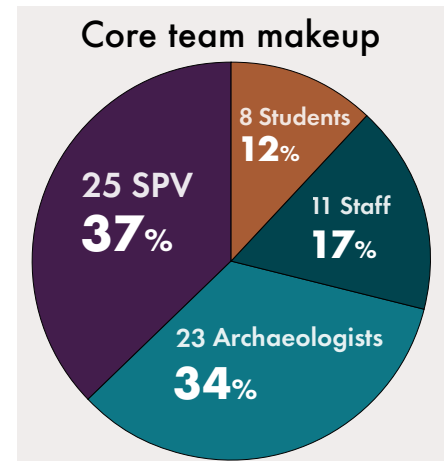


WATERLOO UNCOVERED 2017 ACTIVITY REPORT

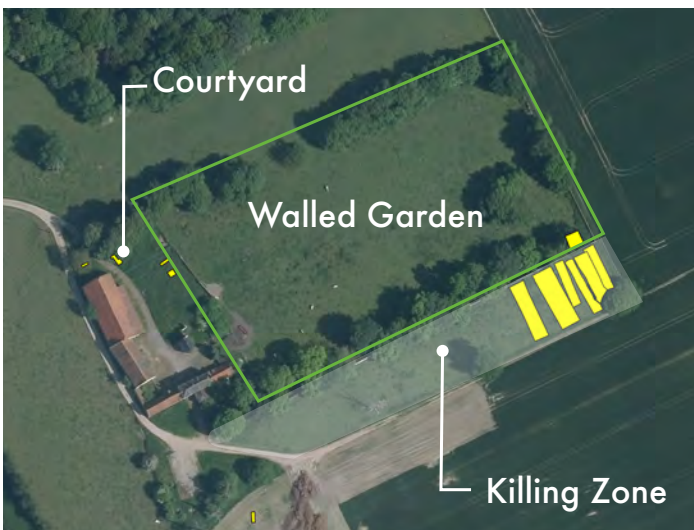
Summer Fieldwork (8th to 22nd July 2017)

In 2017 Waterloo Uncovered (WU) focused their work on two areas of the Waterloo Battlefield: Hougoumont Farm and Mont Saint Jean. Hougoumont Farm (where one of the pivotal actions of the battle took place in 1815) has been the site of WU excavations since 2015. Mont Saint Jean (the site for the British Field hospital during and after the battle) was a new area of excavation.

- 85 people took part in WU 2017. An increase on 62 and 65 participants in 2015 and 2016 respectively.
- Of the 85, 66 were “core team” (with the project for at least a week).
- 19 were visitors (visits lasted under three days) who had some clear impact on the project and its outcomes. They included historians and future partners, and, more often than not serving personnel and veterans (SPV). Journalists are not included as visitors.
- 35 SPV were on site: 25 as beneficiaries¹, 5 in the staff and archaeologists, and 5 visitors.
- Participants with 6 nationalities were involved, with the following breakdown: 59 British, 10 Dutch, 9 Belgian, 4 French, 2 American, and 1 Danish. For SPV the nationalities were: 24 British, 4 Dutch, 1 American, and 1 Danish. While 69% overall and 80% of SPV were from the UK, WU is planning more Dutch, Belgian, and French involvement for 2018.
- Waterloo Uncovered deliberately selects SPV with diversity in mind, to reflect the variety of issues faced by the military community. 77% of SPV had mental or physical injuries. Ages ranged from early 20s to late 70s. 29% of all participants were female and 71% male.



Key archaeological results



Map of the Hougoumont site, with the 2017 trenches.

THE KILLING ZONE continued to reveal more battle debris; including evidence of the role cannon played in the battle. Canister and cannon balls continue to be found at the East end of the **walled garden** (inside and out) suggesting French cannon were in play during the battle for the farm, probably more than are mentioned in British accounts.

- Further evidence of a metallised track running east-west along the Killing Zone was discovered. Cross-referencing finds with historical maps suggest the track is post battle.
- The walled garden continued to reveal widespread evidence of the battle and in particular a French incursion, which tends to counter British (though not French) written accounts.
- A project was also initiated to investigate the possible layout of the garden in 1815 (see below).

