



# ***The A.C.W.S. NEWSLETTER***

## **2025 1st Edition**

ACWS Ltd - PO Box 270 - Washington - Tyne & Wear - NE37 9BX  
[www.acws.co.uk](http://www.acws.co.uk)



**John Rushworth Memorial Trophy  
Winning Photograph 2025  
Stewart Hayllar**

ACWS is a Member of

**N·A·Re·S**

**Issue 215**

**A.C.W.S. CONTACTS - Directors & Officers of the Society**



**Chairman &  
Federal  
Commander**  
Darren Paul



**Secretary**  
Melissa Huntley



**Treasurer**  
Ian Morris



**Health & Safety**  
Dave McDade



**Membership**  
Claire Morris



**Webmaster**  
Mike Bussey



**Events**  
Catherine  
Conyard



**Communications**  
Joseph Reed



**Confederate  
Commander**  
Glenn Gibson



**Federal  
Representative**  
Paul Kennelly

**Newsletter  
Contact Details**  
[editor@acws.co.uk](mailto:editor@acws.co.uk)

# Director's Reports

## **Chairman's Report**

Well hello,  
So we've done the Christmas holiday,  
AGAIN... YES, I'm a Grinch! Got all the  
medals for it too.  
"MAX!, Fetch me my greatcoat..."  
OK enough of that, the new season is on  
the way and you, my fellow comrades have  
work to do, here's a little starting checklist.

- Does my uniform still fit? (if not blame Xmas)
- Sort your boots out.
- Check your tents for repairs & pegs.
- Check Muskets & Rifles, pick it up, stroke it, stick your finger in the barrel, don't get it stuck!, Look at your hands, not oil?, Strip it, clean it and get it in tip top condition and double check your safety works correctly!
- Get your membership forms in before the season
- Have you got all your buttons? (Civil War Sutler is a fantastic supplier)
- Sew up those rips & tears (especially those down below, it's not ventilation)

It's always sad to have any news regarding the passing of family, friends and members. Two legends, Bob Smith and Roger "Hooker" Blackburn, who have gone to the campfire in the sky. Bob, don't think for one moment that you're off duty, mate, keep them in line up there Provost! I do not recall ever meeting Roger, my loss, a great guy I'm told. Thinking about this and not knowing these people gives me an idea, What better way to honour our past and present members than to read stories about them within YOUR newsletter. Joe, what do you say to a "Legend's Page". I personally would love to hear the stories of members who started in this hobby that we all know and love. If you, the members, could put together a few lines, the legend's name, date of service and their regiment/unit within the ACWS, with a story of your most memorable moment with them, then we can all remember and honour them together. A massive thank you from all of the board who have been helping so far with the fundraising for our new Society van, it's vital to tow the artillery to events and also carry all the extra bits and pieces that make our

events go so smoothly. What we are aiming for is a van that we can all be proud of as it passes by on the roads. We intend to have a magnetic poster on either side which will display to all passers by, who we are and of course why they're stuck behind a load of cannons. So please, please lean in and keep helping with any fundraising activities that may pop up for this worthwhile item needed.

Many events are filling up our calendar for this year (Thank you Catherine), very soon myself and my fellow Major in Gray/Butternut will be planning your weekends and skirmishes beforehand and already have a few great ideas up our frock coat sleeves.



See you all soon,  
Daz,  
Chairman, ACWS

## **Event's Director's Report**

Hi Everyone,

I hope you all are looking forward to starting the season at No Man's Land Multi Period Event on 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> April. It will be an excellent opportunity to prepare for the season ahead and blow the cobwebs away.

There are four Balloon Events this year, three of which involve artillery and pyrotechnics. These are excellent events for raising our profile to literally thousands of people and the organiser does a great job with advertising. Thank you all so much for your efforts at these events, particularly with helping everyone unload – I understand it can be frustrating as the event starts on a Friday. These events however, are absolutely crucial in our attempts to raise funds for our Society van.

The organiser has been so impressed by what we offer, that he is looking to organise his first purely historical multi-period event this year. It will hopefully be at Thoresby Park on September 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>.

