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NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

The settlement, known from about 1781 as *Butlersburg*, in honour of Colonel John Butler, the commander of Butler's Rangers, was renamed West Niagara to distinguish it from Fort Niagara. It was a British military base and haven for pro-British loyalists fleeing the United States during the volatile aftermath of the American Revolution. Renamed Newark by Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe in 1792, he made it the first capital of Upper Canada (now the province of Ontario), The first provincial parliament was convened at the Navy Hall on September 17, 1792. Due to Newark's close proximity to the American border, Simcoe moved the capital in 1797 to York and Newark was officially renamed 'Niagara' in 1798.

Niagara played a central role in the War of 1812. Niagara was taken by American forces after a two day bombardment by cannons from Fort Niagara and the American Fleet, followed by a fierce battle. Later in the war the town was razed and burnt to the ground by American soldiers as they withdrew to Fort Niagara. Undaunted by this setback, often referred to as the "burning of Newark," the citizens rebuilt the town after the war, with the residential quarter around Queen Street and toward King Street, where the new Court House was rebuilt using material from the firing range of the cannons at Fort Niagara. In 1859 the town built its first public school, Niagara Public School.

The town's present name was adopted around 1880 as a Postal Address to distinguish the town from Niagara Falls. The name was not officially adopted until 1970, when the Town of Niagara and the Township of Niagara were merged.

Most of the former military sites, such as Fort George, Navy Hall, and Butler's Barracks, have been restored. Fort George's restoration was done as a "Make Work Project", guided by plans from the Royal Engineers, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, an early example of historic preservation. Fort George National Historic Site is a focal point in a collection of War of 1812 sites which, collectively, are managed by Parks Canada under the name Niagara National Historic Sites. That administrative name includes several national historic sites: Fort Mississauga, Mississauga Point Lighthouse (1804, the first on the Great Lakes), Navy Hall, Butler's Barracks, and Queenston Heights.

Niagara-on-the-Lake teems with historical plaques, many national and provincial, reflecting its significance in the establishment of many of the province's institutions. Among these were its first newspaper, lending library, parliament, historical museum, and governing body for the legal profession. Critical battles in the defence of Upper Canada took place here, at Queenston, including one in which heroine Laura Secord gained her fame. The town gave many black Americans their first taste of freedom, both as a stop on the Underground railroad for those travelling further into Upper Canada, and as a refuge in its own right. Its stock of Regency and Classical Revival buildings, considered the best in the country from the post-war of 1812 period, led the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada to recommend that the town's historic district be designated a National Historic Site of Canada, a designation which was approved in 2003.^{[7][8]} The historic centre had already been designated as a provincial Heritage Conservation District under the Ontario Heritage Act in 1986. And, although it did not make the final list, the Historic District was considered for nomination as a World Heritage Site.

Other significant sites in Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL):

- The town contains other National Historic Sites of Canada within its boundaries: the Battlefield of Fort George and nearby Fort George, Butler's Barracks, Fort Drummond, Fort Mississauga, the site of the Mississauga Point Lighthouse, the Niagara Apothecary (the oldest apothecary in Canada), the Niagara District Court House, Queenston Heights, Queenston-Chippawa Hydro-electric Plant, Willowbank, and Vrooman's Battery.
- Old Court House Theatre 1847
- St. Mark's Church 1791 - oldest Anglican Church in Ontario
- McFarland House, built ca. 1800, is the oldest surviving building in Niagara-on-the-Lake. During the War of 1812 the house was used as both a hospital and Officer's Quarters, therefore it survived the Burning on Newark in December 1813. It is now open to the public for guided tours, as well as a tea patio and mini cafe.

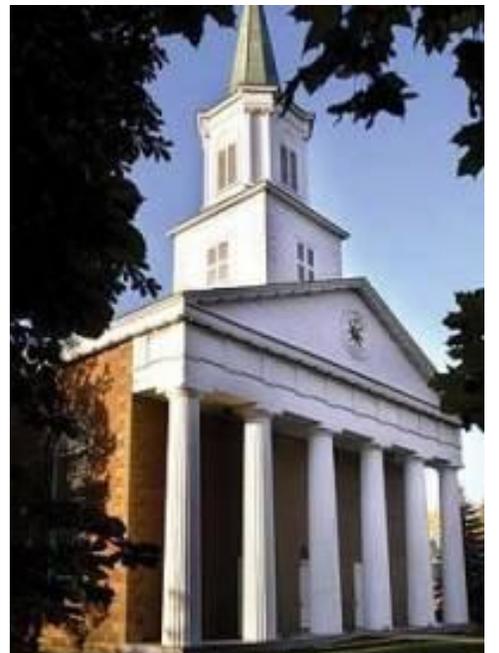
The town is home to the Shaw Festival, a series of theatrical productions featuring the works of George Bernard Shaw, his contemporaries, or plays about his era (1856–1950), running from April to November. The festival operates three theatres in the centre of town: the Festival, Royal George, and Court House theatres, and features one of a repertory acting company, scenic staff, and collection of resident and guest directors considered some of the best in the English-speaking world.

