

CROSSFIRE



THE MAGAZINE OF THE MILITARY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIA † NUMBER 22 † DECEMBER 2011



MCF Faith Under Fire Seminar | AMCF Conference | Building the Kingdom



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MCF-A Department of Defence, CP3-1-130 Campbell Park Offices, Canberra, ACT, 2600 Australia.

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Your contribution will help support the work of MCF within the Australian Defence Force.



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From the editor...

Mr David Coleman
(david.coleman1@defence.gov.au)



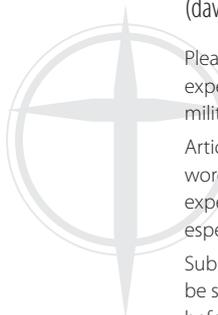
Please send me a short story of your experiences as a Christian in the military and highlight what God has done for you!

Articles for Crossfire should be no more than 500 words long and focus on military Christian issues and experiences. Stories from operational service are especially encouraged.

Submissions should be in electronic format and will be subject to approval from the National Council before publication.

Photos are encouraged and should be of maximum resolution to ensure production standard.

Cover image by: LAC Leigh Cameron
Air to Air of Tiger ARH A38-001 performing a jettison of it's Counter Measure Dispensing System. At the Port Wakefield proving ground.



Chairman's Report

LTCOL Jamie van Heel



The theme for this Crossfire magazine leverages the MCF Seminar conducted in September titled Faith Under Fire.

Historically, faith has strengthened the resolve of Christians to achieve extraordinary results under the most trying of circumstances. The saying there are no atheists in fox holes comes from the realisation that when our lives are on the line humans turn to God.

For me I have found that faith is generated out of relationship and trust. To increase our faith in God, there is no better place to have our foundation than in his word.

In Hebrews 11:1 it says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

In the military, we are trained for warfare and understand the preparation and commitment that is required to prosecute an operation.

In Ephesians 6:12 it says that 'we are not fighting against flesh and blood. We are fighting against forces and authorities and against rulers of darkness and powers in the spiritual world.'

The spiritual battle is real as we as Christians are deployed into the spiritual battlespace. Christians will face spiritual attack. How you react and endure through this attack and whether you exercise your faith under fire and call on God's power and promises is your decision.

Our thoughts and prayers go to the families of those ten service men who have lost their lives and been injured in recent operational activities in Afghanistan and East Timor. Since the last Crossfire edition in April 2011, ten service men in the Army have paid the ultimate sacrifice on operations. They include SGT Brett Wood, LCPL Andrew Jones, LT Marcus Case, SPR Rowan Robinson, SGT Todd Langley, PTE Matthew Lambert, CFN Beau Pridue, CAPT Bryce Duffy, CPL Ashley Birt and LCPL Luke Gavin.

I'd like to thank the outgoing Council members Mark Jobst, Darryl Gibson, and CAPT Katie Chapman for their contributions as Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Members' Representatives on the MCF Council in 2011. I'd like to welcome the new Vice Chairman FLGOFF Scott Minchin, Treasurer CAPT James Feuillerade and Members' Rep LT Jacob Choi to the MCF Council.

Ann Lock, the MCF Staff Worker of the past 2 years is moving with her husband Garry back to Indented Head, near Geelong Victoria at the beginning of December. We wish her well and thank her for the great work that she has done supporting the Military Christian Fellowship. Our new Staff Worker, Lisa Thomas, will be commencing on 30 Jan 2012.

MCF hosted the inaugural National Day of Prayer for Defence on 2 Apr 11. The next National Day of Prayer will be conducted on 24 Mar 12. This prayer day will focus on praying for the safety of deployed service men and women, their families, and those who have recently returned from operations. Additionally, prayer was offered for Defence Christian Military Ministries, chaplains, and Defence senior leaders. Please read the enclosed flyer and join with other Christians in your locality to pray for Defence.

The CDF GEN Hurley launched the ADF Faith Under Fire course on 5 Jul 11. It is available now through chaplains and is a great resource for Defence personnel to understand from a historical perspective who Jesus was and to understand the concept of spiritual resilience. I encourage MCF members to become involved with their chaplains in leading this initiative and inviting their work mates to participate in the course.

The Defence Christians Dinner was held on Fri 2 Sep 11. We were privileged to hear from GEN Hurley and his wife Mrs Linda Hurley in a Parkinson type interview that focused on GEN Hurley as a real man with a real marriage and a real faith. The 210 guests that attended thoroughly enjoyed the evening. The next dinner is scheduled for Fri 31 Aug 12.

The MCF Faith Under Fire Seminar was a resounding success. We were privileged to hear from GEN Hurley, BRIG (Retd) Jim Wallace, Robert Fergusson, and Bishop Eacott. Transcripts of the presentations are enclosed. DVD's of the seminar are also available free of charge from the MCF Office. Contact mcf.office@defence.gov.au to order your copy. The next Seminar titled Spiritual Boot Camp is scheduled for Sat 1 Sep 12.