It will involve ourselves, the Napoleonic Association, Vikings, Knights of Nottingham and possibly the English Civil War. This is such an exciting potential event and I really hope it will be a success and develop in future years. I will let everyone know once it is confirmed.

As always, if you ever have any questions or potential sites for Events, please get in touch and I will make contact. I am still trying to find us something for May and will keep everyone updated.

Best Wishes

Catherine

Events, ACWS



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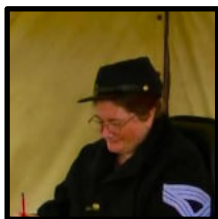
### **Secretary's Report**

As secretary, I sincerely hope to attempt in filling Linda footsteps and give everything to ACWS.

I have been busy working with Linda learning the ropes, and working hard with with every one else and look forward to a great 2025 season.

Melissa,

Secretary, ACWS



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### **Confederate Commander's Report**

Welcome all to a new year and season and I'm sure you had a great Christmas & New Year.

I hope you have all repaired your kit, licenses up to date and raring to go to what looks like another packed season. Also, can everyone ensure that they join the society as soon as it is practicable as this helps the early running of the Society until sponsorship money starts to come in.

If I may go back to my AGM statement about stepping down and training a replacement that still is my intention and will be happy to discuss this with anyone interested.

My personal & working life may take a major (excuse the pun) directional change with a chance of a potential promotion at work and my increased involvement with Armed Forces Veteran groups around where I live but will be more certain around March.

For this year many ideas were put forward at the AGM, some new, some been tried, but I would like to explore these again and see if a slight new perspective can make these happen, but everyone has to be on board to help.

Over the years we have been very successful in engaging with the public and I feel that if we expand this it can only benefit the Confederate army in gaining new members to our ranks. Let's all keep up the good work on this side of the weekend.

One thing that I have noticed is the dedication to the flag raising & lowering on the camp and how impressive it looks. In the past I have asked for volunteers from regiments or individual to carry this out.

What I would like to try this year is a standard colour guard made up of one person from each of the regiments who will be responsible for carrying out this duty on weekends. Any volunteers?

Well, not really much else to say until the season starts apart from, that I am looking forward to seeing you all again on camp, a few drinks around the fire and maybe some cheese & crackers. Let's whip those Yankee blue-bellies.

Yours sincerely

Major Glenn Gibson

Commanding Officer

ACWS



# **Minutes of the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The American Civil War Society Ltd. Held virtually on Zoom on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

## **ACWS BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr Darren Paul	Chairperson	<b>DP</b>
Mrs Linda Reed	Secretary	<b>LR</b>
Mr Ian Morris	Treasurer	<b>IM</b>
Mr Mike Bussey	Webmaster	<b>MB</b>
Miss Claire Morris	Membership	<b>CM</b>
Ms Catherine Conyard	Events	<b>CC</b>
Mr Frank Mair	Health and Safety	<b>FM</b>
Mr Joseph Reed	Communications	<b>JR</b>
Mr Glenn Gibson	Confederate Commander	<b>GG</b>
Mr Paul Kennelly	Federal Representative	<b>PK</b>

**The meeting commenced at 13:11**

## **1. AN EXPLANATION OF VOTING VIA ZOOM**

**MB** explains how the voting will run during the meeting and reminds everyone not to vote if they have already done so via post or email. The total number of votes may vary as people may leave and return during the meeting.

## **2. APOLOGIES**

Mr Graham Beattie, Mrs Angela Cross, Mrs Lesley Bussey, Mrs Helen Gibson, Miss Cerys Reed, Mrs Lindsey Potts, Mr Charlie Potts & Mr Wesley Crockford.

## **3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE 2023 AGM**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 18, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 18. **Total Votes = 42**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 2, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 2**

The motion was passed and the Company Secretary **LR** signed the minutes.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE DIRECTORS FOR THE 2023 SEASON AS PUBLISHED IN THE AGM PAPERS:-**

### **4.1 SECRETARY – MRS LINDA REED**

**LR** states she has nothing to add to her report and no questions were asked by anyone present.

#### **4.2 WEBMASTER – MR MIKE BUSSEY**

**MB** states he has nothing to add to his report. Micheal Crump asks for an update on the order of percussion caps. **MB** says the order for 10 thousand caps is still outstanding and confirms the supplier says it will be February 2025, at the earliest, before the order is fulfilled. He adds that there are no guarantees the supplier will be able to meet the order as there are over 1 million caps on order across all Societies. However, ACWS is in the top 4 orders with our Supplier. ACWS has enough in stock for the first half of the season, but **MB** recommends that members buy any caps they find for sale.