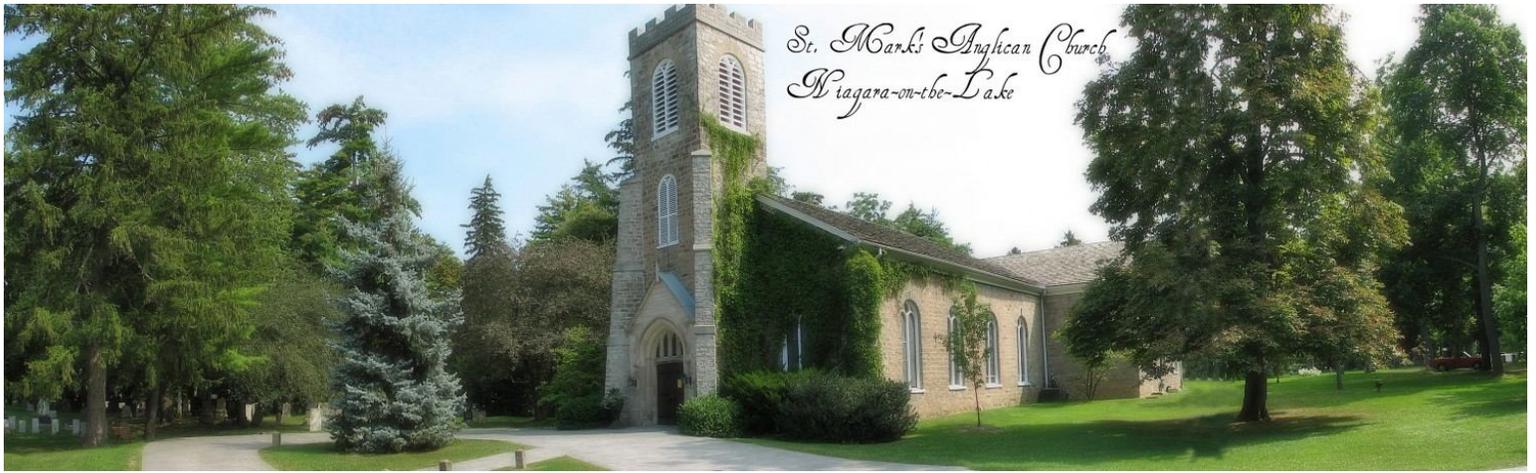
Along the Niagara Parkway is River Brink Art Museum, a popular tourist destination in Queenston. It is home to a unique collection of over 1,400 artworks and artefacts by Canadian and international artists, assembled by Samuel E. Weir. Completed in 1970, the building features Georgian-style architecture, including a mansard roof and gabled windows. It served as Weir's country residence, and was converted into an art museum following his death in 1981.

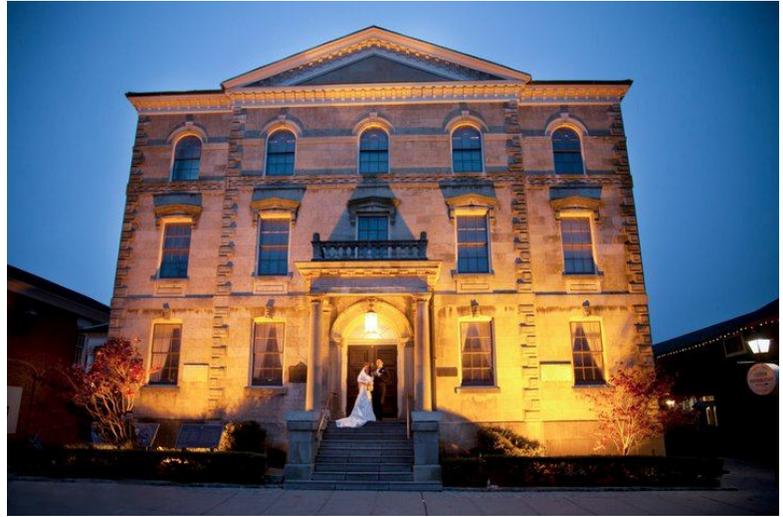
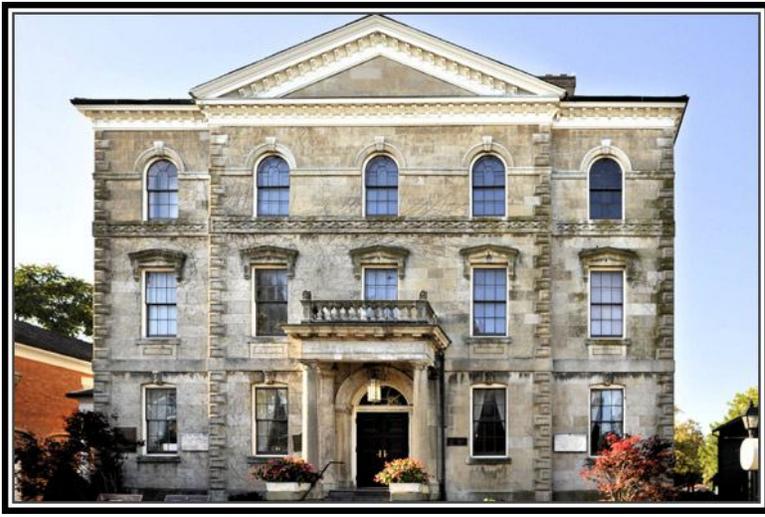
The surrounding region enjoys a comparatively mild climate thanks to the adjoining lakes, and excellent soil for fruit production, for which it has become one of Canada's centres. In particular, NOTL has grown into a major viticultural region. Visitors flock to dozens of nearby wineries, including those making the world's largest volumes of ice wine. The town is also known for its gardens, art galleries, antique shops, and golf courses. There are many hotels, inns, bed and breakfasts, vacation rentals and spas in the area.