I'd like to acknowledge those in the Tongan and Samoan communities who suffered a tragic loss with 11 deaths in a house fire in Brisbane. Our prayers are with the families of those who lost their loved ones and those have to now rebuild their lives physically, emotionally and spiritually. CHAP Al Lavaki who was going to present at the seminar withdrew to provide chaplaincy support to the Tongan and Samoan communities. A nightly prayer meeting of 800 people gathered for a number of weeks and Al was right in the centre of this gathering.



CDF Christmas Greeting

GEN David Hurley, AC, DSC

Christmas is a time of great celebration for Christians everywhere as we celebrate the birth of our Lord. For many ADF members it is also a time of great upheaval as they go on posting around Australia, setting up for a new chapter in their lives in new places. For some it means yet another Christmas deployed away from loved ones, or perhaps a Christmas at home without a loved one. Regardless of where you are next year I encourage you to seek the friendship and fellowship with Christians through MCF or the other military Christian ministries; with old friends and with workmates.

I value the work of the MCF and was privileged to attend the Defence Christians Dinner and the MCF Faith Under Fire Seminar with my wife Linda this year. Wherever you are serving this Christmas I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and God bless you and your family in 2012.



DEFENCE CHRISTIANS DINNER 2011

LTCOL Matt Grills



The atmosphere at this year's Defence Christians Dinner could only be described as vibrant as over 200 people gathered to share a time of fellowship at the 'Top of the Cross' in Woden, Canberra. The ever-increasing popularity of the dinner caused the room to be filled with lively chatter and laughter, complemented by great food and an engaging interview.

This year the guests of honour were none other than CDF, GEN Hurley, and his wife Mrs Linda Hurley. In a candid interview by Peter McKay, the couple shared the meaning of their personal faiths in one of the toughest jobs in the country. "When things get tough, our faith is essential", said GEN Hurley, adding leaders "need a sense of values holding you in place". CDF had no hesitation in adding that his personal standard comes from his Christian values. In addition, he added that an understanding of the importance of faith and spirituality allows an important connection with people from other cultures while on operations.

There is no doubt the operational tempo pressure on ADF leaders is at it highest since the 1970s. According to CDF, GEN Hurley, "we need strong fit people to do the job the Government demands, and spiritual fitness is an important

part of that". Citing his time as CO 1RAR in Somalia in 1995 as an example, he stated he has been in situations where without his faith he could not have "got the job done". Through his faith GEN Hurley finds "wisdom to deal with deeply complex issues".

To the amusement of guests, Mrs Hurley recounted the story of their first meeting in the Basement Jazz Club in Sydney. His opening line, "would you mind my cardigan?" apparently won the day. Now that would be a sight to see! Within a month the then LT Hurley had popped the question, and eight months later the knot was tied. GEN Hurley gave Mrs Hurley the credit for being the catalyst for his faith decision, and it was obvious to those gathered that Defence's top couple share a solid marriage built on that foundation. Did the newly married Mrs Hurley ever think, while sitting in the pews at St Giles Presbyterian Church in Hurstville, that her now husband would reach the top job? Probably not, but the experiences along the way undoubtedly make her qualified to say, "we must work at marriages, they don't just happen!"

From a Christian perspective it is deeply encouraging to know that Defence is in the hands of a man of faith. Thanks must go to the organisers of the dinner, and also to the guests of honour for openly sharing their faith.



MCF Seminar – Faith Under Fire

CAPT Mark Bali

The second MCF Seminar titled *Faith Under Fire* was held in Russell Offices in Canberra on Sat 3 Sep 2011. The seminar has grown from a crowd of 75 last year to well over 120 this year! Many visitors from interstate for the Defence Christians Dinner took the opportunity to stay for the seminar, building on the fellowship from the night before. Along with great networking, the seminar offered a rare chance for the MCF and wider Defence community to gather, worship and learn in a great atmosphere of faith.



This issue of Crossfire will aim to bring the strong message of the importance of faith in the modern ADF to our members who could not attend and provides a record for those who did. Guests enjoyed many insightful and inspiring presentations which are summarised in the following articles. MCF's Patron, the Chief of Defence Force GEN David Hurley opened proceedings with a statement on his views on faith as a critical component of human capability in the ADF. His address was neatly complemented by a later presentation by Bishop Len Eacott profiling the newly launched *Faith Under Fire* course, which inspired the title of this year's seminar.

Guest speakers including Australian Christian Lobby director BRIG Jim Wallace (Retd.), Hillsong's Pastor Robert Fergusson and a message from recently deployed

CHAP Al Lavaki all underscored the theme that faith is important, especially in times of trial. Worship led by Queanbeyan's High Street Church band created an amazing atmosphere of the presence of God. GEN Hurley later commented on the matter: "I never imagined I would feel like this in R1!", referring to his usual office space a couple of floors higher in the same building.