#### **4.3 EVENTS – MS CATHERINE CONYARD**

**CC** states she has nothing to add to her report and no questions were asked by anyone present.

#### **4.4 TREASURER – MR IAN MORRIS**

**IM** says the accounts have been audited. He adds that the Society has received a tax bill of £595 which must be paid by June 2025. **DP** asks if the tax liability will increase if the Society saves money to purchase a new van? **IM** confirms that the accountant says the vehicle should be purchased as soon as funds are available as depreciation can be claimed in the year its purchased (rather than spread across multiple years as it used to be).

#### **4.5 MEMBERSHIP – MISS CLAIRE MORRIS**

**CM** states she has nothing to add to her report. **MB** adds that the membership forms for 2025 are available on the ACWS website.

#### **4.6 CONFEDERATE COMMANDER – MR GLENN GIBSON**

**GG** states he has nothing to add to his report other than he has recently collected items belonging to the late John Dale and Denis Jarwick. He will sell these items next year to raise funds for the ACWS. No questions were asked by anyone present.

#### **4.7 FEDERAL COMMANDER - MR DARREN PAUL**

**DP** states he has nothing to add to his report and no questions asked by anyone present.

#### **4.8 COMMUNICATIONS – MR JOSEPH REED**

**JR** states he has nothing to add to his report. William Jennings asks if the articles he sent for the newsletter have been received? **JR** says they have, and they will be included in a newsletter in due course.

#### **4.9 HEALTH AND SAFETY – DR FRANK MAIR**

**FM** states he has nothing to add to his report and no questions were asked by anyone present.

#### **4.10 CHAIRPERSON – MR DARREN PAUL**

**DP** states he has nothing to add to his report and no questions were asked by anyone present.

### **Motion to approve the ACWS Board of Directors reports:-**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 20, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 18. **Total Votes = 44**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

The motion passed unanimously.

### **5. TO RECEIVE THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS AS PUBLISHED IN THE AGM PAPERS**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 19, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 17. **Total Votes = 42**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 1. **Total Votes = 1**

The motion passed by a majority vote.

### **6. TO CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT OF SPIRE ACCOUNTANTS (OSWALDTWISTLE) AS THE AUDITORS OF THE COMPANY AND AUTHORISE THE DIRECTORS TO SETTLE THEIR REMUNIATION**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 17, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 17. **Total Votes = 40**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 1, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 1. **Total Votes = 2**

The motion passed by a majority vote.

### **7. MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION FEE FOR 2025 SEASON**

For 2025, the Board of Directors recommend that the membership and registration fees remain on the same level but reserve the right to adjust the registration fee as per ACWS Bye-Law B.9.

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 19, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 15. **Total Votes = 40**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 1. **Total Votes = 1**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 2. **Total Votes = 2**

The motion passed by a majority vote.

### **8. ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The following are standing unopposed for the following positions:-

#### **8a CHAIRPERSON - to re-elect Mr Darren Paul**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 19, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 18. **Total Votes = 43**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**Mr Darren Paul is duly re-elected as Chairperson.**

#### **8b TREASURER - to re-elect Mr Ian Morris**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 19, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 18. **Total Votes = 43**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**Mr Ian Morris is duly re-elected as Treasurer.**

### **8c MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY - to re-elect Miss Claire Morris**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 19, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 18. **Total Votes = 43**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**Miss Claire Morris** is duly re-elected as Membership Secretary.

### **8d WEBMASTER - to re-elect Mr Mike Bussey**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 19, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 18. **Total Votes = 43**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**Mr Mike Bussey** is duly re-elected as Webmaster.

### **8e COMMUNICATIONS - to re-elect Mr Joseph Reed**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 18, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 18. **Total Votes = 42**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 1, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 1**

**Mr Joseph Reed** is duly re-elected as Communications Director

### **8f EVENTS - to re-elect Ms Catherine Conyard**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 19, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 18. **Total Votes = 43**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**Mrs Catherine Conyard** is duly re-elected as Events Director.

