



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

## **2025 4th Edition**

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



Photograph courtesy of  
Mrs Catherine McDade  
Moira Furnace Museum 2025

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**Issue 218**

# A.C.W.S. CONTACTS - Directors & Army Commanders



**Chairman &  
Federal  
Commander**  
Darren Paul



**Secretary**  
Linda Reed



**Treasurer**  
Ian Morris



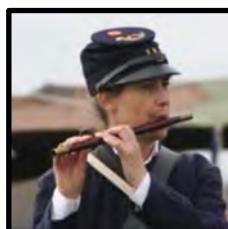
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**Events**  
Catherine  
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# Director's Reports

## Chairman's Report

What a memorable year this has been for us all, especially myself. Let's start with the weather, some weekends, well let's be fair, were just far too hot, but if it was raining we would've all been too soon to complain about that.

A massive thank you to all who attended this season's events and well done to those who managed to attend all of them. I appreciate that it's not possible for most (including myself) to attend every event but I know that we all try our best.

This particular season the ACWS celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, even thought we are all working hard to get a new van, we managed to have a fantastic party weekend at Moira Furnace. I would go as far to say that every member was involved in some way or form. For myself at the party, it was an honour to read our the names of our forebears that started the ACWS way back when.

It was also a pleasure to meet some of the "retired" ACWS members that once graced our camps with their presence and really could tell us a thing or two on how to put on a great weekend of re-enactment. Just think of all the brilliant memories they have.

On the topic of memories, please find a little time to write down your memories and let us all read about them in our newsletter. Think of the ACWS newsletter as being somewhere for your memories to be stored and never forgotten.

This season has also had a dramatic advance in displays within the camps. Are we two army camps or two army museums? Well done to all those that have put the time into making sure that every details is 100% to the best of their abilities.

Apparently there's an ACW game being played and at every event I've been to I've missed having a go, so one for me to watch out for next season.

One game I know we all love is horseshoes, to the point where modern lights were required for us to continue playing after sunset!

It's been great hearing that a few old members have come back to the family and will be at our camp fires once again, welcome back guys and gals, we all look forward to seeing you next season.

I've said it before and will say it again, your board are always working around the clock and all year round. I personally can't thank them enough for the support they have given me to be your chairman and also it goes without saying that I'm very grateful for all of your support throughout the season. Also top of the list, my wife Shaz for putting up with myself and the board shenanigans.

Please make sure you keep in contact with each other over the winter, even if it's just a text. The winters can be long and make the next ACWS season seem so far away.

So now it's time to hang up your hat, uniform away (cleaned), boots in a box (cleaned), and bring on the festive season.

Until we see each other again, have a fantastic time, stay safe and let's get ourselves ready for the 2026 season.

Yours faithfully,

Daz Paul

Chairman, ACWS Ltd



## Secretary's Report

Hey y'all,

I hope this newsletter finds you all well.

Firstly I would like to thank Melissa for her service to the ACWS as secretary over the six months at the beginning of the year on behalf of the board and the membership.

Well, what a year 2025 has been! Our 50<sup>th</sup> year was an amazing and will continue until August 2026!

It was so lovely seeing everyone celebrate at Moira Furnace along with our new members and some of the old guard too.

ACWS isn't just a re-enactment society, it is an extended family who together create some truly fantastic memories to carry for a lifetime.

Thank you ALL for your commitment to the ACWS.

All the very best wishes for the festive season and here's to your health, wealth and happiness to you and yours for 2026!

Linda Reed

Secretary, ACWS Ltd



## Treasurer's Report

I hope you are all well and have enjoyed a busy season especially with it being our 50th Anniversary year

We have had a very profitable year showing a profit of £7,603.56 compared with £4,445.72p last year.

The income side of this has come about due to the slight increase in sponsorship fees, despite having one less event but these were slightly better attended, and the kind donations of the members, especially by purchasing the equipment and uniforms that were kindly donated, with these funds going towards the purchase of a new van.

