



The A.C.W.S. NEWSLETTER

2026 1st Edition

ACWS Ltd - PO Box 270 - Washington - Tyne & Wear - NE37 9BX

www.acws.co.uk



Photograph courtesy of
Mr William Jennings
Northampton Balloon Festival 2025

ACWS is a Member of

N·A·Re·S

Issue 219

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



**Chairman &
Federal
Commander**
Darren Paul



Secretary
Linda Reed



Treasurer
Ian Morris



Health & Safety
Dave McDade



Membership
Claire Morris



Webmaster
Mike Bussey



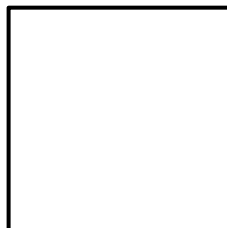
Events
Catherine
McDade



Communications
Joseph Reed



**Confederate
Commander**
Glenn Gibson



**Federal
Representative**
POSITION OPEN
APPLY WITH
SECRETARY

Director's Reports

Chairman's Report

Hi all,

The new season will soon be upon us and do we all have everything ready?

I'll be honest, I certainly don't!

I have so much to sort out, make and find.

Don't be a plonker like me, get everything done, checked or fixed now before your first event comes around.

Your Board of Directors, as usual, have been so busy behind the scenes, as well as their own busy lives. Thank you so much guys and thank you also to the members for voting for your board to carry on the good work that they do.

They all love it really... On that subject, if you feel that you could help or take on any of the board positions, please don't hesitate to ask any of the team about the positions.

They are all your board and I'm sure none of them will bite... well maybe Linda, only joking.

The biggest thing / job happening at the moment is the changing over of the Society cannons. At the time of writing this report, we intend to change over the "Union" cannons with the "Confederate" ones on the 14th of February. The "Union" barrels will then be fully checked and whatever maintenance is needed will be done.

We have noticed that primarily the touch holes will need some attention, needless to say, as well as maintaining the cannons we will find further costs for any necessary work and this means taking from our funds which we struggle with due to being a non-profit Society.

Plans are in place, soon to provide us with a new Society van, due to all of your hard work and donations to help fund such a massive purchase.

Well done everyone, watch this space for future updates.

Catherine has done it again"

Well done Mrs McDade. Have you had the chance to see our latest update to events done by our very own Mr Bussey. OK, so if you have and before you say "oh no, more balloon festivals" Catherine has been working around the clock to get other events elsewhere but to no avail.

Your ACWS still needs funding coming in and as you are aware we are a non profit organisation. So, funds are limited and we cannot say no to clients that are willing to pay for the ACWS.

I know we all would love the old events at big estates with open fields and maybe a small woods, trust me, Catherine has been trying her hardest, as have a lot of other members.

Thank you guys, your board thanks you for your continued support and amazing advice, rest assured all ideas are followed up.

Safe journeys and I'll see you around the camp fires to make memories and keep not only our hobby alive but the memories of our past family and friends that no longer feel the warmth of the flames but sit among us nonetheless.

Yours faithfully,
Daz Paul
Chairman, ACWS Ltd



**Minutes of the 50th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of The
American Civil War Society (ACWS) Ltd
Held virtually on Zoom on Saturday 6 December 2025**

ACWS BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr Darren Paul	Chairperson	DP
Mrs Linda Reed	Secretary	LR
Mr Ian Morris	Treasurer	IM
Mr Mike Bussey	Webmaster	MB
Miss Claire Morris	Membership	CM
Mrs Catherine McDade	Events	CCM
Mr David McDade	Health and Safety	DM
Mr Joseph Reed	Communications	JR
Mr Glenn Gibson	Confederate Commander	GG

The meeting commenced at 13:11

1. AN EXPLANATION OF VOTING VIA ZOOM

MB explained how the voting will run during the meeting and reminded 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

Mrs Lesley Bussey	Mrs Helen Gibson
Mr Frank Unsworth	Mr Simon Unsworth
Mr Ralph Allemano	Mr Antonio Perez

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE 2024 AGM

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 21, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 18.

Total Votes = 43

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

4. TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE DIRECTORS FOR THE 2025 SEASON AS PUBLISHED IN THE AGM PAPERS:-

4.1 SECRETARY – MRS LINDA REED

LR said she had nothing to add to her report and no questions were asked by anyone present.

