

# Old Fort Niagara to reopen Friday

Guidelines in place to protect visitors and staff from COVID-19

Old Fort Niagara will reopen to visitors this Friday, July 3, following its 15-week closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Daily hours of operation have been shortened slightly, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to allow for extra cleaning before and after hours. Hourly musket and living-history demonstrations and seasonal food service will resume following proper health and social-distancing guidelines.

"We are really happy that we can welcome visitors back and do so in a safe way for them and our staff," said Robert Emerson, executive director of the Old Fort Niagara Association. "Old Fort Niagara is an open, spacious and scenic site where people can easily keep their distances. Even still, we are taking extra measures to keep indoor areas open and clean, because the health and safety of our visitors and staff are our first priorities."

Capacity will be capped at 25% in indoor spaces, such as the visitor center, museum and historic

buildings. Staff will monitor building capacity and encourage visitors to tour the fort grounds in a clockwise direction to reduce the chances of groups overlapping.

Old Fort Niagara would like visitors to note the following:

- ✓ If you are sick, do not enter the fort – and encourage your family not to enter until you are all well.

- ✓ Wear face coverings as per New York state law.

- ✓ Maintain minimum 6-foot social distance.

OFN said, "We are committed to keeping you healthy and safe, but we cannot guarantee you will not be exposed to COVID-19. We rely on you to protect yourself by washing your hands often and avoid touching your face, maintain your distance from others, and avoid touching surfaces."

Old Fort Niagara's complete safety plan is detailed at [www.oldfortniagara.org/visitor-information](http://www.oldfortniagara.org/visitor-information).



Photo courtesy of Old Fort Niagara.

## Niagara Celtic to hold 'mini-fest' in September

As cancellations and postponements of concerts, festivals, sports and countless WNY-area events continue to mount due to COVID-19, officials of the Niagara Celtic Heritage Festival announced plans to salvage at least part of their annual celebration for 2020.

Titled the "19-1/2 Gathering of Niagara Celtic 2020 – a stop gap event" the "mini-fest" will take place Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 19 and 20, at the Niagara County Fairgrounds in Lockport. Event organizers intend to offer concerts, food/drinks, ceremonies, shopping, athletics and kid's ac-

tivities, with garb and costume welcome.

They view the September event as a precursor to an even better event for 2021.

"We've made the necessary decision to wait and host our 20th anniversary festival next year, when we can truly make the celebration what it's meant to be: adventurous and immersive! Planning and hosting a massive event has proven too risky this

year, and we appreciate everyone for supporting us in this difficult but necessary decision," a press release noted.

Announcing the September replacement event, organizers said, "The gathering will be a few acres smaller in size, with less daily events, but still many cherished aspects of Niagara Celtic: food, music, heritage, shopping, ceremonial fires and our Ceilidh."

They said all safety and health

protocols will be in place and required for all visitors, based on CDC guidelines, including limited event capacity both days.

A limited number of tickets are available for the Sept. 19-20 event and will go on sale Wednesday, July 8, at [www.NiagaraCeltic.com](http://www.NiagaraCeltic.com).

Tickets are priced \$16 per day for adults, with kids ages 12 and under admitted at no charge. Parking is also free.

"We know that not everyone will feel comfortable (or be able) to join us this year, and we will miss you all immensely. We look forward to the days when we can all celebrate together again!" the press release said.

Those who already purchased tickets for the initial postponed celebration will be contacted to discuss their options.

## William Mattar kicks off 5th annual 'In the Heat Check the Seat' safety campaign

William Mattar law offices announced the kick-off of its fifth annual "In the Heat Check the Seat" campaign to raise awareness of the heatstroke-related tragedies that take place when children and animals are left in hot motor vehicles. Every year, dozens of small children and animals left or trapped in parked motor vehicles die from hyperthermia, a life-threatening condition that can occur when the body's temperature overheats. For this reason, car accident attorney Mattar is raising awareness by giving away thousands of free safety decals as a reminder to parents and caregivers to always check the backseat before exiting a vehicle.

Mattar encouraged parents, caregivers and local businesses to join this campaign by requesting free "In the Heat Check the Seat" safety decals at [williammattar.com](http://williammattar.com). This decal is a reminder to never leave a child or a pet behind, especially on a hot day.

All requested decals will be sent by mail. For more, visit [williammattar.com/community-involvement/programs-and-campaigns/in-the-heat-check-the-seat/](http://williammattar.com/community-involvement/programs-and-campaigns/in-the-heat-check-the-seat/).

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