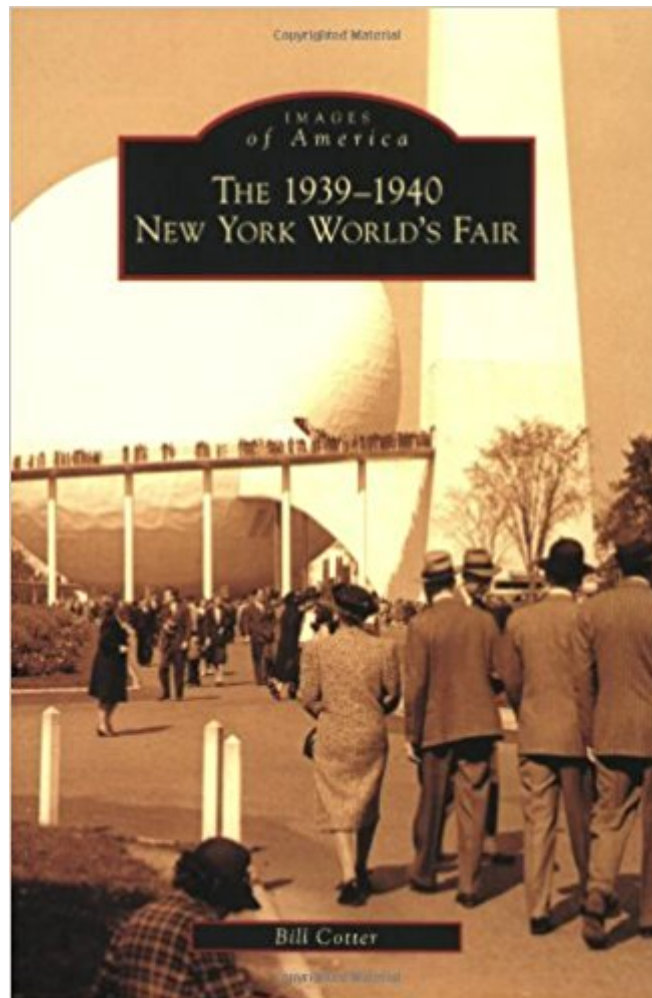


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# The 1939-1940 New York World's Fair (Images Of America)



## Synopsis

After enduring 10 harrowing years of the Great Depression, visitors to the 1939â1940 New York WorldâFair found welcome relief in the fairâs optimistic presentation of the âWorld of Tomorrow.â Pavilions from Americaâs largest corporations and dozens of countries were spread across a 1,216-acre site, showcasing the latest industrial marvels and predictions for the future intermingled with cultural displays from around the world. Well known for its theme structures, the Trylon and Perisphere, the fair was an intriguing mixture of technology, science, architecture, showmanship, and politics. Proclaimed by many as the most memorable worldâs fair ever held, it predicted wonderful times were ahead for the world even as the clouds of war were gathering. Through vintage photographs, most never published before, The 1939â1940 New York WorldâFair recaptures those days when the eyes of the world were on New York and on the future.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Title: New book captures era Author: Nicholas Hirshon Publisher: Queens Daily News Date:

4/21/09 EVEN THOUGH the 1964 World's Fair captivated 12-year-old Bill Cotter, who was awestruck by the seemingly endless array of attractions, his enthusiasm failed to rub off on his mom and dad. "They felt it was more commercial," said Cotter, 57, of Los Angeles. "They felt if you lived through the '39 fair, during the Depression, it was such a breath of fresh air." His parents' stories of the first fair - held, like the 1964 expo, at Flushing Meadows-Corona Park - fascinated Cotter, whose

book "Images of America: The 1939-1940 New York World's Fair," will be released June 15. Featuring more than 200 never-before-published photos that Cotter bought online and at auctions and souvenir shows, the book separates sites into sections of the fair - called "centers" or "zones" - where they sat. Perhaps the best remembered is the Theme Center, home to the fair's side-by-side icons, the 610-foot-tall Trylon and 180-foot-wide Perisphere, surrounded by fountains and walkways. One of the book's most memorable images shows the Perisphere lit as a giant jack-o'-lantern on Halloween 1939, the final day of the fair's first season. Cotter notes the occasion was bittersweet because it was unclear if the fair would return in 1940. In another shot, crowds are packed into the Amusement Area's New York State Amphitheater - torn down in 1996 - for a popular music, dance and swimming show called "Billy Rose's Aquacade." "I wanted to use candid photos, and that's what 99.9% of them are," Cotter said. "I want to do this from the view of, 'What would the average person find special about the fair?'" Visitors who couldn't afford admission to "Aquacade" or the Perisphere's futuristic diorama, called "Democracy," could still enjoy outdoor sights, including an 80-foot-tall sundial or a 60-foot-tall statue of George Washington.

Bill Cotter has been an avid scholar and fan of world's fairs since his first visit to the 1964-1965 New York World's Fair. His collection of vintage photographs has been featured in numerous books, including three previous titles for Arcadia Publishing, as well as in magazine articles, documentaries, and Web sites that document the histories of the fairs.

My mother always spoke about her childhood New York World's Fair in 1939. I went to the 1963-64 New York World's Fair, and I remember after we had been the first time, she expressed disappointment and said it did not measure up to the 1939 one. She tried to describe some of the buildings and displays that made the biggest impression on her, but it was hard for me to visualize it all. This book was exactly what I needed. Clear photos and simple text. I only wish it had been published before my mother passed away because we both would have enjoyed sitting down with this book as she elaborated on what she remembered.

This is a fascinating look at the 1939 World's Fair, a fair which saw both the hopes of many for a peaceful future based on scientific and technological progress and the opening rounds of the Second World War, with many pavilions closing or operating with their flags at half mast as the totalitarian regimes began their march of conquest. Probably the most famous of the world fairs, the 1939 has some of the most memorable imagery and indeed a lot of the material associated with the

fair is highly collectible today. The USSR had a pavilion, as did the Belgium Congo and one that celebrated Italy's fascist regime. Trains and planes were celebrated as harbingers of progress and parachute rides let those daring enough to go up see the fair from high up. It could have used some more concept shots or photos which established the overall look of the pavilions but virtually all of the photos were first rate. A great book by itself or for background on other material about the 1939 World's Fair or the 1930s.

Bill Cotter has collected and assembled some of the most interesting images from the 1939 New York World's Fair I've ever seen. Many are from actual visitors to the Fair, and therefore offer a truer perspective of what it must have been like than the professional, official photographs. You often see real people wandering about among the exhibits and buildings, and overall you get a truer "snapshot" of a moment during its brief lifespan. Moreover, the details and descriptions go way beyond ordinary captions. There is quite a bit of solid information here. Highly recommended for everyone from those who have studied the Fair to the casual observer.

I bought this book for my aged mother who actually lived through the whole thing since she lived in New York. She enjoyed it very much.

This is a great photo collection of various '39 World's Fair venues. Short descriptive paragraphs help guide the reader through the Fair.

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