4.2 WEBMASTER – MR MIKE BUSSEY

MB said he had nothing to add to his report and no questions were asked by anyone present.

4.3 EVENTS – MRS CATHERINE MCDADE

CCM said she had information about a potential event in Moira to celebrate the end of the next season but said she would give more detail later in the meeting. No questions were asked by anyone present.

4.4 TREASURER – MR IAN MORRIS

IM added that the Society had received a tax bill of £1283 and that he had closed the accounts with Lloyds Bank to avoid bank charges. The new account with Nat West is open and some funds have been transferred into the reserve account which pays £13 interest per month. **Andrew Potts** asked if the Society was registered as a Charity? **IM** said the Society is a Not-for-Profit Limited Company. **LR** asked if there will be a tax refund once a new van is purchased? **IM** confirmed that 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 added that another member had joined so the final number of members for 2025 is 149 adults and 17 juniors. No questions were asked by anyone present.

4.6 CONFEDERATE COMMANDER – MR GLENN GIBSON

GG apologised for not sending a written report due to work pressures. He confirmed this will be his last year standing as Confederate Commander and as a director of ACWS. No questions were asked by anyone present.

4.7 FEDERAL COMMANDER

DP said he had nothing to add to his report and no questions asked by anyone present. **LR** added that Paul Kennelly will be stepping down from his role as the Federal Army Representative in 2026, but he will continue until **DP** finds a replacement. On behalf of the Society, **LR** thanked Paul for his hard work.

4.8 COMMUNICATIONS – MR JOSEPH REED

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

4.9 HEALTH AND SAFETY – MR DAVID MCDADE

DM said he had nothing to add to his report, but he thanked everyone for their support. No questions were asked by anyone present.

4.10 CHAIRPERSON – MR DARREN PAUL

DP said he had nothing to add to his report and no questions were asked by anyone present.

Motion to approve the ACWS Board of Directors reports. Proposed CM, Seconded by Philip Golder:-

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 22, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 17.

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 = 2.

Total Votes = 2

The motion passed by a majority vote.

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

Proposed **DM**, seconded **IM**

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 19, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 17.

Total Votes = 40

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

Total Votes = 0

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

Total Votes = 4

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 REMUNERATION

Proposed **IM**, seconded **Philip Golder**

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 20, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 19.

Total Votes = 43

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 passed by a majority vote.

7. MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION FEES FOR 2025 SEASON

For 2026, 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. Proposed **DM**, seconded **CM**

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 22, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 17.

Total Votes = 43

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

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 = 22, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 17.

Total Votes = 43

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

Total Votes = 0

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

Total Votes = 3

Mr Darren Paul is duly re-elected as Chairperson.

8b TREASURER - to re-elect Mr Ian Morris

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 22, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 19.

Total Votes = 45

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 = 21, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 19.

Total Votes = 44

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

Total Votes = 2

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 = 23, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 19.

Total Votes = 46

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 = 20, Postal Votes = 3, E-proxy Votes = 17.

Total Votes = 40

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

Total Votes = 3

STAIN: - Zoom Votes = 2, Postal Votes = 1, E-proxy Votes = 0.

Total Votes = 3

Mr Joseph Reed is duly re-elected as Communications Director

8f EVENTS - to re-elect Mrs Catherine McDade

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 22, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 19.

Total Votes = 45

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 McDade is duly re-elected as Events Director.

9. ELECTION OF MRS LINDA REED TO THE POSITION OF SECRETARY

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 21, Postal Votes = 3, E-proxy Votes = 17.

Total Votes = 41

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

Total Votes = 3

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

Total Votes = 1

Mrs Linda Reed is duly elected as Secretary.

10. ELECTION OF MR DAVID MCDADE TO THE POSITION OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 21, Postal Votes = 4, E-proxy Votes = 19.

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

Mr David McDade is duly elected as Health and Safety Director

11. ELECTION OF MR DARREN PAUL TO THE POSTION OF FEDERAL ARMY COMMANDER AND AS A DIRECTOR

Only members of the Federal Army permitted to vote.

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 12, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 9.

Total Votes = 21

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

Total Votes = 0

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

Total Votes = 2.

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

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

Only Federal Army members permitted to vote.

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 11, Postal Votes = 0, E-proxy Votes = 11.

Total Votes = 22

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 Paul Kennelly is duly re-elected as Federal Army Representative.