On the expenditure side our motor expenses are higher due to the artillery trailer requiring a new set of tyres and the van needing a few repairs to get it through its MOT. In other expenditure you will notice the large increase in bank charges, as a not-for-profit company, in the past we have had a treasurers account which did not incur any bank charges. Lloyds Bank started charging us at the beginning of the year, we as a board decided to look for another bank so we have opened an account with Natwest Bank which incurs no charges, in fact, we have started to receive interest from the bank. Our PL Insurance was also reduced by £400 due to the company we are with have been joined by new underwriters.

At the year end our bank balance is a healthy £21,854.55 compared to £15406.49 at the start of the year.

If you have any queries or questions you can contact me through the PO Box.

So, stay safe and let's hope, for another successful season next year

Ian Morris

Treasurer, ACWS Ltd



## Events Director's Report

Hi Everyone,

Thank you for all your support, attendance and help during events this year. The weather has been generally kind to us, although rather wet at Doncaster. It was a shame that the planned multi-period in September was cancelled, but the organiser is hoping to find a site for 2026.

The Balloon Festivals still love our displays. Thank you so much that we can put on displays on the Friday and all pull together to help each other get set up when access is more limited. These events absolutely raise our profile due to the high number of visitors and their sponsorship is crucial for us continuing to move forwards. Personally, I love the gentle pack away on Sunday mornings.

Finally, my usual nag – **please read and follow the Warning Orders** for every event. There is always a reason why the arrival time is given so please respect the wishes of the Event Organiser, and do not arrive too early.

If you have any queries please always feel free to contact me via email on [events@acws.co.uk](mailto:events@acws.co.uk), Facebook messenger, or call me. I always try to have my phone on me on arrival days at events so I can be contacted.

Roll on next year!

Best Wishes  
Catherine McDade  
Events, ACWS Ltd



## Federal Commander's Report

With a joint effort from all this season, we have advanced with so much. I stated that we were going to bring back a lot of old things that we used to do and we have done exactly that.

We are now starting our mornings with "Dress Parade", conducted by our new Adjutant, Captain Matthew Llewellyn. Paul Kennelly has "begged" us to allow him to retire from the post of Adjutant and continue to do his, what I like to call, "museum display". Paul and Hillary will continue with their display within officer's row until Matthew is ready to take his place. Paul Kennelly a long serving member of multiple ACW groups, was looking to step aside some time ago, but was persuaded to continue. But, now it's time to abide his wishes and let him and Hillary carry on doing what they do best. Thank you Paul.

Our Dress Parade is important for several reasons, please can all Union army members continue with supporting this. It would, I think be a benefit if the non-army personnel were to join us too as one of the main reasons is knowing who is on camp and who our medical team is for the weekend. It also gives us a good look at who are the firers and non-firers attending the event.

Mentioning Paul and Hillary's display, It's not the only one. You may or may not have noticed that we now have our medical display, a christian sanitary commission display, engineers display, quartermaster and postage displays and a brand new signal's office all sprouting up.

Well done to all for the excellence of your efforts.

Major Daz Paul, Federal Commander

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# Civil War Shipwreck Found in Louisiana River!

Researchers have made an unexpected discovery while exploring a murky river in Louisiana in August 2025. They have found an American Civil War shipwreck during their investigation. The team was initially focused on studying water quality and aquatic life in the Calcasieu River. However, their research took an exciting turn when they stumbled upon this historic find. While using sonar technology to map the river floor, the researchers detected an unusual shape buried beneath the sediment. Intrigued by the discovery, they began to excavate the site. To their amazement, they realised they had uncovered a shipwreck dating back to the American Civil War era.

"We didn't set out to find a shipwreck," said researcher Paul Charest. "We were actually looking at water quality issues. But as we started digging into it, we realised that there was something much bigger here." This unexpected turn of events has opened up a new chapter in their research. The researchers believe the ship was likely used for transporting goods during the American Civil War, which spanned from 1861 to 1865. As they examined the wreck, they found evidence of cargo holds, anchors, and even cannons on board. These findings suggest that the ship played a significant role during a tumultuous time in American history.

