

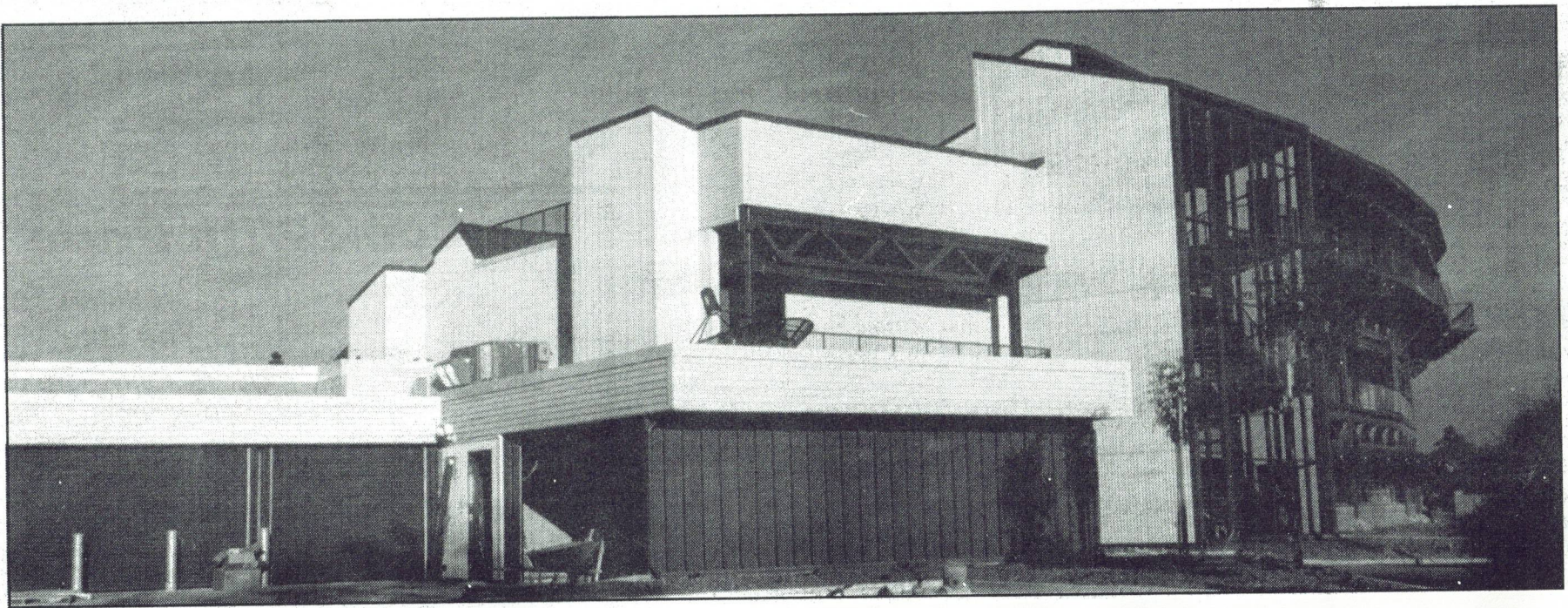


Photo by Joel Summerhill

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POLICE FACILITY TOPS WITH TECHNOLOGY

A cornerstone of Pittsburgh's new Civic Center is a state-of-the-art Police Department that is larger and more efficient than its predecessor.

For most of the 96 department employees, including 74 sworn police officers, their new home is a far cry from the cramped brick building at 55 Civic Avenue. That old structure was demolished in November, a few weeks after officers and other department employees had settled in their new offices at 65 Civic Avenue.

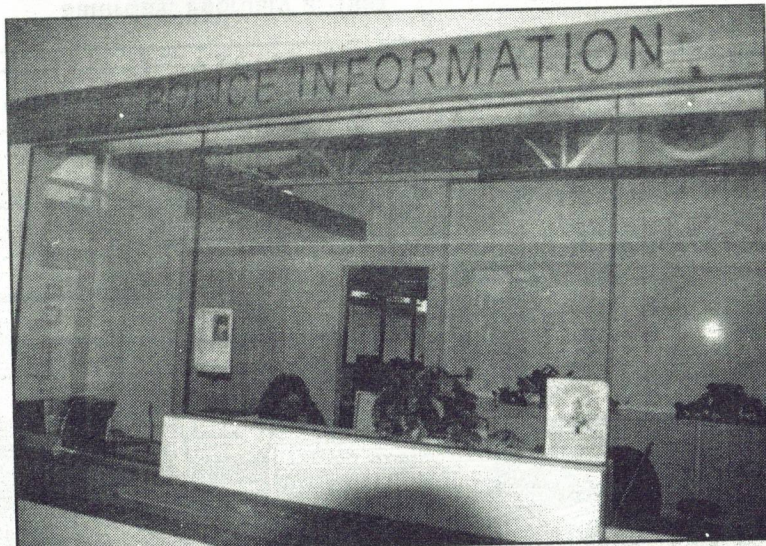


Photo by Joel Summerhill

The Police Information window is accessible from the Civic Center lobby or a 24-hour entrance from the parking lot.

car behind steel roll-up doors. This allows for the safer transfer of suspects into and out of the Police Department. Video and audio surveillance is also operating throughout the police station.

Two divisions of the Police Department are not housed at the Civic Center. The Neighborhood Watch Division is located at Stoneman Plaza, and Code Enforcement is located at 710 Black Diamond Street.

MEDALLIONS CAST HISTORY IN BRONZE

POLICE FACILITY TOPS WITH TECHNOLOGY

The new, modern police facility occupies the west wing of the first floor of the Civic Center. High-technology tools throughout the headquarters have improved law enforcement services to the public. The new police facility is accessible from both the main Civic Center lobby and its own 24-hour entrance door, which is marked "Police" in large white letters that can be seen across the parking lot. An emergency telephone in the lobby area provides an after-hours link to the Dispatch Center in Martinez when the main reception area is closed.

The offices are also laid out to group similar functions together, Porter said. For instance, locker rooms are located just upstairs from the briefing room where officers meet at the start of each shift. Nearby is an equipment room where officers pick up radios and other equipment on their way to a secured parking lot reserved for police cars.

"This facility is much more efficient," said Chief Aaron Baker. Large windows on conference rooms and the Watch Commander and Sergeants' offices make it easier for supervisors to monitor the action.

evidence processing center. An administrative wing separates training and support services from the hub-bub of the investigation and patrol divisions.

Even the modular furniture has contributed to improved communication among investigators. "More information can be shared because our detectives are working closer to each other. They're talking to each other, and are able to stay on top of the various cases we're working on," said Porter.

Another important tool is a new high-tech machine that has taken the ink out

Outside the Civic Center, adjacent to the southern fountains, the stepping stones of Pittsburg's history are literally laid in concrete.

Eighteen medallions, some up to two-foot wide and cast in bronze, capture key events in the city's bygone days. They are the creation of artist Ron McDowell, a nationally renowned painter and sculptor who was raised in Pittsburg's El Pueblo public housing.

McDowell, who has since relocated to Birmingham, Alabama, researched the City's history to develop a list of images summarizing

that will be placed at other public locations.

The piece that McDowell sees as his best effort is a medallion representing the many cultures that came together to form Pittsburg.

"It shows all different people. But it's always difficult in sculpture because there's no color to show their differences," he said. The artist relied on facial features and other elements to illustrate diversity.

"The biggest challenge was trying to please Pittsburg," said McDowell with a smile. Every community has its own image of itself, and it is a difficult task to condense a hundred