13. ELECTION OF MR GLENN GIBSON TO THE POSITION OF CONFEDERATE ARMY COMMANDER AND AS AN OFFICER OF THE COMPANY

Only Confederate Army members permitted to vote.

FOR: - Zoom Votes = 8, Postal Votes = 3, E-proxy Votes = 8.

Total Votes = 19

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

Total Votes = 1

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

Total Votes = 2

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

14. EVENTS UPDATE

CCM gave details of the **confirmed** events for 2025:-

11/12 April No Man's Land, North Wales

18/18 April Fort Paull, Hull

CCM added she is planning an end of season event in Moira 5/6 Sept, but this won't be confirmed until later in the month. Callum Fox, American Eagle Society is planning a Campaign in June, and more information will be shared as it becomes available. **CCM** said that she is in dialogue with the organiser of the balloon events and there are 5 possible events, but no detail can be shared until the organiser has confirmed the dates and locations. Members were asked to continue to share possible locations and **CCM** will make contact. **Andrew Potts** asked about an event at Avoncroft and **CCM** confirmed that ACWS is not attending this year. She added that she recognises that members need to book holidays and she will keep the website and social media pages updated. **LR** asked if events could be added as possible or probable events with dates even if locations not shared? **MB** confirmed this is done where possible.

15. OPEN FORUM

Philip Golder suggested that a definition of possible, probable and confirmed should be added to the events page so that everyone was clear of the status of an event. **MB** said he would consider this.

Andrew Parrot asked for advice on what happens to firearms when you die? There was a general discussion with suggestions, such as, ensure you specify in your will what should happen to them, make sure they are on more than one licence (where two licence holders live at the same address) and/or identify a member in your location who could take them. The police will take the firearms when they are notified of the death of a licence holder, and they will be unaware if they are on another person's licence. **Andrew Potts** shared some advice online from the Metropolitan Police and **Matthew Jennings** offered to put the Board in touch with Estate Planner. **LR** thanked everyone for their contribution and said she will do some research so this subject can be discussed further at the next board meeting with a view to sharing guidance with members in due course.

Andrew Potts asked for an update on the fund raising for a new van. **IM** said that we have around half of the amount needed but one difficulty is finding a van that meets our requirements. **Matthew Jennings** said he is meeting with some garage owners shortly and he will consult them about options if the specification for the van is shared with him.

William Jennings advised members that he will be part of the ACWS band next season and said he would need members to host his living history display whilst he is at band practice. Members said this wouldn't be a problem.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB)

LR thanked the medical team for their hard work and support. **JR** read a report from the medical team and confirmed he will share this in the next newsletter so that all members are aware of their recommendations which include asking members to notify them of any allergies, medical conditions and asking all members to carry a first aid kit.

LR said that she had received a proposal from a member that smoking should be banned when members were formed into ranks. The proposer highlighted the health risks to other members, the safety risks when smoking around black powder and the negative image given to young people.

DP said this was a controversial issue but asked for any thoughts. Several views were shared including a concern about the Society becoming too dictatorial. There wasn't a strong feeling at the meeting that smoking in the ranks should be banned but it was acknowledged that members should be considerate of those around them and step away from the rank if they want to smoke, where possible or at least ask those around if they mind someone smoking. **DP** said this topic needs more discussion at the Board and consideration is needed about how to gather the views of everyone in the Society.

Bella Huntley raised the issue of swearing and hand gestures when in the ranks and in sight of the public. She made the point that this gives a bad impression especially to young people. **William Jennings** agreed with her. **DP** thanked them for the comment and said he and **GG** would share this concern with members at future events.

Philip Golder asked if the Board were aware of the proposal to combine the firearm and shotgun certificates? **MB** confirmed the Board are aware but added this had been proposed a while ago and nothing has changed. **LR** added that the National Association for Reenactment Societies are aware and they will represent our interests.

Caz Davies asked if there was any update on the plans to collect the cannon barrels and the ACWS library from her? **DP** confirmed that a discussion is underway, and a plan will be agreed at the next Board meeting.

DP thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. **LR** thanked all members and the Board for their hard work and support.

The meeting ended at 15:35.

DATE OF FUTURE AGM

Saturday 5 December 2026. The meeting will commence at 13:00. Medium to be confirmed.

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.