### **8g HEALTH AND SAFETY - to re-elect Dr Frank Mair**

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 16, Postal Votes = 3, E-proxy Votes = 11. **Total Votes = 30**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 3, Postal Votes = 3, E-proxy Votes = 4. **Total Votes = 10**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 3. **Total Votes = 3**

**Dr Frank Mair** is duly re-elected as Health and Safety Director.

## **9. ELECTION OF MRS MELISSA HUNTLEY TO THE POSITION OF SECRETARY**

To elect Melissa Huntley. No other applications received.

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 14, Postal Votes = 6, E-proxy Votes = 15. **Total Votes = 35**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 3, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 3. **Total Votes = 6**

**Mrs Melissa Huntley** is duly elected as Secretary.

## **10. ELECTION OF MR DARREN PAUL TO THE POSITION OF FEDERAL ARMY COMMANDER AND AS A DIRECTOR**

Only members of the Federal Army permitted to vote.

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 13, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 8. **Total Votes = 21**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 1, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 1.**

**Mr Darren Paul** is duly re-elected as Federal Army Commander.



### **11. ELECTION OF MR PAUL KENNELLY TO THE POSITION OF FEDERAL ARMY REPRESENTATIVE AND AS A DIRECTOR**

Only Federal Army members permitted to vote. **MB** explains that the Board feels a representative is necessary to support **DP** as he has two roles, Chairperson and Federal Army Commander. **PK** will represent the interests of the members of the Federal Army and be available for members to raise issues and concerns.

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 7, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 8. **Total Votes = 15**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 2, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 2**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 2, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 2.**

**Mr Paul Kennelly** is duly elected as Federal Army Representative.

### **12. ELECTION OF MR GLENN GIBSON TO THE POSITION OF CONFEDERATE ARMY COMMANDER AND AS A DIRECTOR**

Only Confederate Army members permitted to vote.

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 4, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 9. **Total Votes = 17**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 1, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 1**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 0**

**Mr Glenn Gibson** is duly re-elected as Confederate Army Commander.

### **13. ELECTION OF MRS LINDA REED AS A NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**LR** says this role will allow her to support the incoming Secretary and to continue to share her knowledge and experience with the Board, but she will not have any voting rights.

**FOR:** - Zoom Votes = 17, Postal Votes = 5, E-proxy Votes = 17. **Total Votes = 39**

**AGAINST:** - Zoom Votes = 0, Postal Votes = 1, E-proxy Votes = 1. **Total Votes = 2**

**ABSTAIN:** - Zoom Votes = 1, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 0. **Total Votes = 1**

**Mrs Linda Reed** is duly elected as a Non-Executive Director.

### **14. EVENTS UPDATE**

**CC** gives details of the **confirmed** events for 2024:-

26/27 April Avoncroft Museum Living History Fair

20/21 June Worcester Balloon Festival

04/05 July Swindon Balloon Festival (Soskan will be invited to this event)

18/19 July Doncaster Balloon Festival

15/16/17 Aug Northampton Balloon Festival

**CC** adds that she is trying to arrange a pre-season event in April 2024 and was hopeful this would be at Moira Furnace. However, this is unlikely as they have building work underway until Easter. **CC** says she will continue to look for an alternative location. There is no confirmed news about the St Georges Day event in Morley as the event organiser has moved on. **CC** says she will continue her attempts to contact the new organiser. **CC** acknowledges that the balloon festivals are not popular (although the number of attendees remains positive) but reminds members that the Society is well paid for these events and it's these that are keeping the Society going.

There is a possible event at Fort Paull 07/08 June and **CC** continues to look for opportunities for an event over the August Bank Holiday. There is also a possibility of a multi-period event in Doncaster, but this is more likely to be in 2026. **CC** assures members that she continues to send emails to all contacts suggested by members but very few respond, and many locations have funding shortages which are prohibiting them from paying for events. **MB** adds that members will be kept informed via the Society website and Facebook page. **CC** adds that she is working closely with Soskan and hopes this will help to secure future events.

