

**Rod Ebersviller**  
*106th Infantry Division*  
*Unknown POW Camp*

**World War II vets savor trip to war memorial**

Fergus Falls World War II veteran Rod Ebersviller and his wife, Bobbi, still haven't come down from the emotional high they experienced as part of WDAY-TV's second of three 2007 honor flights, Sept. 8 and 9, that took veterans, spouses and other escorts to the World War II Memorial in the nation's capital.

The first delegation this year went in May to Washington, D.C., to see the memorial and the final group will head to the nation's capital in early November.

"It was a very inspiring and emotional experience seeing the memorial for the first time," said Rod, a former POW who served with the 35th Army Infantry in Europe during World War II. "Bobbi and I also were privileged to see former Sec. of State Collin Powell and U.S. Sen. Bob Dole, along with other dignitaries."

Also visiting the World War II Memorial with the delegation were Fergus Falls residents and World War II veterans Jim Amdal, a Navy Chief Petty Officer, and Bob Bruns, an Ensign and Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy during the Second World War.

During their time in Washington the delegation also took a tour of Arlington National Cemetery with stops at the John and Robert Kennedy gravesites and the Tomb of the Unknowns, the Vietnam Wall, Korean War Memorial and Lincoln Memorial. They were guests of honor at a banquet featuring notable guest speakers.

"What impressed me most was that the World War II Memorial is not all statues, granite and marble — but really is alive with flowing water and fountains," Rod Ebersviller said. "Our trip in early September was so very well organized, every step of the way."

In the spring of 1944 Ebersviller was assigned to the 106th Infantry Division before being sent to France. At the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge, his squad was captured by Germans — only 50 miles from where his grandparents had lived before emigrating to the United States — from across the border in France.

Ebersviller was a POW from December 1944 to April 1945. His two brothers, Billy and Gordy, also served in the military during World War II.

"It was wonderful seeing the welcome home people waving flags when we arrived back in Fargo earlier this month," Rod said. "This capped off a wonderful two days for us veterans, spouses and others who made the trip to Washington, D.C."

Amdal participated in landings in Guam, New Guinea and other locations in the South Pacific during the Second World War. One of his most memorable experiences is of how he and his shipmates adopted an orphan off the wharf in Shanghai, China, after V-J Day. It made national news in succeeding years, including Reader's Digest and Paul Harvey's The Rest of the Story.

Bruns and his shipmates took part in seven invasions in the South Pacific.

"We're indebted to WDAY's Tracy Briggs for her determination in arranging the Fargo flights to the nation's capital," Bruns said. "As veterans we can't thank enough all the volunteers and contributors who made our trip possible."

Bruns said he was most impressed with the South Pacific Theater area of the World War II Memorial. It lists the battles in the order of their occurrence. "These honor flights will be long remembered — by all of us who took part," Bruns said.

*Tom Hintgen, Fergus Falls Daily Journal - Fergus Falls, MN, USA*



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