"It's like stepping back in time," Charest remarked. "You can imagine the people who built this vessel, the people who sailed on it, the battles it may have seen." The shipwreck serves as a tangible connection to the past, allowing researchers to explore the lives of those who lived during the Civil War. The team has been collaborating with historians and archaeologists to learn more about the ship's history and significance. They are currently analysing various artefacts found on board. These artefacts include ceramics, glassware, and even personal items like buttons

and coins. Each item provides valuable insights into the daily lives of people during that era.

One historian, Dr. Charles Ewen, emphasised the importance of the discovery. "This shipwreck gives us a unique window into the lives of people during the Civil War," he stated. "It's a tangible connection to our shared cultural heritage." The shipwreck not only enriches our understanding of history but also highlights the region's maritime past. The researchers plan to continue studying the wreck and its contents. They hope to eventually raise some of the artefacts to display in local museums. This initiative aims to educate the public about the significance of the shipwreck and its historical context. Additionally, the team intends to create a detailed 3D model of the wreck. This model will be shared with the public, allowing everyone to appreciate this remarkable find.

"This is just the beginning of this story," Charest said. "We're going to keep digging, literally and figuratively, to learn more about this incredible piece of history." The commitment to uncovering more about the shipwreck reflects the team's dedication to preserving history. The discovery has sparked excitement among locals and historians alike. It offers a glimpse into a pivotal moment in American history. As one researcher noted, "It's amazing what secrets lie beneath our feet, waiting to be uncovered." This sentiment resonates with many who are eager to learn more about the past. In conclusion, the discovery of the Civil War shipwreck in the Calcasieu River is a significant find. It not only enhances our understanding of the Civil War era but also connects us to the lives of those who lived during that time. The ongoing research promises to reveal more about this fascinating piece of history. As the team continues their work, they invite the community to share in the excitement of uncovering the past.

## Confederate Mass Grave Discovered in Richmond, Virginia

Richmond officials have just identified more than 700 potential, unmarked graves beneath a city-owned property in Manchester, with many of the interments believed to be Confederate soldiers. A new report also states there may be even more graves left to be found. The city first announced this discovery on Friday, May 23, 2025, explaining that ground penetrating radar had been used to identify 472 probable and 270 possible grave sites, totalling 742, beneath 2313 Wise Street.

On Friday, May 30, officials released the full report on the burial site, as provided by the vendor who conducted the survey. In this report, the vendor detailed its findings as well as related historical research. Historical evidence suggests that this burial site was used as a municipal cemetery prior to the establishment of the nearby Maury Cemetery in 1874. There are several radar images in the report of the site, including one where the potential grave sites are indicated by small black and white rectangles. However, the vendor noted that this survey, while "comprehensive," is "not likely to represent all potential graves within the survey area."

"Although many of the probable and possible interments exhibited relative clarity in the geophysical analysis, the density of the burial pattern within the cemetery made absolute identification of all burials nearly impossible," the report reads. The vendor added that it appears many people were buried on top of one another, which is "a common occurrence in burial grounds used over a long period or intensively."

The people buried here are thought to be Confederate soldiers who died in area military hospitals during the American Civil War, as well as private citizens. The soldiers are believed to have been buried there between 1861 and 1862. A stone marker had been previously placed there to honour "more than one hundred" Confederate soldiers

from South Carolina who died in a Manchester hospital between 1861 and 1865. This marker was placed in 1939 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. The report indicates that, at this time, there is no known documentation of the burials at this site. However, the vendor did locate several medical-related records that list soldiers who died in area hospitals. As said, none of the records note exactly where any person was buried.

"Although research of period appropriate maps and documentation provides some measure of evidence that the site was used as a burial ground for Confederate soldiers, there are no definitive records of wartime burials or postwar removals," the city said in a press release. "In the absence of conclusive information, the City chose to commission a study of the site to confirm the presence or absence of burial remains."

In the release, Richmond officials said a plan is being developed to allow visitation at the site both for genealogical researchers, as well as those who want to visit loved ones believed to be buried there. "Once finalised, that plan will be announced and available on the City's website," the city said.

Article submitted by Stewart "Goober" Douglas



## **Trump Renames 7 Military Bases to Honour Confederate Figures.**

President Donald Trump announced on Tuesday 10 June 2025 that he was restoring the names of Confederate officers to 7 U.S. military bases. Trump made the announcement during a speech at Fort Bragg after watching a demonstration that includes 600 paratroopers landing on a runway and earth-shaking artillery barrages.