THE COURTYARD was the source of some of the most exciting discoveries:

- Three trenches extending the work done in 2016 provided more information about the layout of buildings in the courtyard. The foundations of what looks like three buildings in an L shape were excavated in the North Eastern corner, as well as a paved road near the North gate.
- In particular, the building closest to the North gate was shown to be much larger than anticipated – at least as big as the current ‘great barn’. Traces of heavy burning and roof tile inside the building could indicate a building collapsed by fire. This might mean that this building is in fact the great barn that eyewitness accounts describe as burning down during the battle.
- Inside the burnt area, near what is possibly a fallen brick pillar, a button was found from a Coldstream Guards officer’s tunic. The same

1: One of whom was a carer – counted as SPV in line with the support and funding criteria of many military charities.

area also contained silver thread, possibly from a uniform epaulette. Close by, in a similar context, were found French and British musket balls.

- The location of the building close to the North gate shows that historical maps of the courtyard's layout are less accurate than previously supposed, and demonstrates that the layout would have had a considerable influence on the fight between Allied defenders and French forces breaking through the gates.

MONT SAINT JEAN

A second site was opened this year at Mont Saint Jean, close to the location of the Allied field hospital. It revealed no traces of the battle, despite extensive trial trenching. Before the excavation, an electro-magnetic survey had been operated by the Department of Soil management (ORBit – Soil Spatial Inventory Techniques) of the University of Gent. Some linear features were detected but, unfortunately, they proved to be the result of modern activities from the late 20th century. Indeed, the excavation shows that the area has been damaged and backfilled not only by the construction of the Brussels ring road passing nearby, but also by infrastructures of the German army during the Second World War.

OTHER ARCHAEOLOGY RELATED PROJECTS

- **Visiting Historians:** 8 historians (3 British, 3 Belgian, 1 Dutch, 1 French) were invited to visit the excavation for one to three days. All had a chance to discuss their field of expertise with the archaeological directors, thereby helping WU gather information to aid interpretation of the archaeological evidence, and providing WU with possible questions to research in coming years. All the visiting historians were invited to write a piece for the Waterloo Uncovered 2017 annual report, to be published June 2018.
- **Historical insight** about a 1795 battle at Hougoumont between French royalist and revolutionary forces was also the source of a new challenge regarding finds interpretation.
- **Photographic project:** A project was started, with archaeologist and veteran participation, in which archive pictures of Hougoumont are recreated on the modern-day farm. In the future, this project aims to crowdsource archive pictures of the battlefield from the interested public.
- **Garden project:** One serving soldier (in the process of Medical Discharge) has, during and since the dig, been working with Waterloo Uncovered on a project to understand what the gardens at Hougoumont might have been like in 1815, using archaeological data, archive research, and existing period gardens. It is hoped that this will lead to discussion with Project Hougoumont to determine the best use for this research.



Photographic project: LCpl Keanie Trick holds an archive picture of the farm's South Gate in front of its modern-day reconstruction.

Veteran and Serving Personnel Support



MOOD IMPACT

The 2017 SPV rated WU on average at 4.86 (with 4 being 'Good' and 5 'Very Good'), and 90% enjoyed it more, or much more, than they expected.

They stated they learned a lot, about the battle, archaeology, new skills (archaeological or not), and/or themselves. When applicable, they also learned things that would be useful for future academic study or career pursuits.

100% of respondents found WU 'inspirational' and 'adventurous' and 20/22 respondents found it 'life changing'. All would recommend WU to others.

On average, military participants recorded a 12% positive mood change during the two weeks, as recorded using University of Birmingham's ICECAP-A measuring system).

A study of the impact on participants by a veteran and University of Leicester undergraduate student is ongoing, and will put together a full dataset of immediate and 3 months post trip impact. Preliminary results suggest that 76% of participants who completed the survey experienced a meaningful positive change in their mental wellbeing after participating in WU17.

7 SERVING PERSONNEL (5 x BRITISH ARMY, 2 x DUTCH ARMY)

- 2 UK soldiers are in the process of Medical Discharge. Both recorded a positive mood change during the two weeks (using the ICECAP-A measuring system).
- 3 UK soldiers and 2 Dutch soldiers will re-join regular training.
- 2 UK soldiers are pursuing archaeology as a hobby.