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 to 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

John Rushworth Memorial Trophy Photography Competition 2025

The rules are as follows

1. The photograph must be taken at an event last 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.

tries for the competition must be sent to the Communications director
Editor@acws.co.uk



2nd

Avoncroft 2024
Abigail Hooper
(118th PA)



1st

Avoncroft 2024
Stewart Hayllar
(69th NY)



3rd

Avoncroft 2024
Matthew Jennings
(2nd SC)

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

Which Navy are we in today?

John Slidell, the Confederate Commissioner in France, was attempting to find builders for several Ironclads, and had managed to get two under construction in J. Laird's yard in Birkenhead. He and his agent, James D. Bulloch, clandestinely set up a secret meeting with Emperor Napoleon III, the result of which was an order for two Ironclads and 4 corvettes – to be built in Bordeaux. The ships were known as "Cheops" and "Sphinx", supposedly destined for the 'Egyptian Navy' (if anyone asked).

However, by September 1863, the U.S. Ambassador had got wind of this arrangement and brought diplomatic pressure to bear on the French authorities to impound the vessels. Following Gettysburg Napoleon had reasoned that any hopes of a Confederate victory were now a lost cause, and convinced of this, denied permission for the ships to leave on completion, and further, demanded their sale. The Prussians purchased the "Cheops" and the "Sphinx" became a Danish vessel and, ironically for Ironclads, they were in opposing fleets in the Second Schleswig War between the two countries, although not engaging each other.

There was a contractual problem whereby the Danes refused to finish the transaction, plus the fact that its purpose was void, so the "Sphinx" was put up for resale in late 1864 by the French. Strangely enough, it was Confederate agencies which negotiated a deal with the French – sound familiar? – and the "Staerkodder" was purchased (secretly) and sailed from Copenhagen on 7th January 1865 bound for the Azores. Somewhere in the Bay of Biscay, the ship became "CSS Stonewall" [not to be confused with "CSS Stonewall" Jackson] and subsequently sailed for Ferrol in Spain for supplies.

She had to avoid two patrolling U.S. cruisers – USS "Niagara", and USS "Sacramento" – by moving out into the Atlantic and making for Lisbon. Having taken on supplies and coaling, she left Lisbon without harassment from the two waiting U.S. Navy vessels, which decided not to engage.

Crossing the Atlantic at a maximum speed of 10 knots– becoming the first ocean-going Ironclad to achieve this feat – she arrived in Cuba on 11th May 1865, only to be greeted with the news that Lee had surrendered. She was handed over to the Spanish authorities in exchange for the crew's wages, subsequently being sold to the U.S. Government!!

The odyssey wasn't quite finished here though! In 1867 she was sold to the Japanese Navy, renamed "Kotetsu" and delivered in March 1869 –having traversed the Pacific now – (how did she get there with no Panama Canal?) – and becoming the first Confederate Ironclad to cross both major Oceans? {answers on a postcard please}.

This led to her seeing action in the battle of Hakodate Bay to help end the Boshin War. Her end came (by now renamed "Adzuma") on 12th December 1889 when she was scrapped.

Thus the "Sphinx"/ "Staerkodder"/ "Stonewall"/ "Kotetsu"/ "Adzuma" at some time or other had come under the auspices of French/ 'Egyptian'/ Danish/ Confederate/ Spanish/ United States/ Japanese authority. How many American sailors had spinning heads by this time as crew of any – or all - of these versions of the same ship? I'm leaving that for another day (or week, or).

Article submission my Mr Michael Crump

1st Tennessee Infantry, CS

Coca-Cola only exists due to a Confederate War Hero.

The iconic drink Coca-Cola only exists thanks to a wounded Confederate warrior from the American Civil War. It's a fun fact that you can never escape in the South and that is that Coca-Cola used to have cocaine in it. The Coca Cola brand is everywhere down in the South and every young teenager will always bring up the cocaine fact a couple of times a week for the first six months after they learn about it. The fact that cocaine used to be offered in every town usually gets written off as an odd quirk of history but it turns out to be fact as the Confederate War hero had a very good reason to appreciate the coca plant.