## **15. OPEN FORUM**

**JR** thanks everyone who contributed to the photography competition and reports that Stewart Hayllar won first prize. He adds that he will upload the winning photograph to the Society Facebook page and include the details of those in second and third place. **LR** adds that she will get the trophy engraved and presented to Stewart at the start of next season.

**William Jennings** raises a point on behalf of Matthew Jennings (who is unable to attend the AGM). He firstly passes on their appreciation to the Board for their hard work behind the scenes. Matthew has concerns about the low recruitment levels into the Society and asks if there is a recruitment strategy? He feels that recruitment is passive and reliant on recruiting at events. He feels there should be a focus on young people and a targeted approach via social media (learning from the Vikings who are very successful in recruiting).

**DP** responds that all members are encouraged to recruit and adds that **CM** does use a variety of approaches, including social media. **CM** confirms that young people are targeted and marketing material including posters etc. have been sent to universities, colleges and student unions alongside the use of social media. This has been expensive and time consuming and it hasn't been successful. **CM** adds that the American civil war period is not popular and has had very little positive media presence in recent times, unlike the Viking era. The negative connotations make our reenactments less popular and talking to people who come to events has become the best route to securing new members.

**Melissa Huntley (MH)** says her daughter, Bella, is working with photos and videos from reenactments and asks permission to upload these to TikTok as a way of reaching younger people. **Caz Davies** reports that TikTok will not allow anything that includes weapons to be shared. **MH** says the focus could be on the musicians and adds that she is in the process of getting an engraving machine which will allow Bella to produce bookmarks, containing the details of ACWS, which could be used to market the Society. **LR** suggests that **MH** adds an item to the agenda for the next Board meeting so these ideas can be discussed.

**Caz Davies** suggests that a poster is made available to members which they can print off and use for local advertising. **CM** confirms there is a poster which can be shared with members. **Joel Beaumont** suggests a banner for the side of the van. **CM** replies, a magnetic banner could be supplied so it can be removed when not required. **LR** adds that leaflets and membership forms are always available at events and **CM** adds that there is a QR code available that links through to the ACWS Facebook page.

**Philip Golder** suggests that the restriction on only being able to be a guest on one occasion may need to be lifted. Allowing potential recruits to guest at a couple of events would allow them to have different experiences and this may encourage them to join. **MB** makes the point that this would have to be limited to new members and not members with lapsed membership. **CM** reminds everyone of the need to be bi-partisan and when people ask about membership, they should be directed to her so they can be made aware of the options and matched with the unit that best suits them.

**William Jennings** raises a second point on behalf of Matthew Jennings. Matthew reports that he has witnessed an inconsistency in living history displays on camp (specifically the Confederate Army camp). He praises the musicians, those with display stands and those proactively interacting with the public but feels many others are content to sit by their tents and not interact. He asks if Board members could brief members and encourage more interaction and consider introducing more activities, for example, bayonet drill. **DP** makes the point that not everyone is comfortable in talking to strangers and **GG** adds some people are comfortable just sitting and providing a 'photo opportunity'.

There was a lengthy discussion with agreement that a variety of activities are needed on camp and care is needed to avoid duplicating these across the Federal and Confederate Camps. There was recognition that not everyone is a historian and join the Society for other reasons, some members are nervous about being asked questions they can't answer or find difficult i.e. about slavery, and not everyone who visits the camps want to be approached. **Polly Jones** mentions some activities for camp next season, for example, cooking on the campfire with recipes being available to hand out and a sewing circle.

**CM** asks about the battle scenarios and how these can be developed to ensure the public feel engaged and get the best view of the battle? **DP** reports he has discussed battle scenarios with **GG**, but options are always influenced by the location and the number of members attending. **CM** suggests that approaches used successfully in the past made need to be considered. For example, an attack during a baseball game or possibly not having a plan at all and just reacting to events. She also asks **DP** and **GG** to consider consulting members for suggestions.

**Michael Crump** asks whether there will be any celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society. **LR** confirms that she is working on options with **CC**, and they will share details as soon as they are able. She adds the celebration will be open to past members and makes the point this could be a great opportunity to encourage past members to rejoin ACWS. **CM** says that a filming opportunity also attracts past members and **CC** and **LR** say they will work together to see if there are any opportunities available.