27 VETERANS (17 ARMY, 3 NAVY/RM, 3 RAF + 2 DUTCH, 1 AMERICAN, 1 DANISH)

- 9 veterans are (realistically) looking to pursue archaeology as a career, hobby, or academic studies.
- 3 veterans are in the process of writing academic dissertations, 2 of which are related to the Battle of Waterloo or Waterloo Uncovered (one undergraduate, one MA).
- One is pursuing an MA Heritage Studies
- One has re-enrolled in college for History and IT courses.
- One has completed a postgraduate degree in archaeology and found a job in object curation.
- 4 are carrying archaeology and/or metal detecting on as a hobby.

DUTCH INVOLVEMENT

Dutch involvement - through the Dutch military and the Veteraneninstituut - was a resounding success, with both institutions expected to be involved again in the 2018 summer excavation, and to provide support for their participants.

WELFARE AND SELECTION PROCESS

The welfare, support, and selection process used by WU continues to evolve and was again supported by Walking with the Wounded (WWTW), and the NHS, who provided staff to help selection, and on site welfare. WU continues to work with veteran charities like WWTW, Help for Heroes (H4H), Combat Stress, and the Royal British Legion, to identify SPV who could benefit from taking part in the excavations.

Selection process:

1. Applicants submitted an application form online or on paper and returned it to Waterloo Uncovered.
2. They then were interviewed by one Waterloo Uncovered staff member and one welfare officer to evaluate their capacity to participate to the excavation and the likely benefit to the participant.
3. All participants were contacted directly to let them know the result of the selection process.
 - a. Unsuccessful participants were directed towards other military and archaeology charities.
 - b. Successful participants got a one hour follow up call from WU staff to facilitate support on the dig, and administrative support beforehand.



The 2017 team on the last day of the excavation.

National Army Museum Trip

Participants (both military and non-military) were given the opportunity to join WU on a day trip to the National Army Museum on June 18th 2017 to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo by exploring the Waterloo gallery and Siborne model, and get a chance to meet some of the team ahead of the dig.

Mental Health First Aid

Participants (both military and non-military) were invited by WU to take part in a Mental Health First Aid (Armed Forces) training course before attending the dig. 5 took this two day course in June.

External evaluation

Participants and visitors to the dig from organisations such as WWTW, Headley Court, the NHS, and the Dutch Veteraneninstituut, have evaluated the dig very positively. For example:

- *"I have never experienced a project where people have benefited so much in such a short space of time. The feedback and positive comments I heard from participants were really positive and for some life changing."*
- *"Genuinely had a fantastic time, I am very impressed with the highly professional event you have managed to put together."*
- *"I feel like a new man, so relaxed and happy, I can't believe the change in me. This was the first time since leaving the Army in 2012 with mental health difficulties that I have been afforded the chance to be a beneficiary. I think we forget to care for the carers. Waterloo Uncovered has been a much-needed tonic which I recommend for anyone."*

Headley Court are now looking to identify appropriate patients for WU's 2019 Summer Excavation.

QUOTES FROM 2017 PARTICIPANTS

- *"I don't have a favourite part, it's all been good. I will have some nice memories to look back on, and I'm not the same man I was two weeks ago. People believe in me, so I must believe in myself."*
- *"Waterloo Uncovered's been an amazing experience, an absolutely brilliant opportunity. I highly recommend it to somebody who is wanting to experience something different, meet interesting people. Overall, really outstanding two weeks, and thrilled I had a chance to do it!"*
- *"I haven't felt so good since I left the army, and that was a long time ago. It was good to be working with a group of veterans."*
- *"I found an enthusiasm I thought lost. I found myself digging a hole just to find out what's under and I feel happy, that's because of Waterloo Uncovered. Fantastic people, and the staff was really nice. Thanks for giving me this chance."*
- *"I'd come back again. Even if I didn't dig I'd come and help, drive the minibus or something. It's not just the digging side, the archaeology; it's also the support as well. The thing here is there's no them and us, we're all together, we all support each other."*
- From one participant's case worker: *"He returned from your trip a very different man, he had gained his lost confidence and made friends – the trip has given him a new lease of energy to attempt his lifelong goals and archive things he has been putting off for a long time. If all of the people that went came back as fulfilled as he has it has really been worth all of your team's very hard work."*

Educational Outreach, Research & Communications

COMMUNICATIONS

Website:

The WU website (www.waterloouncovered.com) has been reworked and the new website is live since July 6, 2017.