The names would be restored to Fort Hood in Texas, Fort Gordon in Georgia, Fort Rucker in Alabama, Fort Polk in Louisiana and three bases in Virginia: Fort AP Hill, Fort Pickett and Fort Robert E. Lee. The Army had changed those names during the Biden Administration, based on a 2022 study completed by the Pentagon's Naming Commission that recommended new titles for military installations that had been named after leaders of the Confederacy. But discussion of changing the names had predicated Biden's presidency. Many of those bases located in the South were given Confederate names in the middle of the 20th Century, at a time when southern states were still restricting the voting and assembly rights of Black Americans through Jim Crow laws.

"We won a lot of battles out of those forts. It's no time to change. And I'm superstitious. I like to keep it going, right? I'm very superstitious. We want to keep it going," Trump told soldiers of the XVIII Airborne Corps, the 82nd Airborne Division, and the U.S. Army Special Operations Command about his decision to restore the names of Confederate officers that led troops to preserve slavery in the southern states during the Civil War.

Trump said his staff suggested he wait until Saturday to make the announcement, when Trump plans to preside over a military parade in Washington, D.C. marking the 250th Anniversary of the U.S. Army. Trump said he couldn't wait and wanted to reveal the restoration of the Confederate names

while he was visiting Fort Bragg. "I can't wait. I got to talk to my friends here today," Trump said.

Fort Bragg is home to more than 50,000 troops and is one of the largest military bases on the planet. In 1918, it was initially named for Braxton Bragg, a Confederate general and slave owner. The Pentagon renamed it Fort Liberty in 2023. When Trump's new Defense Secretary, Pete Hegseth, took office in February 2025, he ordered the base to be named after Pfc. Roland L. Bragg who was recognized for his courage during the Battle of the Bulge in World War II.

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### **4 discovered Confederate soldiers recently interred at a Williamsburg cemetery where Confederate soldiers from the same battle are buried.**

Archaeologists in Williamsburg, Virginia were excavating the grounds of a building that stored gunpowder during the American Revolution when they uncovered the eye sockets of a human skull. The team carefully unearthed 4 skeletons, including 1 with a bullet in the spine and three amputated legs. They quickly surmised the bones were actually from the American Civil War, when a makeshift hospital operated nearby and treated gravely wounded Confederate soldiers.

The archaeologists work at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, a museum that owns the land and focuses on the city's 18th century history. They are now trying to formally and positively identify the human remains from the 19th century, a rare endeavour that will include searching for living descendants and requesting swabs of DNA. The museum has recovered enough genetic material from the men's teeth for possible matches. But the prospect of identifying them emerged only after the team located handwritten lists in an archive that name the soldiers in that hospital. "It is the key," said Jack Gary, Colonial Williamsburg's executive director of archaeology.

"If these men were found in a mass grave on a battlefield, and there was no other information, we probably wouldn't be trying to do this."

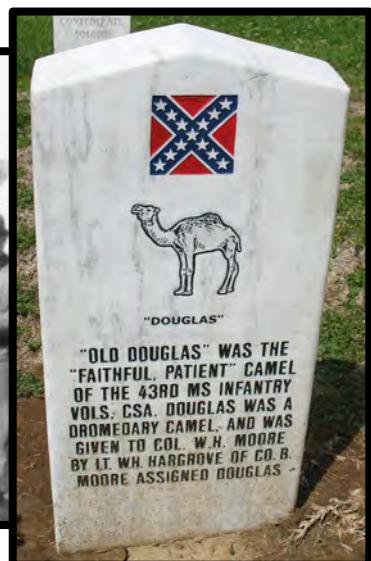
The archaeologists have narrowed the possible identities to four men who served in regiments from Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina and Virginia. The museum is withholding the names as the work continues. Meanwhile, the remains were re-interred on Tuesday 04/06/2025 at a Williamsburg cemetery where Confederate soldiers from the same battle are buried. "Everyone deserves dignity in death," Gary said. "And being stored in a drawer inside a laboratory does not do that."

