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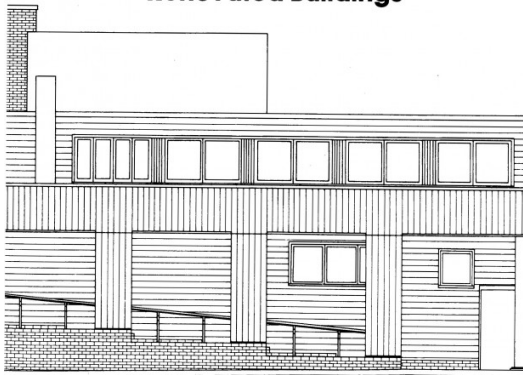


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A BUILDING MANUAL FOR THE YWCA

PART 2: Design Guidelines for New or Renovated Buildings



"A Building Manual for the YWCA" by Iris S. Alex, FAIA

More Than Just a Bright Idea

Framing buildings in structural steel means fewer columns. This not only lets more daylight reach interior work areas, it gives organizations greater flexibility to adapt to change. Wouldn't your clients want this advantage?

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Latest Issue—08/14/13

"Architalker" Iris Alex passes

IN MEMORIAM by [SUZANNE MECS](#), HON. AIA NYS • 08/14

AIANY recently learned of the passing of Iris S. Alex, FAIA. Though she was not able to be active in the profession in the last few years, Alex had a career that was oriented to the public good through long-term work with the YWCA and other social welfare organizations. She served on many Chapter and National committees, was Secretary of the AIANY Board in 1979, and was one of the weekly volunteer "Architalkers" – docents who teach visitors about the Center for Architecture's mission, design, and exhibitions – when the Center for Architecture first opened in 2003. A 1950 graduate of the Institute of Design of the Illinois Institute of Technology, Alex was part of a pioneering generation of women seeking recognition and leadership in the profession of architecture. Post-graduation, she developed her technical skills with several Chicago firms and with SOM in New York. She became a registered architect in 1964. In 1970, she shifted focus from work with private firms to consultancy with the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association. She worked with YWCA Building Committees

nationally to develop strong standards for the many projects they commissioned, and eventually codified and wrote a two-volume book which provided a benchmark for the work of the YWCA and similar organizations. In the 1980s she moved from the YWCA to the State of New York Facilities Development Corporation, administering architectural projects for state psychiatric and developmental centers. For this work and her contributions to the community and the profession, Alex became a member of the College of Fellows in 1984.

These large institutional projects could have been impersonal, but as Sarelle Weisberg, FAIA, recalls, "What was so remarkable about Iris is that the client-users and residents of the projects she worked on liked her and respected her work for them. They always invited her to their celebrations long after their projects were open and operating – she made friends of these users!"

As an early female registered architect, she was an inspiration to other women in the profession, and consistently sought to encourage others to excel. Her support will be continued through a bequest from her family to the AIA New York Chapter.

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