DVDs of the *Faith under Fire* Seminar presentations are available on enquiry from the MCF office free of charge, contact mcf.office@defence.gov.au. Next year, we are looking forward to another Seminar with its initial theme being *Spiritual Boot Camp*. The date for the seminar is Sat 01 Sep 12 following the Defence Christians Dinner in Canberra. We hope to see you there.



Faith on the Front Line

BRIG (Retd) Jim Wallace, AM

When I was serving in Defence during the long peace, there weren't many front lines around. But in fact, there is a very real front line for all of us as Christians serving in the military, indeed as I now experience daily, in our Christian walk in the nation and community at large. The front line is where our faith and its values clash with the world's "faith" and its values.

It's a front line with all the characteristics of a battle field – but with even more consequence. It is in reality even more important. How we perform at that point of contact has enduring implications – not just for one battle, but for the cause of Christ more generally in our place of witness – the Defence Force – and our world. And make no mistake it is a clash of values at this point of contact. And our values are formed eventually on whose wisdom we follow.

You and I must draw our values from the wisdom of God, not the wisdom of the world. Partnering with worldly wisdom, often simply what's customary or popular has so often been the first mistake of the Church. The battlefield analogy is that your front line has been infiltrated and your position is untenable; you have to retreat and you might be routed.

Martin Niemoller, a pastor who initially supported the National Socialist Church but was later interned himself, described it this way after the War:

"First they came for the communists, but I didn't speak out because I wasn't a communist, then they came for the trade unionists, but I didn't speak out because I wasn't a trade unionist, and then they came for the Jews, but I didn't speak out because I wasn't a Jew, and then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak out for me."

That applies to the erosion of the values of any organisation, of any person's capital of integrity and therefore authority.

Now the question is still how do we manage our faith at this front line - whether it's the battlefield front line, the barracks front line or defence committees as the front line. How do we find the courage to stand, or the even greater quotient required to lead. How do we determine the values and maintain our commitment to them?



The answer – as always – is to be found in scripture. If we want values better than those driving parts of this world – we have to look outside it and rely on what it denies – the spiritual.

In 1 Corinthians 2:11–13 we are told:

"For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God, except the Spirit of God. This is what we speak, not in words taught to us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

I have always been a great believer that in this world we have to speak and demonstrate our faith in words and ways the world understands. The safeguard, lest we corrupt the message, is that we

rely on the Spirit. We need to speak and act in ways to a world that doesn't understand spiritual things as the scripture says with "spirit taught words". Of course I would never add to the scriptures, but I think implicit in the scripture is an equal requirement on our actions and our witness.

If faith at the front line of the battlefield, the barrack room or the defence committee is going to triumph, if it is going to make a difference, it must be informed by the Spirit. The secret is to stay close to Him. There are a host of organisations in the Defence Force to provide fellowship and prayer coverage, and if we are to be effective for Christ, if we are to ensure that our faith is to not just survive at the front line on the battlefield but thrive and demonstrate through our witness by word and deed that Christ is real, we have to avail ourselves of this fellowship. We have to stay in fellowship in order to stay strong in our faith.

All the theory and knowledge of scripture is for nothing unless we have the courage to stand for Christ when it counts. I've mentioned it previously, but the reality is that contacts and battles on the front line are carried as much by courage as anything else, and God equally requires it of us in this spiritual battle – the spiritual front line in which you find yourself every day.

Courage is a decision – it is a decision that each of us has to make each day – to be courageous. God will honour your decision, but you first have to make it.



Captains' Letters — Faith Under Difficult Circumstances

Robert Fergusson

All of us will face tragedy and challenging seasons. We cannot control the nature of these circumstances but we can govern how we respond to them. We can also determine how we communicate at such times. Whether we recognize it or not, people are listening to us, 'reading us'. Our communication can encourage or discourage, empower or disempower. We need to ensure the messages we send, the 'letters' we write, are filled with faith.

Paul the apostle made an interesting statement about letters when he wrote, "You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry..." (2 Corinthians 3:2-3 NIV). Every Christian therefore, is a letter written and sent by Spirit of the living God to be received and read by the world. We have a responsibility to live lives that reflect the Writer and 'write letters' that lift the spirit.

The Bible clearly states that believers "will have no fear of bad news" (Psalm 112:7) but it doesn't say that we will have no bad news. Jesus Christ said to his disciples, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). We should face the facts that we will go through difficult times, but when they come, we must react appropriately. We need to find refuge in God, believe His word and confess the truth to a watching world.

