

**Gold Star Families
Memorial and Park**

Category: Public
Location: The Museum Campus
of Burnham Park in Chicago
Client: The Chicago Police
Memorial Foundation

LA: Wolff Landscape Architecture, Inc.
Consultants: David Woodhouse Architects,
Graf/X Communication Group, Inc.,
Delta Fountains, Charter Sills, Fisher +
Partners, Milhouse Engineering and
Construction, Inc., Weber Consultants, Ltd.

Honor Award

Wolff Landscape Architecture, Inc.
A Memorial to Honor the Fallen

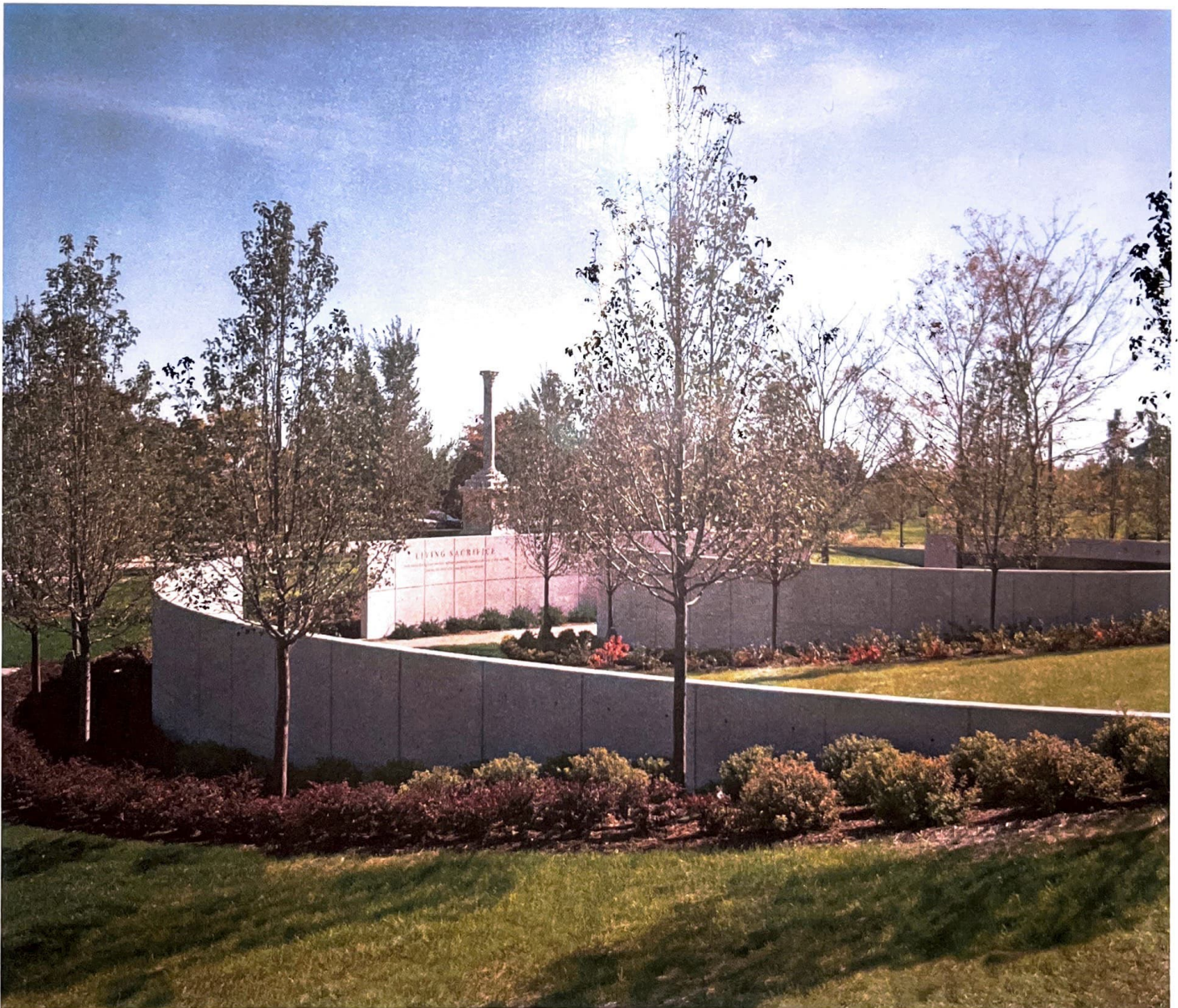


FIG. A

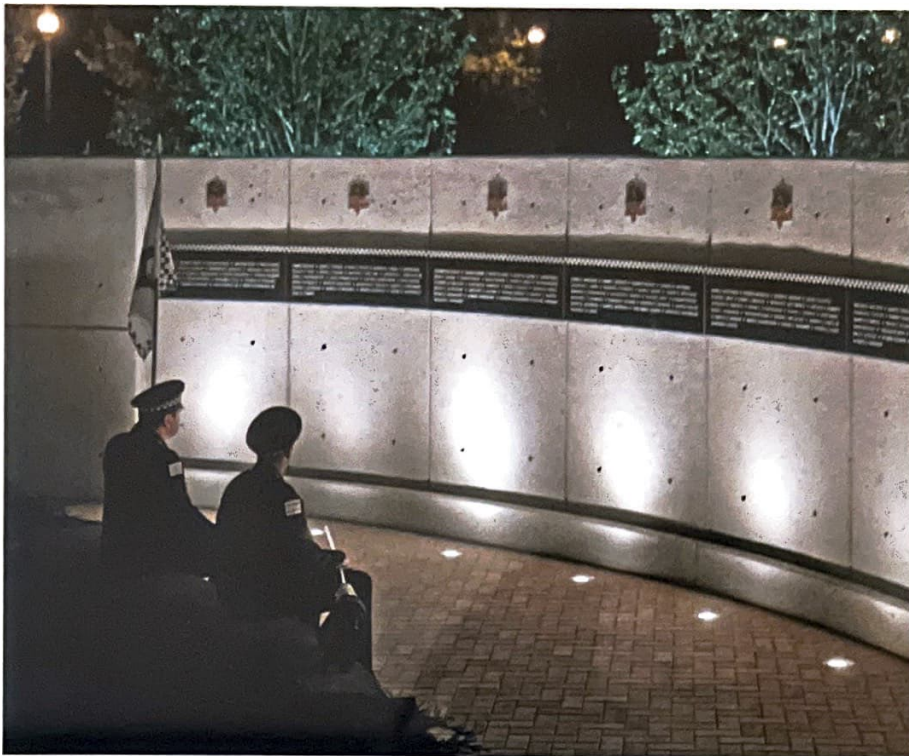


FIG. B



FIG. C



FIG. D

Located on a five-acre site in Burnham Park, Gold Star Families Memorial and Park honors more than 520 Chicago police officers killed in the line of duty. The client's goal was to build the finest law enforcement officers' memorial in the country memorializing both how officers died but also communicating how they lived. The memorial is part of the surrounding park and welcomes families, friends and colleagues of the slain police officers as well as the general public.

Both the site and its context influenced the memorial design. First, it was important to maintain views of the downtown skyline, in order to maintain the sense of place in downtown Chicago. Second, it was important to respect the presence of Soldier Field, a memorial to the men and women of the armed services. Third, it was

important that the memorial, located within Burnham Park, be integrated with the park, not separated from it.

Four principal design elements are connected and unified by a curved gravel park walkway. Circular entries marked by a pair of stainless steel pylons are filled with Whitespire birch creating a canopy overhead. Brick circles defined by a bench on one side and a low wall on the other with a relevant quote regarding core values of service, family, courage and honor symbolize how fallen officers lived their lives. A central gathering space at the center of the Memorial is programmed to accommodate special events, such as the annual St. Jude's Day candlelight vigil and a Father's Day memorial. Curving concrete walls spiral out from the central circular space to create a "sacrifice space" for emotional and spiritual reflection.

Figure A: The memorial is part of the surrounding park and welcomes families, friends and colleagues of slain police officers as well as the public. Concrete walls spiral out from the circular "sacrifice space" in the middle, forming a spatial progression that goes from "outside" to a transition space between the walls and then to the "inside" of the enclosed circular "sacrifice space."

Figure B: Bronze stars identify individual panels to aid in locating names; the ledge at the wall base provides a place for notes, flowers, medals and other mementos.

Figure C: Water flows over a weir and down rotated stainless steel mesh grids forming a water wall with a dynamic and changing checkerboard of water.

Figure D: Stainless steel pylons marking each entry are oriented as "open doors" to the Memorial and are further abstractions of the iconic checkerboard pattern.