



The Village of Youngstown began just south of Fort Niagara which is strategically located at the southwestern end of Lake Ontario and at the mouth of the Lower Niagara River. The fort has been controlled by the French, the British, and finally the Americans. Native peoples once lived in the area, and in the 1990s a burial ground containing both native and non-native burials was found on Main Street. New Fort Niagara, a U.S. Army fort and military base, developed on the land between Fort Niagara and Youngstown and from this location hundreds of soldiers were sent off to wars. From 1944 to 1945, German and Austrian POWs were interred at New Fort Niagara at a secured camp along Jackson Street, and they provided a ready supply of manpower needed to work in the factories and on the region's farms. New Fort Niagara was decommissioned in 1963 and the land was turned over to New York State and became Fort Niagara State Park.

The village welcomes visitors to Old Fort Niagara, and in 2006 the regional publication *Business First* wrote: "Youngstown offers the best quality of life of any small village in Western New York."

Image courtesy Town of Porter Historical Society Museum

## American history happened in Youngstown.

The Niagara River Village of Youngstown, known in the early 1800s as "Young's town" (named after property owner John Young,) has witnessed American history in the making, from the opening of the continent by early French explorers and through the British presence, then the American independence.

The region's history comes alive as you walk the streets, view the sites, and learn about the importance of the Battle of *La Belle Famille*, the destruction and havoc of the War of 1812, the importance of the river to the growth of the farming community, and because of its location just across the Niagara River from Canada, its role as a station on the Underground Railroad.



Image from James Croil. Steam Navigation and Its Relation to the Commerce of Canada and the United States. Montreal News Company, Limited. 1898. p. 29



Youngstown, New York, is a village in partnership with the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area, and many local, regional, and national tourist organizations.

Just south of Fort Niagara State Park and historic Old Fort Niagara, it is on both the Great Lakes Seaway Trail and the Shoreline On-Road Trail. It is in the Niagara River Greenway Corridor and its businesses are members of the Youngstown Business and Professional Association which is a member of the Lower Niagara River Chamber of Commerce.



This project was made possible by a grant from the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area.



Sponsored by: Youngstown Heritage Tourism & Tours Committee

Researched and written by Karen Noonan and Gretchen Duling. Design by Goulah Design Group, Inc.



## Experience HERITAGE TOURS & TOURISM in Youngstown, New York 14174

Volunteer Tour Guides: Young in spirit, ageless in pride

Image courtesy Howard Noonan



## Walking Tours Through Time

June

### General Walking Tour

A comprehensive tour which covers the village's history from 1800-1900.

July

### Battle of *La Belle Famille*

Offered in conjunction with Old Fort Niagara, this tour covers an important 1759 battle that helped the British capture Fort Niagara.

August

### War of 1812

This tour focuses on the causes of the war, the battles and events that took place in the village over 200 years ago, and the fate of village residents when Fort Niagara was captured on December 19, 1813, and once again under British control.

September

### Youngstown Families

Did you ever wonder what it is like to live in a home built over 150 years ago or wondered who built them? This tour covers architectural detail and the history of many of the families who lived in them.

October

### Ghosts & Graveyards

Visit the village cemetery to learn more about 19th century burial customs, and stop for libations at the Stone Jug; listen to stories about the ghosts who haunt its halls.

TBA

### The Youngstown Waterfront

From commercial and sport fishing, boat building, motorboat and sailboat races, to the Underground Railroad and Canadian Steamships, this tour covers it all, ending with a visit to the Youngstown Yacht Club.

## You will be surprised at the architecture and meaningful geographic location!

Located conveniently on the Seaway Trail, Youngstown provides a glimpse of the past. The village was once the site of numerous stores that provided goods and services to the thriving farming community of the Town of Porter. Today, it boasts over 100 homes and buildings dating from the mid-to-late 19th century, historic markers that describe the importance of the Salt and Fox Batteries during the War of 1812, and historic churches, one on the National Register of Historic Places.

## Let the enduring spirit of this vibrant community draw you in!

People who settled in Youngstown and the Town of Porter left their homes when the British captured the fort in 1813, but they returned and contributed to the growth of the area, especially its agriculture, horticulture, and fishing. The citizens of the area took part in the California Gold Rush, the agony of the Civil War, and the exhilaration and despair of national economic cycles of boom or bust. In the 20th and 21st centuries, villagers fought in the World Wars, the Korean and Vietnam wars, the Cold War and the wars of the Middle East. When you visit Youngstown you might want to pause and reflect on the preservation of small town "America," its heritage and its contributions to the nation.

## This small river village has always welcomed visitors.

Some of the earliest village records contain the names of inn keepers and later records describe the role of the tour boats that transported tourists across the lake to view Niagara Falls. Later, electric trolleys brought families from Niagara Falls up the Niagara Gorge to the Lake Ontario waterfront to enjoy the scenery, the beaches, and entertainment. Cruise boats and lake steamers transported goods and visitors to and from the region and local ferry boats traversed the river between Youngstown and Niagara-on-the-Lake from 1790 to 1973. Today a yacht club, marina, and two village docks provide an opportunity for the boating enthusiast and fisherman to enjoy the waterfront, the river, and the lake. Beginning May 1, 2014, river tours will be available through Niagara Jet Adventures. Visit [www.niagarajet.com](http://www.niagarajet.com) for tickets.

## Let us share Youngstown with you!

This village encourages national and international tourists and their families to come and take part in their numerous community activities and seasonal heritage walking tours that are associated with the Lower Niagara River, Lake Ontario, Fort Niagara State Park, and Old Fort Niagara.

### Current information

Call the Town of Porter Historical Society at 716-745-1271 or the Village Office at 716-745-7721.

### Self-guided tour brochures are available at several locations:

Village Office in Youngstown  
Village Center (Red Brick School) at 240 Lockport Street and at most area retail establishments and restaurants.

### Lodging & Events throughout the year

Go to [www.youngstownnewyork.us](http://www.youngstownnewyork.us) or the Youngstown Business and Professional Association.

