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Bus Excursion To New York City 9/11 Memorial, Just What One Would Expect...And Much More

By Bill Wurzell, Editor

One of the first things that became apparent to me while browsing through the massive collection of displays and artifacts of the 9/11 Memorial was the mood of the throngs of visitors; it was crowded, and the mood was somber.

People were being very respectful of the sacred ground on which they were treading. Oh, sure there were plenty of mobile phones present, but they were being used as cameras. Talking on a cell phone inside the museum is prohibited, I never saw anyone violating the rule; which is a miracle in itself. When people spoke to each other it was in moderated, hushed tones. Even small children seemed to understand this place is special.

Visitors had a wide-eyed and somewhat reflective look on their faces. I guess this is to be expected in a shrine that memorializes nearly 3,000 innocent men, women and children murdered by terrorists while they were just going about the simple pursuits of their lives.

Word of the day... 'Respectfull'

As with the multitudes killed on Tuesday, November 11, 2001, the Museum visitors represented nearly every nationality on this planet. I observed people from foreign lands walking a self-guided tour wearing headphones listening to narration in their own language. They were just as respectful as members from our group. The museum audio guide narrated by Robert DeNiro is available in a number of languages on iOS and Android devices.

The 9/11 Memorial not only pays homage to the innocent victims but also to the individuals from many NYFD and NYPD that gave their lives trying to save others, and they diligently carried out recovery operations for months. This would include men and women from the building and construction trades, much of their skills and labor supplied without compensation.

Our group entered the museum and passed through security which included

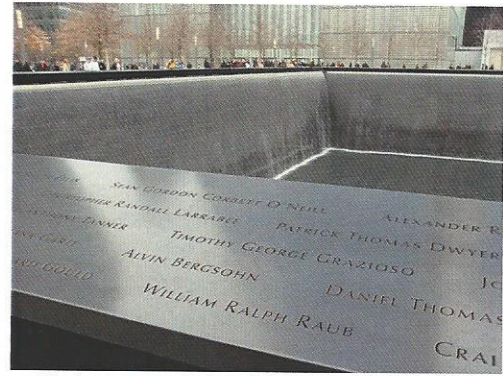
emptying pockets of all metal items into a shallow, plastic tray. I passed through without removing my belt or shoes. Security guards and Police officers were present but fairly scarce. Never saw anybody carrying an automatic rifle. There were plenty of security cameras present. We established a rendezvous point to meet at 3 p.m. Our group dispersed in many directions, each person looking for the tour they wanted and to observe each display in their own way.

Now, dear readers, its time to bring you back up. If the mood in the museum was of quiet reflection, the bus trip up and back certainly was not. Most of the 55 day trippers were familiar with each other and had a rollicking good time. Tour directors, Tom and Anne Kenney seriously outdid themselves on this one. The huge, nearly new Diesel bus from Rills had large, plush fabric seats that would put you in a snooze quickly. Enroute to NYC, we only encountered one traffic delay due to an accident. The box lunch Tom and Anne provided was great and included so many items to munch on. Leaving lower Manhattan on a Saturday evening was a little slow.

The best dinner companions!

The return trip included a stop for dinner at a Cracker Barrel Restaurant. After filing in we were quickly seated and I very luckily drew two of the nicest and interesting women dinner companions anybody could ask, Ruth Synodinos and her good friend, Ann Boddiford. We discussed events and talked about old and new cars, other car clubs and just had a wonderfully pleasant time. Well, I know I did, I hope Ruth and Ann feel the same!

If the club sponsors this trip again, DO IT! You will not be sorry...I promise.



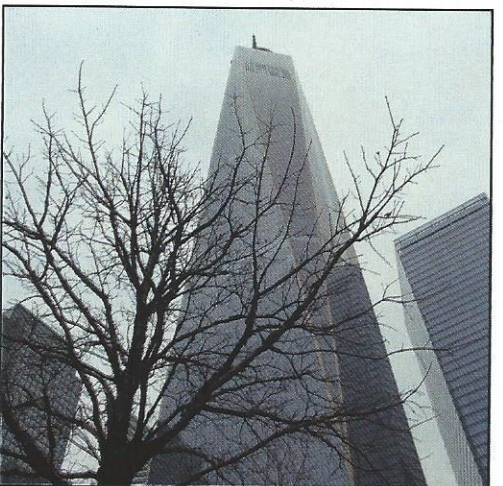
The huge memorial pool of cascading water is the first thing you see on the 9/11 Memorial grounds. Nearly 3,000 names of those that died on 9/11 are etched into the granite border. Flowers or mementos can be inserted into the names.



This artifact is about the size of a semi tractor. Although it looks like space junk it is the center section of the antenna mast that was atop the North Tower. It was salvaged from debris at ground zero.



This NYFD Ladder Company 3 firetruck is probably the most iconic display in the museum. It was at ground zero when the North and South towers collapsed. (All photos on this page by Harold Diehl)



One World Trade Center, replaces the twin-towers



6:45 am at Cromwell Bridge Rd., Park 'n Ride



World class chefs prepare a world-class box lunch