The soldiers fought in the Battle of Williamsburg, a bloody engagement on May 5, 1862. The fighting was part of the Peninsula Campaign, a major Union offensive that tried to end the war quickly. The Union campaign that summer was a failure. Bigger and bloodier battles followed Williamsburg but casualties were high. Roughly 14,600 Union soldiers fought about 12,500 Confederates, Carol Kettenburg Dubbs wrote in her 2002 book, "Defend This Old Town." The number of Union killed, wounded, captured or missing was 2,283. The Confederate figure was 1,870. The fighting moved North, while a Union brigade occupied the Southern city. Confederate soldiers too wounded for travel were placed in homes and a church, which was converted into a hospital. A surgeon from New York treated them, while local women visited the church, Dubbs wrote. One woman noted in her diary on May 26 that there were "only 18 out of 61 left." When the Confederate remains were discovered in 2023, they were aligned East-West in the Christian tradition, said Gary, the archaeologist. Their arms were crossed. The careful burial indicates they were not dumped into a mass grave, Gary said. Those who died in the battle were almost immediately placed in trenches and later re-interred at a cemetery. The men were not in uniform, said Eric Schweickart,

a staff archaeologist. Some were in more comfortable clothes, based on artefacts that included buttons and a trouser buckle. 1 soldier had 2 \$5 gold coins from 1852. Another had a toothbrush made of animal bone and a snuff bottle, used for sniffing tobacco. The bullet in the soldier's spine was a Minié ball, a common round of Civil War ammunition. The foot of 1 amputated leg also contained a Minié ball. Bones in a second severed leg were shattered.

As the team researched the battle, they learned of the lists of hospitalised soldiers, said Evan Bell, an archaeological lab technician. The lists were likely copied from Union records by the women who visited the wounded. The documents were with a local family's papers at William & Mary, a university nearby. The lists became the project's Rosetta stone, providing names and regiments of more than 60 soldiers. They included dates of death and notes indicating amputations. The archaeologists eliminated soldiers on the lists who survived or lost an extremity. The 4 recovered skeletons had all of their limbs. Death dates were key because 3 men were buried together, allowing the team to pinpoint 3 soldiers who died around the same time. William & Mary's Institute for Historical Biology examined the remains and estimated their ages. The youngest was between 15 and 19, the oldest between 35 and 55. The estimates helped match names to enlistment records, census data and Union prisoner of war documents. The soldiers' remains and the amputated limbs were buried in their own stainless-steel boxes in a concrete vault, Gary said. If descendants are confirmed, they can move their ancestor to another burial site. The identification effort will continue for another several months at least and will include extensive genealogy work, Gary said. Using only DNA tests on remains from the 1800s can risk false positives because "you start becoming related to everyone." "We want it to be ironclad," he said.

# “Old Douglas” The Confederate Camel



The 43<sup>rd</sup> Mississippi had a camel named “Old Douglas”. As a result, the regiment subsequently became known as the “Camel Regiment.” Old Douglas was used for transportation purposes and carried the Officers personal camp belongings. He was relatively well behaved and rarely got into trouble. However, he would not be restrained and tended to wander and graze but always in sight of his regiment. He became very friendly towards horses in his own company but would not socialise with others. However, he could be cantankerous and he occasionally spooked other horses in wagon trains and on one occasion during a forced march before the battle of Corinth caused a stampede injuring several men. Afterwards, he was banished from being inside the camp perimeter. Old Douglas was killed in action by a minie ball at the siege of Vicksburg by Union Sharpshooters whilst carrying supplies between Vicksburg and the left wing of Confederate General Pemberton’s Army on the Graveyard Road near the 3<sup>rd</sup> Louisiana Redan. His skeleton was recovered by Union troops and his bones were used for finger rings and other ornaments for relic and souvenir hunters from the North. When his bones ran out, unscrupulous Yankee sutlers used cow bones in the pretence it was Old Douglas. Old Douglas has his own marker in the battlefield cemetery at Vicksburg.

Article by Stewart “Goober” Douglas, 43<sup>rd</sup> North Carolina, ACWS (and perhaps a distant relative of “Old Douglas”!)