**MB** alerts members to a change in the legal status of specific types of top venting blank firing firearms manufactured in Turkey. Testing has established that models RETAY, EKOL, CEONIC and BLOW are readily convertible to live firers and are therefore prohibited under section 5(1) (aba) of the Firearms Act 1968. **MB** has been made aware that it is the intention of the National Police Chiefs Council to hold an amnesty during February 2025 during which owners will be able to hand these items into police stations. Anybody in possession of one of these firearms who wishes to dispose of the item before the amnesty should contact their local police force to discuss safe disposal. Discussions are also underway about a similar amnesty in Scotland. **JR** will alert members not at the AGM via the newsletter.

## **16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB)**

**IM** says the Society might have to change banks as our current bank are introducing a monthly fee as well as fees for non-electronic transactions. He will approach NatWest as he believes they still have Treasurers accounts without fees.

**Michael Crump** asks about the command structure and whether the reduced number of members should prompt a review to ensure there are not too many Officers? **GG** confirms this has been considered by the Board and agreement reached that it remains necessary for each Army to have a Major. He adds that this will be kept under review and, both **GG** and **DP**, accept they may need to portray a lower rank at some events. This is something they will do willingly when required. **DP** agrees and adds that having an Officer in a Major's uniform is another point of interest for the public and it also helps new members to know who to approach if they need help or advice.

**Michael Crump** says he feels that voting on camp for the Confederate of the Year disadvantages members who are not there. **LR** says there have been discussions about having an electric vote in future to enable everyone to vote (including for the Federal Soldier of the Year).

**DP** thanks **LR** on behalf of the Board for her hard work over the years as the Secretary. **CM** thanks **Ben St John** for driving the Society van and everyone who helps behind the scenes.

**DP** thanks everyone for attending and wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

**The meeting ended at 16.27.**

## **DATE OF FUTURE AGM**

Saturday 6 December 2025. The meeting will commence at 13:00 via Zoom.

# **NOTICE**

## **Change to Board of Directors**

The American Civil War Society Ltd hereby advises that by correspondence, Dr Francis Stephen Mair resigned from his position as Health and Safety Director with the company with effect from 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025, the Board of Directors appointed Mr Dave McDade into the position as “Health and Safety Officer”, an officer of the society until the next AGM where he can stand for election if he so wishes.

We would also hereby further advise that Mr Glenn Gibson has resigned as a Director of the company with effect from 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 due to personal reasons, but will remain as Confederate C.O. and representative and as an officer of the society.

Linda Reed (Director)

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

28 February 2025

**TOP VENTING BLANK FIRING FIREARMS – from the Home Office**

I am writing to advise you about the legal status of specific types of Top Venting Blank Firing Firearms manufactured in Türkiye, namely RETAY, EKOL, CEONIC and BLOW pistols.

By virtue of section 1 of the Firearms Act 1982, an imitation firearm is legal to purchase and possess without a firearms certificate in this country if it is not 'readily convertible' to a firearm. Section 1(6) of the 1982 Act defines what is meant by 'readily convertible' in this context. It means any imitation firearm which can be converted to a firearm without any special skills or specialist equipment or tools. In its Annual Strategic Threat Assessment 2024, the National Crime Agency noted that criminals are converting blank-firing weapons, such as Top Venting Blank Firing Firearms to fire live or modified ammunition, and this has been assessed as one of the most significant firearms threats.

The National Crime Agency recently commissioned an accredited expert to undertake forensic examination in Durham Firearms Classification and Examination Laboratory of the different examples of Turkish manufactured Top Venting Blank Firing Firearms to assess their convertibility into live-firing weapons. This testing has established that models RETAY, EKOL, CEONIC and BLOW are 'readily convertible' within the meaning of section 1 of the Firearms Act 1982, which means that they fall within the controls set out in the Firearms Act 1968. As the models tested fall within the specifications of a handgun they are, therefore prohibited under section 5(1) (aba) of the Firearms Act 1968. Their possession, purchase or acquisition is unlawful in the absence of specific authorisation of the Secretary of State.