When my wife accidentally set herself on fire while cooking on a gas stove a number of years ago, there was no point in panicking or blaming God. After all, the book of Proverbs says, "If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength" (Proverbs 24:10 NIV). After rushing her to the hospital, and making an inappropriate joke about how 'smoking can damage your health' (which she didn't appreciate!), we had to trust God. This consisted of praising His Name and confessing His word which culminated in her miraculous healing. It was a difficult time for us but it resulted in a good report that encouraged many people. Through the grace of God and our resultant faith, our bad news became good news.



As believers we are called to make disciples. As leaders, we have many who look to us to live an exemplary life. Among the numerous letters written by my family over the centuries I have discovered four letters, all written by Captains, that illustrate how we should react in times of trouble. King David exhibited each of these attributes and, by doing so, sang a song that others could sing.

1. Remain positive when you hear a bad report.

When David was struck down with sickness he wrote a psalm on his sick bed and praised God despite his pain. The psalm ends with a determined and positive cry of victory, "All my enemies will be ashamed and dismayed; they will turn back in sudden disgrace" (Psalm 6:10 NIV). When my father, Capt. David Fergusson, was struck down with cancer he wrote a letter in 1962 about his illness that is filled with such optimism that I am inspired by his example not just saddened by his condition. His war diaries are characterised by beneficial outcomes rather than negative events. He describes a bird he saw on the slopes of a hill rather than the minefield he had to cross to capture it. He wrote his life with such positive language that I want to emulate it.



2. Receive peace when you go through loss.

Kings are not immune to suffering. King David's son Absalom betrayed his father and then was killed tragically. Yet despite his pain, David found peace and comfort in God. He wrote, "I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the Lord sustains me" (Psalm 3:5 NIV). My grandfather, Capt. Donald Fergusson, lost a member of three generations in two world wars: His father, brother and son. Yet a letter, written in 1944, about the loss of his son and the serious wounding of another, reveals humour, resolve and comfort. Once again, his attitude, recorded for posterity, equips me in times of inevitable loss.

3. Retain prayerfulness when you encounter injustice.

Despite the evident loyalty he engendered in his followers, David also attracted injustice. One of his best friends betrayed him and caused him immense pain. After describing the hurt of being deceived by a companion, he concludes, "Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall" (Psalm 55:22 NIV). He evidently learned to give the injustice to God so that he didn't communicate bitterness to others: Something one of my ancestors clearly didn't learn. Capt. Daniel Gavey wrote a letter in 1825 about the "unfeeling", "unprincipled" and "wretched wife" who had abandoned him. His letter serves as a warning rather than an example.

4. Reveal perseverance when you face challenge.

King David was not only a man of prayer but also a man of perseverance. Anointed by God but pursued by men, followed by crowds and yet forgotten in a desert; David certainly understood challenge. Yet, while in a cave, he wrote, "When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who know my way" (Psalm 142:3 NIV). I have a letter penned by my great uncle Capt. Frank Myddelton-Gavey in 1915 on his way to Gallipoli where he finally died. He had already been seriously wounded both in France and Gallipoli and yet was returning again with resolution and equanimity of spirit. It is a Captain's letter.

These letters and King David's example teach us how to have faith in difficult circumstances. Napoleon suggested that we should study the great commanders and model ourselves on them. "This", he said, "is the only means of becoming a great captain... When I face challenging seasons, I want to write a Captain's letter.

MCF Small Group Code of Conduct

As a member of an MCF small group I will:

1. Respect the denominational differences of all Christians within the ADF. I will not argue denominational doctrine or question denominational beliefs.
2. Allow all members of the group an opportunity to speak regardless of spiritual maturity.
3. Respect rank during MCF meetings unless invited not to.
4. Invite local Chaplains, and members of other Christian groups, to be part of MCF meetings.
5. In group studies respect differences in bible translation and interpretation. Studies of the bible are not to involve books or passages of the Bible that denominations contest.
6. Apply wisdom in the demonstration of Spiritual gifting where there is potential to cause offence to members present.
7. Respect the authority of the small group leader, regardless of rank and uniform.



I Lift Up My Eyes To The Hills: Where Will I Find Help?

CHAP Al Lavaki

I was deployed with MTF1, 6RAR Battle Group to Afghanistan last year for 9 months. It was a very difficult deployment with so many KIA and WIA during my time there. I chose my title because in Uruzgan, we were surrounded by mountains and hills everywhere we travelled. Lots of people have asked me how did I manage to fulfil my responsibilities as a Chaplain in the midst of grief, struggles and troubles. My answer is always, "My helps come from the Lord" as the writer of Psalm 121 confesses.

Uruzgan is a barren desert with dust everywhere. The desert was symbolic of hopelessness and nothingness. In the midst of this dry land, soldiers came to me for comfort and prayer when their mates were killed. I also recall the tragic memorial services looking across at the soldiers with tears in their eyes... looking up to me for comfort.

