

# HOW TO HOST A NAPOLEONIC BATTLE SPECTACULAR

## INTRODUCTION

This is a guide to help you and your organisation run a major Napoleonic public event. We can provide a spectacular Napoleonic Battle involving several dozen participants that you may use as a drawcard for your site or as the centrepiece of a larger event.



You may have seen one of our events, or caught sight of our publicity, and wondered how we achieve the organisation of a battle, and what you, as the Sponsor of an event, would need to do. We hope this leaflet helps you. A recent sponsor said:

*"We also thank you for the tremendous support that you have given to us, which has enabled us to run the absolutely best historical display seen for years. The final tally of people through the gate was 2,500 members of the general public".*

## WHAT DO WE DO?

The aim of our group is to recreate the life and times of the turbulent Napoleonic Wars. We do this to entertain, and in so doing educate the public. To do this we stage Battle Re-enactments and Living History events. A major Napoleonic battle and living history event will typically run two days, usually over a weekend.



## HOW DO WE DO IT?

Once we have agreed the date, the site, and the fee, you can leave it to us to produce the spectacle whilst you concentrate on the other elements. We will make all the arrangements to get soldiers and other participants to the site together with the uniforms, accoutrements, horses and weapons of Napoleonic warfare.



About \$150,000 of equipment will be on display each day, to provide a breathtaking display with charging cavalry, booming cannon, the crash of musketry and the drama of hand to hand combat. Behind this scene, we also ensure that gunpowder and special effects are provided, licensed, and used safely. Our members are well drilled and disciplined, and are all members of groups that are part of the Australian Living History Association which provides all necessary public liability insurances



A major battle could be supplemented by a 'Living History' encampment where our members will portray camp life in the army on campaign for the audience to inspect in closer detail. This can be open both days except during the battle.

The performance of a Napoleonic battle lasts 50 mins and takes place on both Saturday and Sunday afternoon. It is uneconomic to appear on one day only, and an event over 2 days can reduce the risk of bad weather affecting public attendance.

## **WHAT SORT OF SITE IS SUITABLE?**

Firstly there needs to be a Battlefield of at least 20,000m<sup>2</sup> (two hectares). The site needs to provide a good viewing area for several hundred spectators around part of the perimeter. Some natural features like a small rise of a few trees help to add variety. We cannot perform on a steep slope, but a flat field tends to be dull and uninteresting. A good backdrop of trees or a scenic view adds to the spectacle. Some fortifications need to be erected to make a focal point, these can be dug and made good or portable defences can be built. The fortifications will hold the "Living History" encampment.



The site needs to include secure parking for cars, a few transport vehicles, horse floats etc. A number of members will arrive late at night; having travelled long distances, and are bound to make some noise, so a relatively secluded parking near the battle site is always preferable.

We ask that you arrange the supply of toilets, drinking water and firewood. A drinking trough or tap should be in the fields or nearby so that our horses have a ready supply of water.

You may also need to consider an area for car parking for the spectators and some more space around the Battlefield for side shows, concessions, public toilets, catering and beer tents etc. We may ask your assistance to identify a suitable nearby outbuilding for use as a store for gunpowder, for which we arrange the necessary licences.

## **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO PROVIDE?**

To achieve a good audience you must advertise the event widely. We can provide suitable copy for insertion in programmes, press releases and poster/handbill artwork for you to adapt to your requirements. However, we ask you to take the lead in organising publicity and in handling the local press, radio and TV. You may also wish to arrange additional attractions and facilities for the public including drinks and catering facilities, public address

system, toilets, market or fair stalls and sideshows – all depending on your requirements.

## **WHAT DOES IT COST?**

We will attend for a fixed fee. A proportion of this fee is payable in advance, the remainder after the event. This covers the appearance of the armies for the battle, including horses, artillery, weapons and gunpowder. We also insure ourselves for public liability, and ask that you do the same for your organisation. We recommend that you investigate weather insurance.

To maximise our appearance you will be able to recoup money by letting concessions and arranging complementary activities such as a farmers' market or tours of an historic building. You may also wish to pre-sell programmes or tickets.



## **HOW IS AGREEMENT REACHED ON AN EVENT?**

If you feel that you are interested in hosting a re-enactment event then we will discuss specific details, enabling us to provide a tailored feasibility document at no charge. This will include all the details of our appearance, numbers, scenario, layout etc. This will form the basis for our appearance. We like to achieve a lead time of 6-9 months ahead of our appearance. This enables us to fit the smaller events we undertake around those major dates and avoid clashes.

We have considerable experience in organising such events, as we are sure you have. We are only too delighted to discuss matters with you and we can often resolve issues and concerns by talking. Please feel free to contact us if we can help in any way.

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

Name:  
Email:  
Telephone: