

NYPD's Horse Unit Gets New Home

By **MARCUS FRANKLIN**

Associated Press Writer

New York City has opened up a brand new building for its police horses in Manhattan, ending worries that a park expansion would leave the Mounted Unit homeless.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg and police Commissioner Raymond Kelly cut the ribbon on a new \$8.7 million (euro6.54 million) buildings at Pier 76 on Manhattan's West Side near West 38th Street, a location that is closer to many of the landmarks the unit patrols than its previous spot.

The new 22,500-square-foot (2,090-square-meter) facility, located on part of the police department's towing impound lot, includes a covered 6,500 square foot (600-square-meter) heated training ring, box stalls, a saddle room, a horse shower stall and office space for the Mounted Unit's headquarters.

New amenities include a hay loft and separate showers for officers and their supervisors and hostlers - civilians who care for horses.

"Their impressive visibility make our mounted police officers and their horses great crime fighters and outstanding ambassadors to the public," Kelly said in a statement. "It is only fitting that the horses have the best accommodations possible in Manhattan, close to the action, where they are often needed."

Troop B, which has 30 officers and supervisors and 28 mounts, was previously housed on the ground floor of a structure between the Hudson River and the West Side Highway at West 23rd Street, about 15 blocks south of the new location. The unit was kicked out for a 9.2-acre (3.72-hectares) expansion of Hudson River Park along the West Side.

The mounted unit was established in 1871, peaking at 800 officers and 400 horses. Currently there are 120 officers and 80 horses, a reduction that started with the invention of the automobile.

Other horse troops are based in lower Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens.



Courtesy of The New York Post/James Messerschmidt

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