

World Trade Center beam arrives in Urbana

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URBANA — A 12-foot steel support beam from the World Trade Center arrived in Urbana on Saturday to become a part of a Sept. 11 memorial at Freedom Grove Memorial Park.

The beam arrived about 1:30 p.m. on the bed of a tow truck bearing iconic photos of the burning towers and draped in an American flag.

The beam was escorted into the memorial park at the intersection of U.S. 68 and Ohio 55 and was greeted by about 150 area residents who stood in the rain to witness the dedication of a piece of history.

“It’s a living reminder of the price of freedom. Freedom is not free,” said Major General Francis Hazard, a member of the Urbana Rotary Club that helped form the memorial park after 9/11.

Freedom Grove is among dozens of memorials around the country using the structural remains of the WTC towers destroyed by terrorists on Sept. 11, 2001.

The beam is one of about 1,000 pieces of wreckage made available this week by Kennedy International Airport’s Hanger 17, where debris from the towers is stored, Freedom Grove Committee members said.