People might say that they do not believe in God, but when they struggle they look for hope and peace from me. Why? Because we all have limits as human-beings – but by looking up and seeking God's face we draw strength to carry on.

The blessing of being a Christian is that we have someone special to draw our energy from. In the midst of a barren land and hopelessness, I lifted my eyes to those hills and called upon his name and he helped me out. How did I manage to do my job? I did it because of God's promises that he is there for us no matter where we are.

I would like to share some verses that were of great encouragement to me in Afghanistan:

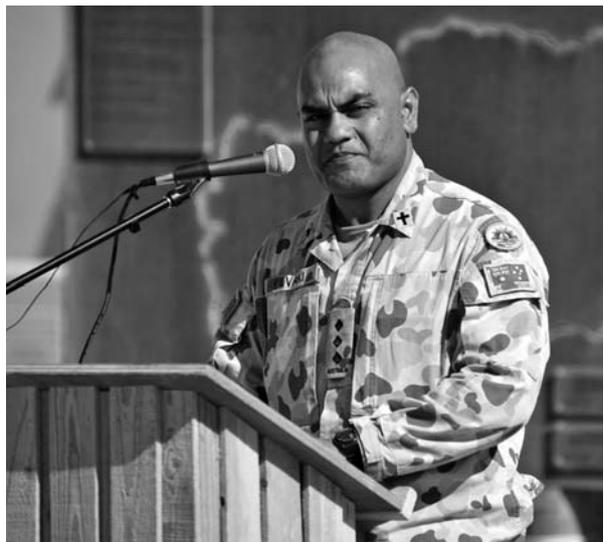
Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16

Because God has said, Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. Hebrews 13:5c

Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. Isaiah 43:1b

But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:31

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am



gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matthew 11:28-30

I lift up my eyes to the hills; where will I find help? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. Psalm 121

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Psalm 23:4

The above verses demonstrate God's covenant and promise to uplift us in times of trouble. This is a promise that we must claim wherever we are – and no matter what the situation is. I finished my deployment through hope in God's faithfulness during tragic times...because no matter what the circumstances around us – God is good all the time.



Announcing



Association of Military Christian Fellowships
South West Pacific Regional Conference
HANDS ACROSS THE PACIFIC
A Journey in Faith



Brisbane – Australia

Conference – everyone (subject to venue)
Monday 1st – Thursday 4th October 2012

Interaction Training – by invitation only
Thursday 4th – Monday 8th 2012

If you want to attend or have any questions, please contact

MCF Australia via www.mcf-a.org.au or
Commander Tony Roper via
email: AMCF-Conference@marbl.net or
Mob: 0449 173 321

To help others to attend or to make a donation use:
DEFCREDIT – BSB: 803-205 ACCOUNT: 20325435
Please help us make this a special event!



I would like to make a difference in the ADF by becoming a MCF Centurion

Rank/Title: _____ Full Name: _____ Employee ID (if serving ADF or APS): _____

Mailing Address (only if your mailing address needs updating): _____

Town/Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

Country: _____ Email: _____

As an MCF Centurion I:

1) Commit to pray weekly using MCF's prayer calendar.

2) Commit to financial support of \$5, \$10, \$20 or \$50 per fortnight.

- I have made a \$_____ per fortnight allotment via DEFPAY to allottee WG0052.
- I have arranged an auto transfer of \$_____ per fortnight to MCF's DEFCREDIT account (Account name: Military Christian Fellowship, BSB 803-205, Member number 66126, Account number: 20514572).
- Find attached my cheque of \$_____ to cover one year's support. Please contact me in twelve month's time to renew my pledge.

3) Agree to promote MCF by displaying MCF advertising provided to me in my local area and church.

4) Do/Do not (circle one) wish my name to be listed in Cross Fire as an MCF Centurion.

5) Do/Do not (circle one) wish to receive quarterly updates about MCF including an email from the Chairman about the recent happenings in MCF, Treasurer reports so I can see my gift working, and sneak previews of Cross Fire and MCF products.

6) Do/Do not (circle one) wish to receive a Centurion Pack of signature items including a Centurion coffee mug, MCF Centurion lapel pin, a 15%-off coupon for Koorong bookstores, and book 'Principles of War'.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Return to:

MCF-A, CP3 -1-130, Department of Defence, CANBERRA, ACT, 2600
OR fax 02 6266 3578

For further information ring MCF Staff Worker on 02 6266 4950 or email mcf.office@defence.gov.au

Only MCF members can become Centurions. MCF membership and Centurion forms are available online at www.mcf-a.org.au, from the MCF Office at CP3-1-130, or in the 'Cross Fire' magazine.

The Centurion program commenced in 2005. We are aiming for 100 centurions to carry the Lord's work forward in MCF by 2014.





