMCA questions:

Did you ever find something really cool when you were looking for something else really cool? A while back I started perusing the web looking for local websites with great history sections, and made a list of them on a website. Checking the links on the Research page, I noticed I had 2 links that were broken, so I suppose they made some changes since and thus changed the location. Fixed, I happened to check out the new one for the YMCA. Wow, lots of photos I have never seen before! I now (2021) know the old 1889 building was torn down in 1946*, and they did not move into the new one on 6th & Oak Sts. until 1962, but where were they in the meantime? I have heard they were a bit scattered for a while, using gymnasiums and rooms where they could find them. One of the photos was interesting...the “headquarters” was on the proposed site, in the old (first) Dandanell’s store building! I’d like to find out more on this **transitional period**. There is a dandy 10-photo slideshow on their site:

<https://www.brainerdlakesymca.org/mission-history>

*Brainerd Family YMCA History

Looking for a “wholesome place to spend their leisure time”, the Northern Pacific Railroad proposed establishing a YMCA in Brainerd in 1885. **By 1889**, the first site of the Brainerd YMCA was built on the corner of 6th and Front Street. This building included two reading rooms, a lounge and a gymnasium area. This was one of the first, if not the first gymnasium in Brainerd. **It served the Brainerd Community until 1946 when it was torn down** Plans were immediately made to start raising funds for a new building.

Find more business history pages here on the Research page...scroll down a bit on the site page:

See Brian's (BM) entry about the NP Depot location. His entries are now/4/25/2020, incorporated in the timeline below.

Where was the YMCA from 1946 until 1962?

NP YMCA, first, 1888*-1942, 1943, or 1946:

1888: See magazine snip above. **Brainerd Family YMCA History**
Looking for a "wholesome place to spend their leisure time", the Northern Pacific Railroad proposed establishing a YMCA in Brainerd in 1885. **By *1889**, the first site of the Brainerd YMCA was built on the corner of 6th and Front Street.

1931/4/21: 80 years ago (1931)

After a match at the **YMCA** shooting gallery last night, in which members of the Snelling club proved themselves equal to the Legion rifle team, a special match took place. Brown bested Gorham by hitting the head of a thumb tack at a range of 50 feet.

1942, or 1942: Until 1942 or 1943 - 124 S. 6th St. **-BM

** I'm guessing that the 1942-43 BCD probably came out in early 1942. So, it may have closed down early that year because of the war. -Brian Marsh

1942-1943: Abandoned, but I can find no clear date on its razing. See **2019/7/12** below.

1944-1949: - No listings at all. My guess is that it disbanded during WWII probably because young men were serving in the armed forces. -BM

1946: Torn down, as per the YMCA website's history page: **It served the Brainerd Community until 1946 when it was torn down**

TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, 1946-1962:

1950: This postcard has a 1950 postmark, so it appears that by that time the YMCA had at least some facilities in the Ransford Building:



1950-1956: Northern Pacific depot building (3rd floor)

1957 BCD: 323 S. 6th St., YMCA Youth Center; National Food Stores gro

This was the earlier Schaefer's Model Market building, later Burton's Appliance. I'm guessing the YMCA was upstairs, or in the basement, as the NP YMCA building was torn down in 1946, and not reopened on 6th & Oak Sts. until 1962.

1957 - 323: S. 6th St. (Schaefer's, Burton's Building) -BM-map>

1959: - No listing -BM

1960/1/20: 60 years ago (1960)

YMCA directors met at Eddy's Restaurant last night to interview an official of a Chicago fund-raising firm that specializes in hospital and YMCA campaigns. The board will interview one more candidate before settling on one to help raise funds for a new building at the corner of 6th and Oak Streets.



1961?: Based on a photo only from the YMCA website, was this “headquarters” a temporary location just BEFORE the current one was built? Where was it DURING the construction? Likely in the City Hall, see below.

1961: - Brainerd city hall -BM



NEW YMCA on 6th & Oak Sts., 1962-present:

1963: and forward - 602 Oak Street

1970/5/10: 2010/5/10, 40 years ago (1970)

Whitey Skoog's memories of the old YMCA gym in Brainerd were humorous, but as he told YMCA leaders meeting in their new gym, It would be my hope that this new gym would have as much meaning for young people today as the old gym had in my day.

Thanks to Brian Marsh for this great research and info!:

2019/7/12: From: Brian Marsh <bm371985@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, July 12, 2019 10:34 PM

To: Carl Faust <fertfaust@msn.com>

Subject: YMCA

Carl –

You had wondered about where the YMCA had been located over the years. Here is what I found:

*- Until 1942 or 1943 - 124 S. 6th St. **

- 1944-1949 - No listings at all. My guess is that it disbanded during WWII probably because young men were serving in the armed forces.

- 1950-1956 - Northern Pacific depot building (3rd floor)

- 1957 - 323 S. 6th St. (Schaefer's, Burton's Building)

- 1959 - No listing

- 1961 - Brainerd city hall

- 1963 and forward - 602 Oak Street

* I'm guessing that the 1942-43 BCD probably came out in early 1942. So, it may have closed down early that year because of the war.

-Brian (Marsh)

-CWF, 4/27/2021; UPDATED: 2/7/2024