The Home Office is working with the National Police Chiefs Council and the National Crime Agency to ensure that all interested parties are aware that these models of Top Venting Blank Firing Firearms are prohibited under the Firearms Act 1968 and that their possession, purchase or acquisition is unlawful. I hope that you will be able to advise your members of this and any other person or organisation you consider may be affected or have an interest.

The Government wishes to ensure that these weapons are removed from circulation and that current owners have the opportunity to dispose of them safely. It is the intention of the National Police Chiefs Council to hold an amnesty during which owners will be able to hand these items into police stations.

The amnesty will run for four weeks from 3 February 2025 across all police forces in England and Wales. There will be further details about the amnesty scheme issued nearer the time. It is, however, open to anybody who is in possession of one of these firearms who wishes to dispose of the item before the amnesty begins to contact their local police force to discuss safe disposal. Discussions are also underway about a similar amnesty in Scotland.

No compensation will be paid by the Government in respect of firearms that are handed over in the amnesty (or prior to the amnesty) on the basis that they have been found to be illegal and contrary to current legislation.

It is the responsibility of the firearm owner to ensure they are complying with the law.

The background of the advertisement is a collage of historical items. At the top, there's a close-up of a rifle's barrel and trigger. Below that, a yellow book titled 'HARRERS WEEKLY' is visible. In the center, a white ceramic mug sits on a surface. To the right, a small wooden box is labeled 'NEW MODE'. The bottom right corner shows a wooden gavel and a small wooden block. The entire scene is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent circular graphic containing the text.

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# John Rushworth Memorial Trophy

## Photography Competition 2025

**Thank you for your submissions for the 2024 season.**

**The competition will be running again this year and we can't wait to see what fabulous photos are taken this year.**



**2nd**

**Avoncroft 2024  
Abigail Hooper  
(118<sup>th</sup> PA)**

**1st**

**Avoncroft 2024  
Stewart Hayllar  
(69<sup>th</sup> NY)**



**3rd**

**Avoncroft 2024  
Matthew Jennings  
(2<sup>nd</sup> SC)**



# **Notices from the Board**

Two Safeguarding Officers have been appointed by the board, Joseph Reed and Melissa Huntley. These appointees will remain approachable by any and all members for any issues regarding Safeguarding with Children, Adults or vulnerable individuals within the Society.

On the Board of Directors there are Directors that are Representatives of both the Union and Confederate armies, these are always available to listen to any issues that members of either side have and to assist however they can and if required will raise the issue with the rest of the Board of Directors.

Regiments are able to host their own fundraisers to raise money for various items to aid in the Regiment's authenticity, impression or general well being.

These fundraisers can include but are not limited to, general donations, raffles, "golden tickets" and football cards. All requests to host a fundraiser at any event **MUST** be passed through the Secretary.

Any questions regarding Regimental Fundraisers can be directed to either Army Commander or the Secretary for clarification.

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## **From the Medical Team**

Members please remember to bring personal first aid kits with you to events, just as you would take on holiday. Along with any medication you may need for any existing condition you may have.

You must let the medical team know of any existing conditions or allergies that you think may affect you. However, the medics are not allowed to give out any medication under any circumstances this includes but is not limited to pain killers and anti-allergen medications.

Please also remember to stay hydrated at all times and notify any medic if you're suffering with any symptoms of dehydration.

Also anyone in the Society that has any medical qualifications, please feel free to contact our Chief Medical Officer (Mr Ian Morris) or Mr Stewart Hayllar and let either of them know, help is always appreciated.

If an ambulance is needed or has already been called for an injury or emergency please let one of the medical team know, as this will allow us to take observations and do a full handover with the NHS paramedics.

Don't forget, the medical tent is always occupied by a society medic and is easily identified by a yellow flag with a green "H" (Hospital).

If you wish to know who your army medics are at any event, feel free to ask your army commanders.

So let's all be careful out there and look after each other.