Coca Cola was invented by John Stith Pemberton (the drink is named after the coca plant, not the inventor or company founder). John Pemberton became a doctor at the ripe old age of 19 in 1850. He was a successful surgeon and chemist in the 1850s but he signed up for frontline service when the American Civil War broke out. Initially, he served as a first lieutenant in the Third Cavalry Battalion of the Georgia State Guard which was at that time a component of the Confederate Army. Due to his bravery and loyal service, he achieved the rank of lieutenant colonel. However, in April 1865, during the very latter stages of the Civil War, he sustained a serious saber wound to the chest as well as multiple gunshot wounds during the Battle of Columbus. At the end of the War, he soon became addicted to the morphine used to ease his considerable ongoing pain. John Pemberton would suffer for many years from the wounds he took near Columbus and he struggled against a morphine addiction thanks to all the painkillers he was given.

However, John Pemberton was not only a Confederate War hero, he was also a doctor, skilled chemist and pharmacist and had a medical degree and soon after the Civil War, he began a quest to find a substitute for his ongoing problematic

morphine addiction. In 1885, at Pemberton's Eagle Drug and Chemical House, his drugstore in Columbus, Georgia, he registered Pemberton's French Wine Coca nerve tonic. John Pemberton's tonic may have been inspired by the formidable success of Vin Mariani, a French-Corsican coca wine, but his recipe additionally included the African kola nut, the beverage's source of caffeine. He had become aware of a new European product already popular in Italy and France which was wine infused with extracts from coca leaves. It is worth noting that this was not technically cocaine in a drink. Coca leaves are a precursor to cocaine, but you have to use a solvent to extract cocaine sulfate from the leaves in order to get actual cocaine out. But John Pemberton's French Wine Coca did have anesthetic effects like cocaine would. He sold the drink as a way to settle nerves, relieve pain and cure morphine addiction. This was exactly the same morphine addiction that he and many of his Civil War veteran friends had.

The jump from John Pemberton's French Wine Coca to Coca-Cola came when wine was threatened by alcohol prohibition in Atlanta and he decided to replace the sweetness from the wine with sweetness from sugar. After a few more changes to refine the taste, the product was renamed Coca-Cola and released in 1886. Since then, Coca Cola has gone through a few formula changes including switching fresh coca leaves out for spent coca leaves which have had the cocaine sulfate extracted. So now all those Southern teenagers could not get high from Coca Cola anymore. John Pemberton never got rich off his invention. He was still standing up the Coca-Cola Company under his son, Charles Pemberton when he died. The company passed into the hands of another investor and the Pemberton history and it's Civil War origins were soon brushed aside.

Article submission by Mr Stewart
"Goober" Douglas, 43rd North Carolina

4 Long Lost Confederate Blockade Runners found off Fort Moultrie, South Carolina

"Historical records indicate that several American Civil War blockade runners were wrecked in the shallow waters around Fort Moultrie, but their exact locations were forgotten," the division reported in a social media post.

"Because Sullivan's Island has been marching steadily southward ... since the construction of the Charleston Harbour jetties, what once was water for ships to wreck in is now dry land. The remains of these vessels are now buried deep below the beach and adjacent woodlot."

The buried "magnetic anomalies" which were identified as the missing Confederate blockade runners were found with the help of drones fitted with magnetometers. Underwater archaeologist James D. Spirek told McClatchy News in an email. "We launched aerial drone magnetometry over the suspected locations of the four wrecks.

After a bit of adjusting to the magnetics, we believe we have located at least two or three of them: the **Celt** and either the **Beatrice** or **Flora** ... or both of them, as they lay close together," Spirek said. "I'm not sure why we didn't locate the other one: **Presto**, as I know that it isn't in the water.

An analysis of their depth hasn't yet been completed, but it's estimated that 3 of the wrecks are 5 feet deep or more. At high tide, most of the **Celt** would be underwater but the **Beatrice/Flora** would still be dry. The **Celt** was a

side wheel paddle steamer that ran ashore while trying to leave the harbour, Civil War historians confirm. Union troops boarded the vessel and "found the back or keel of the hull broken and full of water, decks ripped apart, and the boilers below water along with the machinery, and deemed it worthless to recover," Civil War Traveller reports.

A cargo of cotton was also found and salvaged to be taken North, the site says. Overall, the survey was intended to find and identify the wrecks so they can be protected, officials said.

No further archaeological work is planned to find out exactly what survives in the ground. However, additional drone surveys are planned to formally determine whether both the **Beatrice** and **Flora** were found.

Sullivan's island in Charleston Harbour, South Carolina was the "first line of defence" for Charleston during the Civil War, and is now part of the National Park System, along with nearby Fort Sumter.