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# John Rushworth Memorial Trophy

## Photography Competition 2025

### The rules are as follows

1. The photograph must be taken at an event this season, by a member of the Society.
2. Any member wishing to enter the competition can enter any number of separate entries.
3. “Amusing” photographs can also be entered for consideration.
4. Non members or members of the public cannot be included in the photograph.
5. If you think someone else has taken a great photograph, feel free to send it in on their behalf.
6. All submissions must clearly state what event they were taken at.

Entries for the competition must be sent to the Communications director  
[Editor@acws.co.uk](mailto:Editor@acws.co.uk)



**2nd**

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



**1st**  
Avoncroft 2024  
Stewart Hayllar

(69<sup>th</sup> NY)

Good Luck and Have Fun  
We look forward to seeing  
your fabulous pictures.



**3rd**

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

# Notices from the Board

Reminder for all members to submit any photographs to the Communications Director's email address - editor@acws.co.uk - or to his personal Facebook messenger at the earliest opportunity.

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**

It's has been a busy season with a few incidents, but all is well, one being taken into hospital via trust ambulance but was back on camp later that day at the Northampton Balloon Festival.

Please let your medical team deal with an incident when one occurs and please keep away unless you are assisting i.e. guiding the emergency services to the location, fetching and carrying equipment and holding sheeting or lights.

We would like to advise members to let the medical team know if you have any medical conditions, this will be kept in the strictest confidence. If members out on the field could put a card in their cartridge box with their name, any allergies, medical conditions and blood group as this gives us a good head start if we have deal with anyone who is unconscious or otherwise unresponsive.

Can we also remind you to carry a small personal first aid kit yourself to deal with your own small cuts and grazes.

Stewart Hayllar's medical kit with O2 and Defib is always kept in his tent on the right just in the entrance and the Society's Defib is always located in Claire Morris' tent as well as her medical kit, so if you are sent to get either, you know where to find them!

See you in 2026

# ACWS at Northampton Hot Air Balloon Festival

The ACWS travelled to the Northampton Hot Air Balloon Festival on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> August 2025 for a full living history and skirmish 3 day event. Like the last 2 years, the old Northampton Racecourse venue itself is huge with 2 arenas but the ACWS did have our own secure camping space with nearby water supply, parking spaces and thankfully a large amount of regularly cleaned portaloos. In addition, there was tight security throughout the whole weekend. The Northampton Balloon Festival is an extremely popular and well attended event and there were huge numbers of members of the public on site on all 3 days from 12.00am until 10.00pm but Saturday was particularly busy.

There were the usual many food (expensive) stalls, large bars, a giant funfair, international stunt shows, freestyle motorcycle display teams and the excellent Hot Air Balloon Night Glow show on all 3 nights. Sadly, there were only fireworks on the Sunday night which many of his missed but were reportedly magnificent.

The artillery were our in force for this event with their 3 superb and now fully restored artillery pieces with both the Union and Confederate crews in absolutely fearsome action. Special well done to Caz for helping out both sides at short notice. Although there was an issue with 1 artillery piece on the first day, this was quickly replaced the next day by another barrel arriving! Again, many special thanks to Mick Smart for bringing the replacement and all those who exchanged these heavy barrels.

For all the ACWS re-enactors, the living history days were manic and hectic particularly on the Saturdays and Sundays and this was additionally commendable due to the extreme heat.

There were superb and interactive displays on both camps on all 3 days including the Union Medical display, the USS Sharp Shooters display, the Union artefact display, the excellent ACWS Union band music display, Union Artillery loading displays and the Union Christian Commission display. On the Confederate camp, there was Williams excellent Confederate Soldier kit display, Steve Lords uniform/de-ac photo shoot, the Ask a Soldier questionnaire and Jason's ever popular chuck a luck. There were also many other various individual drill and living history sessions including small impromptu music and dancing impressions as well as ever popular flag raising displays. I do apologise if I have missed anything or anyone out.

Despite all these, there are always lovely highlights but for me and everyone else the main highlight was Catherine's superb but unexpected Hen Party.

