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News

WTC steel delivered to Coatesville

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Five hundred tons of Lukens steel is in Coatesville after more than three decades used to support the World Trade Center.

In 1969, the last trainload carrying the structural shapes, known as "trees," pulled out of Lukens Steel headquarters in Coatesville destined for New York City to become part of the two tallest buildings in the world.

Until the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, the steel framed the first nine floors of the North and South Towers.

The steel, which now represents relics of a terrorist attack that resulted in the deaths of 3,000 people, will become the centerpiece of the proposed The National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum to be built in the Lukens Historic District on South First Avenue in Coatesville.

"It's our goal to honor those who lost their lives on 9/11, as well as the steelworkers who created the steel for these monumental buildings during the 1960s," said Scott Huston, a descendent of the Lukens family and president of the Graystone Society, a local historic preservation group.

The 28-truck convoy, carrying 10 50-ton steel trees as well as supports and steel window frames, is estimated to arrive in Coatesville in the early afternoon.

The World Trade Center's twisted steel supports, among the few remaining pieces of the 110-story skyscrapers still standing in the aftermath of the 2001 attacks, became an iconic image of defiance and strength for a mourning nation.

"We feel that it is only fitting that these trees become the keystone of The National Iron and Steel Heritage Museum, especially as the 10th anniversary of 9/11 draws near," Huston said.

Though the event will be somber in tone, the arrival of the World Trade Center artifacts is also seen as an element of the rebirth of the city of 11,000.

The Graystone Society is forming a committee to oversee the design for a memorial that will incorporate the structures. The group is named for the Graystone Mansion, part of The Lukens National Historic District that also includes the 35,000-square foot former industrial building that will be museum's home.

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