

The Morro Castle, the Mohawk and the End of the Ward Line

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Cover

It has been almost 72 years since the Morro Castle, gutted, afire, and carrying the bodies of at least six luckless passengers and crew members was driven ashore, with visual impact worthy of a Hollywood production, just to the north of the new Convention Center at Asbury Park, New Jersey. Regionally, the Morro Castle remains perhaps the best remembered shipping disaster of the twentieth century. Six, and likely more, survivors remain of the 418 who swam or drifted ashore, or were carried to safety by a fleet of fishing boats, freighters and a luxury cruise ship on the dismal and stormy September morning in 1934. Thanks to three successful books and a series of television documentaries, Morro Castle is known by a surprising number of people too young to have any first hand recall of the disaster: the snapshots and souvenirs of 1934 regularly fetch prices at auction by no means warranted by rarity, and the pre-fire brochures and promotional items once shipped by the truckload are among the costliest and most sought after in the collector's market.

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