



**Lars Edmon owner of the Toy Soldier Factory & Mary Moynihan Marketing and Sale manager unveiled the largest handmade 'Battle of Waterloo' diorama in Cill Na Martra on Sunday last.**

# LET THE BATTLE BEGIN

THE world's largest model battlefield recreation, featuring more than 15,000 hand painted soldiers, has found a new home at the Prince August Toy Factory in Kilnamartyra.

Already hundreds of eager military buffs and wide-eyed visitors have visited the 8 x 4 metre diorama, a stunning scale model of the

Battle of Waterloo – one of the most pivotal engagements in European history.

The battle has been faithfully recreated in all its glory by a German enthusiast and will become a permanent fixture at the Cork factory for the next five-years.

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Pictured are just details of the battle scenes from the massive diorama now open at the Toy Soldier Factory in Cill Na Martra. Photos: John Delea

# LET BATTLE COMMENCE

## NAPOLEON AND WELLINGTON DO BATTLE IN KILNAMARTYRA 200-YEARS AFTER WATERLOO

**BILL BROWNE**

AFTER weeks of preparation the world's largest scaled battlefield recreation featuring more than 15,000 hand-cast figures has finally opened to the public.

Already hundreds of people have flocked to the visitor centre at the Prince August Toy Soldier Factory in Kilnamartyra to take in the 8 x 4 metre diorama of the Battle of Waterloo – arguably one of the most pivotal military engagements in European history.

The famous battle saw French army, under the command of the infamous Napoleon Bonaparte, defeated by the Anglo-Allied armies of the Seventh Coalition under the command of the Irish born Duke of Wellington, combined with the a Prussian army under the command of General Gebhard Von Blücher.

The three-day long battle proved to be the key engagement of the Waterloo Campaign with Napoleon's defeat ending his rule as French Emperor and marking the end of his Hundred Days return from exile on Elba.

The battlefield scene, which took German model enthusiast Andre Rudolph eight-years to create, normally resides in his home town of Cologne.

However, it is set to become a permanent fixture at the factory, ironically the place where the model soldiers were originally cast, for the next five-years.

Such is the scale of the display, Toy Factory MD Lars Edman and his staff had to convert a building

within the factory just to accommodate it.

"This was a real labour of love for Andre and we are honoured that he has allowed us to bring it to Cork," said Lars.

"The hand-painted figures were cast from our moulds, so it is fitting that they are coming back here. When you consider that the soldiers cost around €10 each to make, it gives you some idea of how much it cost to put the whole scene together," he added.

More than 300 people visited the exhibition on Sunday following its official opening.

"What I found really interesting was people's reaction to the diorama. You expect to get the 'wow-factor' reaction from model enthusiasts, but the general reaction was really positive. It was wonderful to literally see people's jaws dropping when they saw it," said Lars.

He said one of the first people through the door was a Belgian national who was born and raised a stones-throw from the actual Waterloo battlefield.

"He was impressed with the accuracy of the model. The man, who has visited the interpretive centre at Waterloo a number of times, said our exhibition was better than anything there," said Lars.

He said the intention was to develop the exhibition into an interpretive centre over the next couple of years complete with posters, military sound effects and looped screenings of documentaries and films about the Waterloo campaign.

"There is a huge connection between Ireland and Waterloo,



Lars Edmon owner of the Toy Soldier Factory and Mary Moynihan, Marketing and Sales manager put the finishing touches to the diorama.

given the fact that up to one-fifth of those who fought there on both sides were born in Ireland," said Lars.

"When fully completed the installation will give a full and accurate overview of the battle

and the influence it had in terms of shaping European history," he added.

For more information about the Toy Factory and the magnificent Battle of Waterloo diorama visit [www.princeaugust.ie](http://www.princeaugust.ie).