..... from Wikipedia

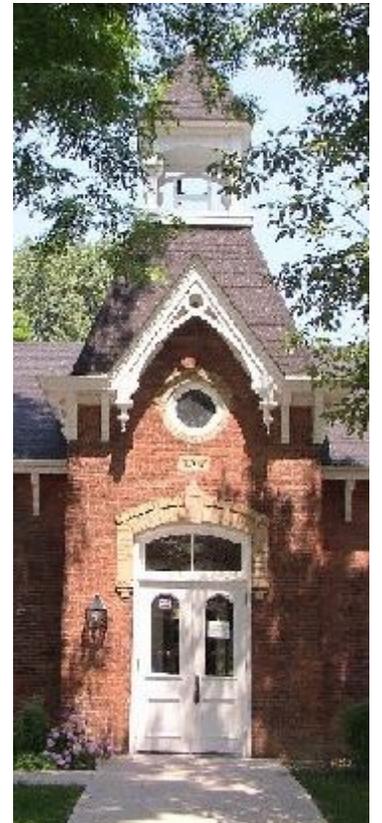




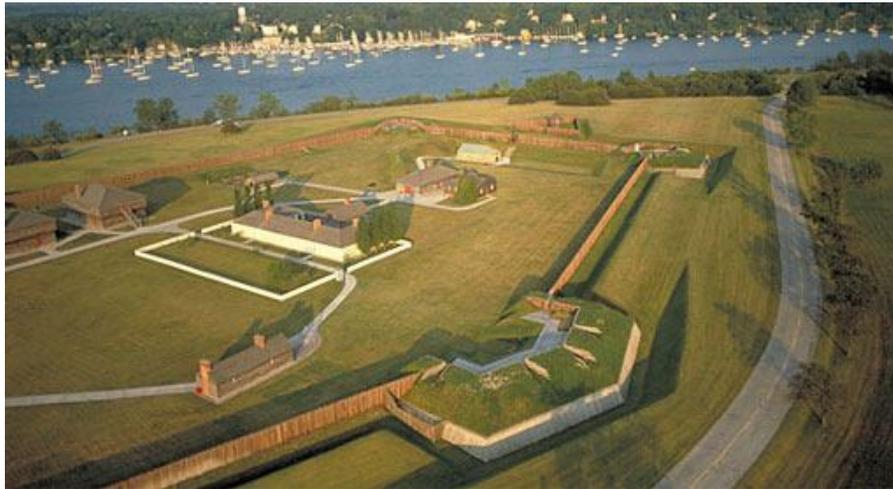


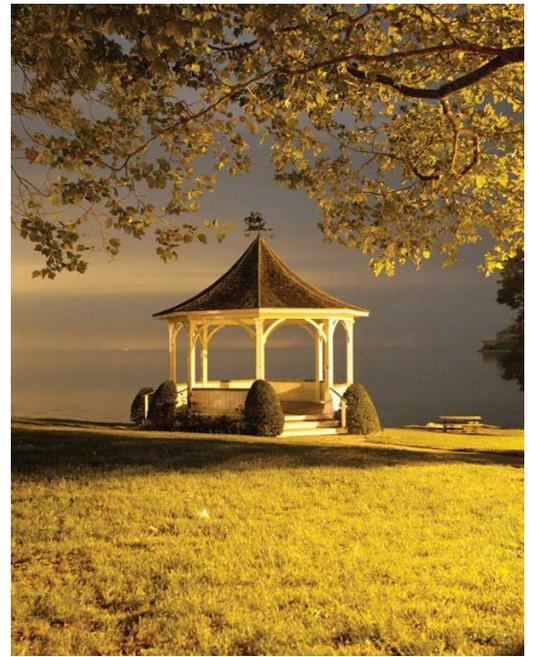














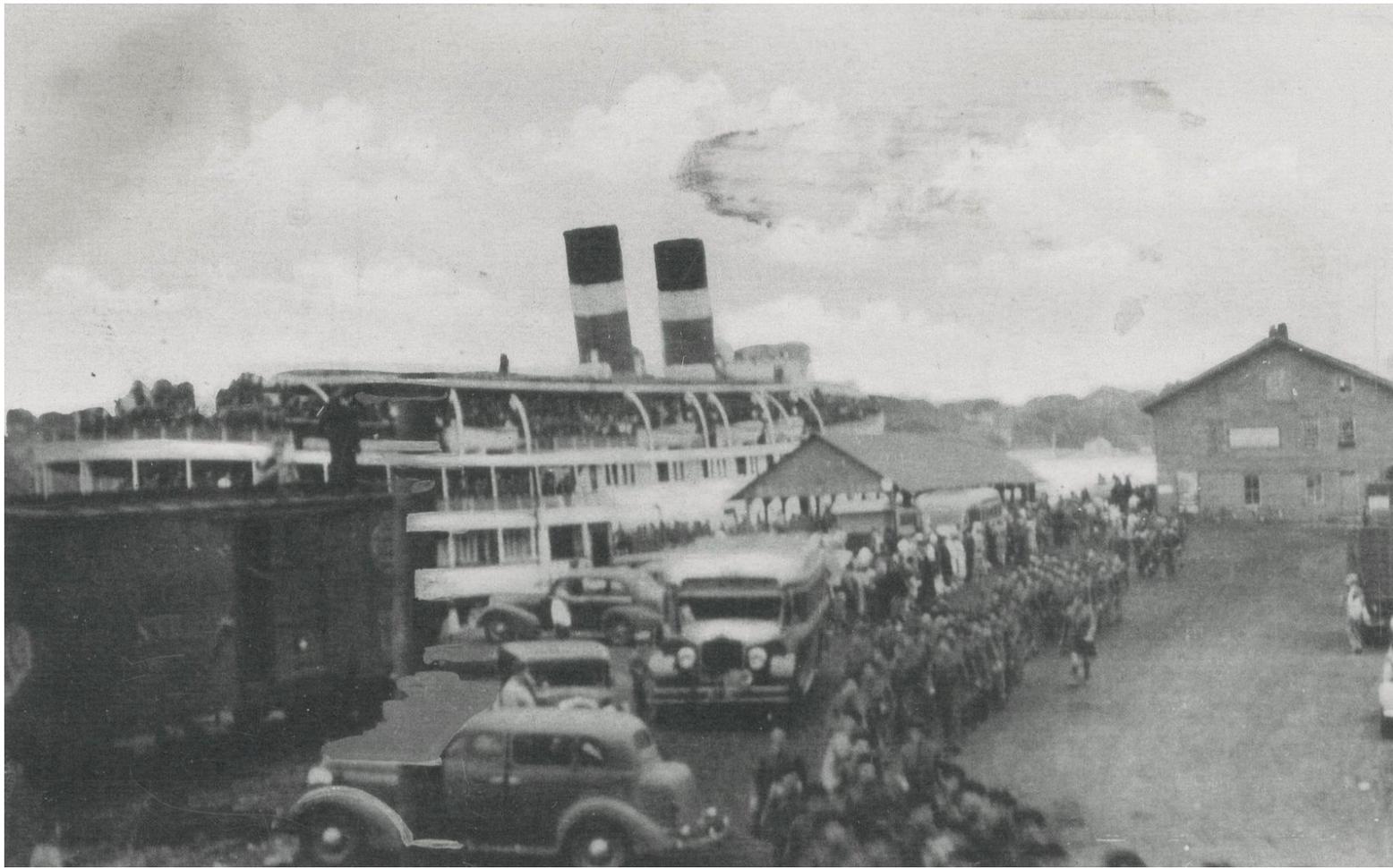






*PETER JOHN STOKES, OLD NIAGARA ON THE
LAKE, WITH DRAWINGS BY ROBERT
MONTGOMERY*





S.S. Cayuga approaching Dock, U.S. shore in Background.—25.



A. S. Corps and Butter's Barracks, Niagara on the Lake.





Oct. 15th, 1901

The Prince and Princess of Wales (George V)

leaving the hotel, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, that hosted his father, the then Prince of Wales (Edward VII) in 1860.