## Alligators and Turtles shot during the American Civil War

Here is a previous article I wrote about alligators and the Civil War. On 4<sup>th</sup> September 2016, a group of Mississippi hunters finally shot and killed an alligator weighing a monstrous 910 pounds (413 kilograms). However, on inspecting the animal, they discovered it had numerous injuries caused by musket balls dating back from the American Civil War. A total of 9 spherical Enfield musket balls were later found in both his tail and hind legs. On further specialist forensic examination, tests and analysis, the musket balls were confirmed to have been fired at the alligator in the early 1860's and were also confirmed to have been fired by Enfield Pattern 1853 rifle-muskets supplied to the Confederacy by the United Kingdom. As such, it has been widely suggested that the alligator was used as a "Yankee" target for shooting practice by Confederate troops during the early part of the American Civil War. The huge animal also bore 5 other bullet wounds from 3 different calibre hunting weapons as well as many dents and scars. However, it did not survive the 6 .50-calibre bullets fired at him by the group of amateur hunters from Jackson, Mississippi who finally managed to take him down. This incredible animal brings a whole new perspective to the alligators endemic to the south eastern United States. These alligators have been well known to survive over 50 years and were thought capable of living up to 80 years.

However, this unique specimen was estimated to have been as old as 185 years at the time of his death. Other reptiles such as turtles are known to have life spans of over 150 years but this is the first alligator of such an age that has ever been discovered. It is also one of the largest ever recorded in the United States.

Recently more evidence has revealed that there's another reptile that has been reported to actually contain Indian artifacts and bullets from the American Civil War. This equally intimidating creature is the Alligator Snapping Turtle. Al Redmond, a giant turtle trapper, used to catch such giant turtles for the soup making companies he was working for. On occasions, he would catch particularly larger and much older turtles off the nearby Flint River where he worked. Whilst slaughtering and processing such animals, he frequently found Indian artifacts stuck deep and embedded in the hide including arrow heads and spear points. These were usually found in the tenderloin in the back where there would be a large growth over the impact site. Sometimes they were totally covered up and sometimes just sticking out. However, what astonished him most, was that he occasionally found American Civil War bullets including both minie balls but more surprisingly 50 caliber Sharps bullets. As a result, he suddenly began realising how old some of the turtles were and decided to stop killing them. He has now dedicated his life and



## EVENTS CALENDAR 2025

### Page One

#### April 12-13 NO MAN'S LAND, N WALES

Full Society Event at No Man's Land Event, Bodrhyddan Hall,  
Dyserth Rd, Rhuddlan, Rhyl **LL18 5SB**

Living History, Infantry Drill & Maybe a firing display on  
**SATURDAY & SUNDAY.**

Further Details to Follow

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#### April 26 - 27 AVONCROFT, WORCS

Living History Marketing event at International Living History Fair,  
Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, Stoke Heath,  
Bromsgrove **B60 4JR.**

Further Details to Follow

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#### JUNE 07 - 08 FORT PAULL BATTERY, HULL

Full Society Event at Fort Paull Battery Heritage Site, Battery  
Road, Hull, **HU12 8FP.**

Further Details to Follow

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#### June 20 - 21 WORCESTER BALLOON FESTIVAL

Full Society Event Worcester Racecourse

Infantry, Artillery & Pyrotechnics

Skirmish/displays on FRIDAY and SATURDAY.

Worcester Racecourse, Grand Stand Road, Worcester **WR1 3EJ.**

Further Details to Follow.



## EVENTS CALENDAR 2025 Page Two

### July 4 - 5 SWINDON BALLOON FESTIVAL

Full Society Event in Swindon, Wiltshire.

Infantry and Living History only. Skirmish/displays on FRIDAY & SATURDAY.

Further Details to Follow.

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### July 18 - 19 DONCASTER BALLOON FESTIVAL

Full Society Event at Town Field, Thorne Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN1 2JS.

Pyrotechnics, Artillery, Infantry and Living History.  
Skirmish/displays on FRIDAY and SATURDAY.

Further details to follow

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### August 15 - 17 NORTHANTS. BALLOON FESTIVAL

Full Society Event at Northampton Balloon Festival, Northampton Racecourse, Kettering Road, Northampton, NN1 4LG.

Pyrotechnics, Artillery, Infantry and Living History. Skirmish/displays on FRIDAY, SATURDAY and SUNDAY.

ACWS Members entrance opposite Trinity Avenue  
on St. Georges Avenue  
(in between **NN2 6JA & NN2 6JF**)

Further details to follow.

