NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

NEW YORK POST, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2001

The ruins are the Memorial



"OH, my God!"

"It looks fake, it looks like cardboard."

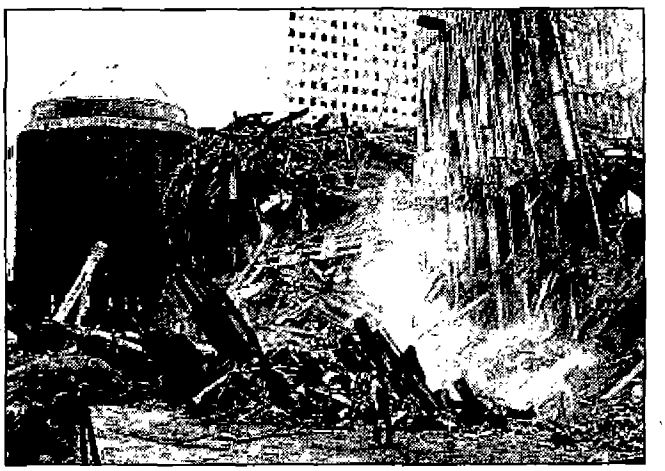
No one could walk past the jagged remains — the last standing piece of the Twin Towers — without freezing in their tracks.

No one could walk by it without opening their mouths to say something, or gasp and inhale a dose of dust and soot.

The city opened up sections of the Wall Street area to the public nine days ago. For the first time, the regular folks on Nassau and Liberty streets, among others, got a three-dimensional view of the destruction.

It wasn't a television image of the 25-foot skeleton that looked like the Roman Colosseum. It was real. To the shell shocked, it became a visible monument of grief.

For nine days, it was the Memorial.



'SHELL' SHOCK: With the remaining facade torn down, New Yorkers will have to find another place to cry. Pool photo

"Everyone was trying to make a physical attachment to what used to be there," said a security guard outside the Chase Building.

The Memorial created a traffic jam of people.

"Please, people, take your pictures and keep moving. There is too much congestion," screamed one frustrated soldier guarding the street. "Keep moving, please. There is a better view over on Cedar [Street]."

One man in a navy-blue suit maneuvered past the crowd, refusing to turn his grimacing and tearful face toward the Memorial.

"It wasn't real until I came back to work and saw it," said Eva Maria, a lawyer with a 19-month old baby. "You can't even describe it. It's freaky. There's National Guardsmen, fighter jets flying around. Our kids will never know how free we used to be."

T.J. Nelson, 36, stared at the Memorial as if it were a corpse.

"It's hard to explain," the computer specialist said. "Maybe it's because there are 5,000 people missing in there."

William Murphy, 62, of Westport, Conn., took his 13-year-old daughter downtown and discovered the Memorial.

"It's part of U.S. history, and that's why it's important for her to come here and be part of history," he said. "I had no idea we'd see the shell of the building. It's pretty frightening."

A reasonable decision was made Tuesday to tear down the Memorial so rescuers can safely search the area.

But once the search is over, average New Yorkers need to see that 25-foot Memorial, reconstructed and returned to the site.

It was the only real monument of grief, and until it's returned, the regular folks are going to have to find another place to stand and cry.

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