The harbour played host to "a protracted struggle from 1861 to 1865 between Confederate defenders and Federal attackers," the University of South Carolina reports.

Blockade runners were private vessels that worked to sneak cargo through Union blockades of Southern ports like Charleston. Wrecks of the ships are today considered "nationally significant cultural resources," historians say.

The **Celt** was built at Charleston during the Civil War, which helps explain the relatively simple machinery construction apparent in surviving images of her. She was launched in 1863 and the 160-foot steamship was used by the C.S. Quartermaster in and around the harbour until February 1865, when she was loaded with cotton and attempted to run out through the blockade. The Celt was wrecked near Moultrie on February 14, 1865. Although the steamer was grounded in shallow water, yards from the beach, 6 or 7 of her crew took to a boat and rowed out to a Federal warship instead. Her cargo, or most of it, also ended up in the Federals' hands.

The **Beatrice** was another Confederate blockade runner which was famous for its capture by Oliver O'Brien. He served during the Civil War as a coxswain on the USS John Adams. On November 28, 1864, he was involved in the actual capture of the Confederate blockade runner Beatrice off Sullivan's Island in Charleston Harbour. Oliver O'Brien commanded one of the launches which approached and boarded the ship despite heavy fire from the Confederate Fort Moultrie. Beatrice's equipment was then confiscated and the ship set afire. For these actions, Oliver O'Brien was awarded the Medal of Honour a month later on December 31, 1864.

The **Flora** was built by J & W Dudgeon which was a Victorian shipbuilding and engineering company based in Cubitt Town, London. They initially specialised in building blockade runners for the American Civil War at times employing up to 1500 men. The first ship built there was the 150-foot Confederate blockade runner Flora, which was the first twin-screw steamer to cross the Atlantic Ocean.

The **Presto** was initially built as the Fergus by Alexander Stephen and Sons in Glasgow in a very short time and was launched in December 1863. She was purpose built to run the Union blockade. She reportedly made 20.5 knots on her trials. She made 3 runs through the blockade. The first 2 runs were to Wilmington. On her 3rd run to Charleston in early February, 1864 she ran up on a wreck in front of Confederate fortifications on Sullivan's Island on the north side of the harbour entrance. When the sun came up the next morning she was still stranded and came under fire from Union batteries on the South side of the harbour entrance and by Union monitors. She was a total loss but most of her cargo was recovered by the Confederates.

Article by Stewart "Goober" Douglas, 43rd North Carolina, CSA, ACWS

Sources : Article "Civil War wrecks vanish, then drone finds buried 'anomalies' on land" by Mark Price, News and Observer, South Carolina; Wikipedia and various Internet sources.



EVENTS CALENDAR 2026 PAGE 1

May 23 - 25 AVONCROFT, WORCS

Full Society Bank Holiday Event at the Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, Stoke Heath, Bromsgrove, **B60 4JR**.
Living History on SATURDAY, SUNDAY and MONDAY.
Firing Displays on SATURDAY and MONDAY.
Further details to follow.

June 6 WENTWORTH BALLOON FESTIVAL, S YORKS

Full Society ONE-DAY Event in South Yorkshire, Wentworth Woodhouse, Wentworth, Rotherham, **S62 7TQ**.
Further details to follow.

June 19, 20 & 21 LEICESTER BALLOON FESTIVAL

Full Society Three Day Event in Leicester.
INFANTRY & ARTILLERY TO ATTEND.
Further details to follow.

July 3 - 4 SWINDON BALLOON FESTIVAL

Full Society Event at Lydiard Park, Hook Street, Lydiard Tregoze, Swindon, Wiltshire, **SN5 3PA**.
INFANTRY ONLY (NO CANNON) .
Further details to follow.



EVENTS CALENDAR 2026 PAGE 2

July 24 - 25 DONCASTER BALLOON FESTIVAL

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

Pyrotechnics, Artillery, Infantry & Living History.

Further details to follow.

August 14, 15 & 16 NORTHAMPTON BALLOON

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

Pyrotechnics, Artillery, Infantry & Living History.

Further details to follow.

September 5-6 MOIRA FURNACE MUSEUM

Full Society Event at Furnace Lane, Moira Leicester, **DE12 6AT**.

Further details to follow.

December 5 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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

Further details to follow.

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