Really well done to all the ladies who organised this lovely occasion and everyone who took part including all those would be male strippers! I have never laughed so much. Such lovely personal memories were made. Other highlights included the Horseshoe Competition which was easily won again by the Union. The Union staff team were the superb winners and followed by the Pennsylvania boys.

The Confederate teams were absolutely awful and all finished in the bottom 3 with 1 team even managing the incredible difficult score of absolutely zero points! If points were won by hitting a passing stranger on the way to the portaloo, a parked Volvo 50 yards opposite or the light well to the side marking the pin, the rebs would have easily won.

As Confederate horseshoe organiser, I have to take personal responsibility but improvement on many levels is definitely needed! Only our Major Glenn Gibson came out with any credit after a lovely rounder! Other special highlights included the Union Re-enactor Award of the year deservedly won by Neil Manison. This was an absolutely lovely silver dragon trophy. The Confederate Re-enactor Award was deservedly won by William Jennings and the ACWS Young Musicians Awards deservedly won by Freya Manison and Bella Huntley.

On a more sombre and upsetting moment, we did have a medical incident and much thanks and credit must go to our superb professional medical team and all the other ACWS members who reacted to the situation and insured the appropriate medical assistance and ambulance was provided. We are very fortunate indeed to have such a lovely caring medical team.

On all 3 days, both the Confederate and Union infantry did drill and firing sessions in the much smaller arena. These proved really popular with the public coming onto the site itself particularly with our now iconic Kids drill sessions. The Kids drill on the Saturday was 1 of the biggest ever with over 3 long lines! Massive credit to both Union and Confederate re-enactors who got involved and took part but particularly ACWS commentator Matthew Jennings who really adds to these hugely popular sessions. In addition, his commentary regarding the skirmishes on all 3 days was absolutely brilliant particularly with having to improvise whilst the “balloonatics” slowly cleared the middle of the battlefield!

The ACWS had to perform 3 skirmishes over the 3 days. These occurred in the very much larger arena and involved 3 different scenarios involving a chronological run through of the 1984 Overland Campaign between US

General Grant and CS General Robert E Lee. All of the 3 skirmishes were really enjoyable and involved lots of movement, firing, artillery and pyro explosions near to the crowd. Both sides took casualties particularly when the Union and Confederate armies withdrew from each other and the public certainly enjoyed them all as many came back after the first day. Personally, I thought the wounding of CS General Longstreet (Major Glenn Gibson) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day and the death of US General Sedgwick (Major Daz Paul) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day were great focuses of attention.

Both armies being much closer and next to the crowd was spectacular with many members of the public actually screaming, shouting and cheering along with the re-enactors as the fast volley firing and casualties on both sides mounted. Both lines of infantry blasted away at each other, taking casualties and now putting on bloodied bandages before getting up to make it a little more realistic. Also the super synchronised pyros following artillery blasts were spot on and well done to both sides who went down in response.

As is now becoming usual, the organisers were absolutely delighted with our numerous displays over the whole weekend and long may our displays and living history impressions continue to impress and more importantly entertain and educate the huge amount of public who attended. As usual, special thanks to Catherine for not only organising this event but also all the other hard work she had to do over this long weekend despite it being her own personal Hen Party! It does not go unnoticed. In addition, well done to everyone who helped each other pack away the camp and get home as many had long journeys ahead.

Personal Observations and Reflections by Stewart “Goober” Douglas, 43<sup>rd</sup> North Carolina Volunteers, ACWS.



# EVENTS CALENDAR 2026

## April 11-12 NO MAN'S LAND, NORTH WALES

Full Society Event at Bodrhyddan Hall, Dyserth Road (A5151), Rhuddlan, Rhyl, **LL18 5SB**.

Further Details to Follow.

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## April 18 - 19 FORT PAULL BATTERY

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

Further details to follow.

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## December 5 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Meeting will begin at 1pm Prompt, medium to be confirmed..

Further details to follow.

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**More events will be confirmed in due course.**

Apologies to all members for the lateness of this newsletter, work commitments prevented me from producing this on time, any concerns please contact Joe Reed at [Editor@acws.co.uk](mailto:Editor@acws.co.uk).