Application for Membership of MCF

Return to MCF-A, CP3-1-130, Dept of Defence, CANBERRA ACT 2600

Surname: _____ Given Names: _____

Rank: _____ Employee ID: _____

Mailing Address (preferably a Defence address):

Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

Country: _____

Telephone: (____) _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

I apply for Ordinary Membership: (*tick one*)

- I am a member/ex member of the ADF: Air Force, Army, Navy, APS (*circle*)
- I am the spouse of a member/ex member of the ADF: Air Force, Army, Navy, APS (*circle*)
- I am an accredited representative of the ADF philanthropic organisation
- I am a civilian who currently works alongside ADF personnel, or have done so for at least one year at: _____ (*Location*)
- I am a member/ex member of the Armed Forces of _____ (*name of country*) currently residing in Australia
- I am none of the above and apply for Associate Membership.

Military Christian Fellowship Statement of Belief

To ensure that members of MCF agree to the basics of Christian doctrine, applicants must, in accordance with the MCF Constitution, sign the following Statement of Belief. This Statement is based on the 381 AD Nicene Creed; the most commonly used statement of Christian faith in the history of the church:

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through Him all things were made. For us men (meaning all) and for our salvation He came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit He was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scripture; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. I believe in one holy catholic (meaning universal) and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sin. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. I believe that the Holy Scripture is inspired by God and is the authority in all matters of faith, teaching, activities and personal conduct concerning MCF.

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

National Day of Prayer for Defence



Background

In 2011 MCF sponsored a National Day of Prayer for Defence which was supported around Australia. The recent success of the MCF *Faith Under Fire* Seminar and the accompanying launch of the ADF *Faith Under Fire Course* by the CDF has reinforced the need to continue to pray for our Defence Force and our beloved Defence families.



Why prayer is needed

Australia has experienced unprecedented losses of some of its finest young men fighting in the Middle East for the security of Australia. Jesus said in John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." Many families have been impacted by these tragic losses, and we have a duty to support them and uphold them in prayer.

Like all human systems, political systems have strengths and weaknesses. We need to pray that our senior policy and decision-makers bring a selfless approach to their responsibilities like those who have given their own lives in service to Australia.



The vision

A *National Day of Prayer for Defence* is planned for **Saturday 24th March 2012**. Defence Christian military ministries as well as the Chaplains and those who have a heart for Defence are welcome to be part of this *National Day of Prayer for Defence*, whether they are able to join with us in Canberra, or remotely in the regions. The Duntroon Chapel and Annex will be used as a prayer centre for the Canberra region. This does not preclude churches or groups conducting their own prayer sessions at their own convenience on the day.

Please join with us at this challenging time in Australian history and uplift the Australian Defence Force to God. If you are planning to attend the *National Day of Prayer for Defence* at the Duntroon Chapel please RSVP to the MCF Prayer Coordinator, Olly Kaese on mobile number 0434 679 213 or email fit4life@hotmail.com by **Saturday 10th March 2012**. Alternatively, if you would like to organise a prayer meeting in the regions please contact Olly by **Thursday 1st March 2012** so other Defence Christians can be advised.

The format

It is proposed that prayer groups conduct three two-hour prayer sessions between sunrise and sundown facilitated by a local prayer leader. It is also proposed that people can commit as much time as they are able. It is acknowledged that short sessions are achievable for some families with small children. Session structures are at the discretion of the prayer leader and may include a time of worship. Themes include:

- Defence members and families soldiers, sailors and airmen who have physical, mental and spiritual injuries both on deployment, and upon return to Australia
- Defence military ministries
- Defence senior leadership
- Defence chaplaincy
- Faith Under Fire DVD
- Association of Military Christian Fellowship (AMCF) Conference 2012



ADF Faith Under Fire Course

BISHOP Len Eacott, AM

The concept for the ADF *Faith Under Fire* Course really began at an Army Chaplains' Conference 20 years ago, entitled "Spiritual Fitness." From this began for me a growing realisation that there was a general ignorance of the importance of spirituality within the ADF. I spent many years pondering how to bring a resource to Defence members that would highlight the significance of the spiritual dimension of their life and military service. Many existing resources from the church, when applied to the Defence environment, have been found to be not suitable. What relevance does a product designed for the civilian faith community have to the ministry of the Air Force Chaplain at Kandahar in Afghanistan or RAAF Richmond, or to the Army Chaplain at Dili in East Timor or Puckapunyal; or a Navy Chaplain at HMAS Stirling in Western Australia or at sea aboard HMAS Stuart?

Our current operational tempo is leaving a human toll, and whilst our mental and physical capability is the subject of rigorous training and support, to a large extent the spiritual aspects of human capability are ignored for want of appropriate resources. Spiritual injuries occur in operations in isolation from or in conjunction with mental health problems like post-traumatic stress. Spiritual injuries such as grief and shame, anger or a challenged faith are real, and may have a long term toll on the individual. Some will suffer to an extent that causes damage to their world view, to personal relationships and ability to function in the workplace. It is for this reason that the Defence Chaplaincy is developing a strategy for spiritual health and wellbeing in the ADF.