Social media

Social media reach is steadily rising, particularly during the content-heavy summer excavation. Reach at time of writing: Facebook: 2407 likes, 2389 followers; Twitter: 758 followers; YouTube: 170 followers; Instagram (created this year): 71 followers.

Following the excavation, a support network / 'WU community' has developed, and has been partly curated on social media by WU through creation of a private Facebook group ('Waterloo Uncovered Veterans') for all previous dig participants (2015-2016-2017). This group contains 75% of previous attendees, with the remaining 25% mostly not on social media, and contacted by email instead. The group is now an active community of people who were on the digs, with new posts almost daily. WU is now using it as a more informal communications tool to stay in touch and share information about WU events and projects.

This network:

- Is keeping people informed about archaeology opportunities and helping them continue archaeology as a hobby, education or vocation.
- Is keeping the WU community informed of WU activities and opportunities to take part.
- Is a part of reducing social isolation – encouraging participants to stay in touch, online or in real life.



A private Facebook group is helping participants stay in touch.

Media

Around the summer excavation, media interest in print, TV, radio, and online news, was generated in the UK (3 major news outlets), the Netherlands (8 outlets), and Belgium (4 outlets). There has been no French press involvement so far – but this could change depending

on French involvement in the coming years.

Outside of the summer excavation, Waterloo Uncovered was mentioned on BBC Radio 4 when author K J Whittaker was invited to discuss her new book *False Lights* on September 8th 2017.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

While on site, Waterloo Uncovered gave **tours of the site** and its archaeology to a group from the 1815 Battlefield Guides and to The Waterloo Committee.

WU developed a **walking tour of Hougoumont farm** (a small leaflet aimed at visitors to the farm) and a modular 'touring exhibition' of posters and finds display, that can be used for outreach events. Both were used at Hougoumont during the H4H Big Battlefield Bike Ride. The display was also used at Chalke Valley History Festival, and The Salisbury Museum Festival of Archaeology.

WU has taken part in, or organised, **12 outreach events** in the UK, Netherlands, and Belgium. Among those:

- An Academic Conference in April 2017, with an audience of 70, varied nationalities and areas of expertise came to Waterloo to discuss and exchange ideas with WU about the charity's work to date and future plans that could be done through collaborations.
- Reading to Remember, both a fundraiser and remembrance event with sponsored readings of first-hand accounts of the battle of Waterloo read in English, Dutch & French over 11 hours on July 12. Readings were recorded and made available to the public online². The event raised over £6,000.

Continued **Dutch involvement** from University College Roosevelt (UCR) has once more been successful and provided students for the summer excavation including the communications team.

Following the excavation, UCR students and Dutch veterans have remained in contact and are planning outreach work for the spring period, when many schools have project weeks.



During Reading to Remember, dig participants took turns over 11 hours to read accounts of the battle in the chapel at Hougoumont.

WIDER RESEARCH AND FUTURE PUBLICATIONS

- A **Biannual Report** for 2015-2016 is in draft and will be published by December 2017. The plan for an annual 2017 report has been laid out and we aim to publish by June 2018.
- **Anglia Ruskin University** have visited the 2017 dig as a first step towards an academic study of the impact of WU on veterans on the dig.
- **University College Roosevelt** conducted a successful round of focus groups and individual interviews with SPV and non-military participants in 2017. This demonstrated that there is a significant positive impact on civilian participants in terms of an improvement in their attitude towards veterans. Further studies to measure this impact are planned for 2018.
- **French involvement** into the summer excavation, through visits from one historian and two metal detectorists (who are also both part of the French military), was also successful, and an aspect of the project that should be built on in coming years. French involvement may also rise from scientific collaboration with the Institut Laue-Langevin whose analytic techniques can be applied to certain finds (particularly metallic objects) from Waterloo Uncovered.

Find out More

www.waterloouncovered.com

 • www.facebook.com/waterloouncovered

 • <http://twitter.com/DigWaterloo>

 • www.youtube.com/waterloouncovered

 • www.instagram.com/waterloo_uncovered

2: You can listen to the readings and find the transcripts on our website: www.waterloouncovered.com/readings-archive/ or our YouTube playlist: <http://bit.ly/2kD05xE>