Raising the awareness of the importance of the spiritual wellbeing of sailors, soldiers, and airmen and women was the catalyst for the development of the ADF *Faith Under Fire* course. Under CDF's sponsorship, this vision has matured into the product launched on 5 July 2011. Based on the Centre for Public Christianity's *Life of Jesus* program, the course explains the role of faith in our lives and in the modern ADF. The course also challenges participants to look critically at the claims Christianity makes about itself and to consider its influence on our culture, the ADF and in our lives.

The aim of the DVD-based course is for individuals to:

- a. understand the importance and relevance of spiritual resilience;
- b. understand the influence of Christianity upon Australian and Defence culture, and upon personal faith; and
- c. consider some of life's big questions.



The course acknowledges that many other religions and belief systems also influence Australian society, however, it deliberately focuses on the Christian faith as it has had the most significant impact on our culture, values, laws, ethics, and upon the traditions of our nation and the ADF. An understanding of faith also enables members of the ADF to have a solid foundation from which to interpret and interface with the other cultures and religions that form a major facet of the modern battlespace.

The course has been designed to be delivered by the chaplains and is available to other leaders in the defence community through the chaplains. CDF acknowledge spiritual fitness and resilience to be a valid part of human capability, and hence the course is designed to be conducted during work hours as part of human capability and resilience development. As a training resource it is important that command is involved in the delivery of this training. MCF members interested in seeing this training take place in their work environment are strongly encouraged to work with their chaplains to ensure this objective is maintained.

This is the first contemporary resource available to members of the ADF that gives a relevant, challenging and easily delivered means of building an elementary level of spiritual awareness. This is but one part of the broader strategy to bring spiritual fitness back onto the agenda, and to raise it to its place as a central and equitable component of the ADF's most critical capability – its people. We trust you will find it useful in your workplace.



My Christian Walk with Christ

PO Oliver Kaese

My life story to the present day is by no means an accident or a miracle but more so God's purpose in what he saw in me. This purpose continues today. I wanted to become a Christian as I didn't want to live a life without purpose or meaning. My way wasn't good enough. My life and career began in Brisbane, where I grew up. My place of birth was Rabaul PNG. When I was eight I moved to Brisbane to attend school, and remained there until I joined the Royal Australian Navy in January 1995.

My first few years in the Navy opened my eyes up to what the world was really like. The Navy has given me a strong base and the appreciation of the many worlds that people live in. Being accepted for who you are was very tough in my early days in the Navy. Being an Islander, this wasn't easily achievable. However, having served on many ships and enduring long voyages of up to 6 months away from home, I quickly learnt about people – their habits, likes and dislikes etc. I was very shy in nature, however the Lord has many ways to expose us and reveal our greatness in a way that we ourselves don't understand. I experienced many levels of peoples' attitudes and character. Good or bad, I am thankful for those experiences as it has shaped me and made me a better person today.

Fitness and health were the driving factors for me when I was growing up. And it's still the driving factor today in my career in the Navy. I believed the Lord was preparing me for greatness before I was saved – I just didn't know it. Exercise and fitness kept me focussed on who I was. In 2003, I transferred category from a Gunnery Sailor to a Physical Training Instructor in the Navy. Yet whilst I knew that I wanted to do something I loved, the thought of going on a Physical Trainers Course with 15-20 other ADF members was terrifying. Being a Navy Physical Trainer required getting in front of people and barking out orders and commands and expecting them to follow.

This was a painful thought for me, because it was something that I was seriously scared of doing. And I struggled a lot on course, in this department. My health and fitness was at a top level though. However, it was combining all the elements together which I found very hard at that times. I cried out to the Lord. I still had my Catholic beginnings, so I knew of him, just didn't know His purpose in me at the time. I persisted because I knew I didn't want to give up. It wasn't until I finished the course after 6 months, and got a posting to my first base establishment in Nowra, NSW that it all made sense. As my confidence grew, so did my own belief in who I was. During this time, the Lord entered my life again, to try one last time to win me over to His way. It was through a relationship breakdown, that I realised that there had to be a better way.

When my time was up in Nowra, I got re-posted to a ship in Sydney. My first thought was Lord, I don't want to go back to my old ways and do the things I used to do. From that point on the Lord put people in my path and my questions were answered almost immediately. I'm a PT trainer, so in my down time I like to take groups of people out for some extra exercise sessions (running etc...)



It was in one of those PT sessions that, from no where I said to the group I was about to train with; bow your heads and let's pray for a good safe session. The thing was I don't normally do that at all. Anyway, half way through the PT session one of the young lads asked me if I was a Christian, which I said 'No', however I was looking for a good church to go to. He mentioned the church he was going to had a Home Group Bible study meeting that night, and asked if I wanted to attend. I said 'Yes'; and it was a big revelation from that point onwards. I attended church services at Bondi Church at the Beach, (now C3 Bondi) and got to know the Pastor and all the people at that church. As I got to know the Word more and establish a relationship with the Lord, I became more alive in Him.

Three months later, I gave my life and heart to the Lord. My life has never been the same since. He compels me to do so many extraordinary things. To this day, I am a servant of His word. It was tough being a Christian in the Military when I first became saved, however, the Lord found a way by introducing, and positioning me around people that share the same faith.

I recently got posted to Canberra from Sydney and before I started work there, I prayed to the Lord to be around Christians and continue his work. My first week at work, I ran into the Senior Chaplain of my Base. After a good chat he mentioned that the Military Christian Fellowship were looking for a Prayer Coordinator. He asked me if I was interested in joining MCF and also to take over the prayer leadership role. I agreed to both, and the rest is history. As a member of the Military Christian Fellowship in the ADF, my next step continues to be the study of the Word and to let others know of Him.



New Armour in Afghanistan

MCF Centurion, SGT Darren Thomas has written to us from Afghanistan to show the new armour he is wearing – his MCF Centurion pin! He reports that he has distributed all the copies of Crossfire magazine that he’s received, and has been asked some great questions about Christ which is great news!



MCF – CENTURION LIST

MCF currently has 62 Centurions. Some have chosen to be anonymous. We are grateful to everyone who contributes through the Centurion program.

Allan	Gary	COL (RETD)
Bayliss	Jan	Ms
Bielenberg	Helen	MRS
Bielenberg	Russell	LTCOL (RETD)
Blagg	James	WGCDR
Burton	Eric	CHAP (Res)
Cannon	Geoff	CMDR (Res)
Chapman	Katie	CAPT
Choi	Jacob	LT
Colton	Gregory	CAPT
Cosh	Robert	CPL
Couper	Jonathon	CAPT
Davies	Owen	CHAP
Fowle	Gary	WO2
Foxhaull	Alex	FLTLT
Hays	Samuel	Mr
Hoskin	Amy	Mrs
Jobst	Mark	Mr
Kaese	Oliver	POPT
Lawson	Rebecca	MS
Lawson	Stuart	Mr
Liston	Peter	CAPT
Lock	Ann	REV
Lock	Garry	CHAP
Luck	David	CHAP
McPhan	Ken	GPCAPT (RETD)
Mena	Anne	LCDR
Minchin	Scott	FLGOFF
Muller	Marcaus	MAJ
Mumford	Mick	LTCOL (Res)
Mumford	Janet	MRS
Neuhaus	Steve	CHAP
Nicholls	Kim	Mr
Nicholls	Trudy	Mrs
Ruting	Trevor	RADM
Quinn	Adam	PTE(REC)
Stoll	Talei	LS
Stone	Gary	CHAP (Res)
Sutherland	Rob	CHAP
Thomas	Darren	SGT
Urlichs	Troy	SGT
van Heel	Jamie	LTCOL
Vandeppeer	Bruce	LCDR
Watson	Matthew	AB
Webb	Shaun	CPL
Williams	David	MAJ (Res)
Wright	Jason	CHAP



The Loaves and the Fishes

Help us make your MCF donation go further!

CAPT Mark Bali

At the 2010 AGM, MCF decided to step out in faith by purchasing more resources for members, supporting the work of fellow Defence Christian ministries through tithing, increasing staff worker hours to coordinate initiatives like the MCF Seminar as well as more staff worker visits to small groups around the country, and purchasing resources for our small group leaders. We felt it was our role to support our members to become stronger Christians in the ADF, and that God would honour this commitment.

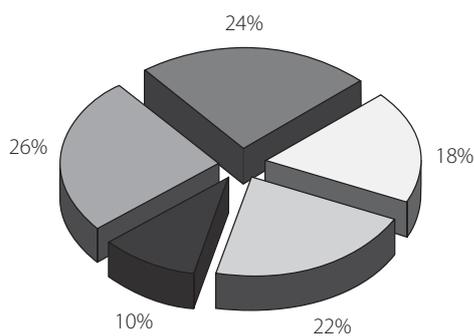
The current distribution of MCF donations is shown in the graph below. This representation takes into account the fact that our budgeted costs currently outstrip budgeted donations. Our heart is to see a distribution that looks more like the second chart. With a larger budget, MCF can develop initiatives such as providing more resources, training and support to group leaders, and improvements to our in-house resource production capability. We have a heart to support local groups in developing their own regional seminars under local leadership. This will ensure the success of our Canberra seminars can be spread across the country, with

MCF members and other Christians in the Defence community. Resources can also be injected into our still emerging Deployment ministry, which seeks to meet the spiritual needs of our deployed members.

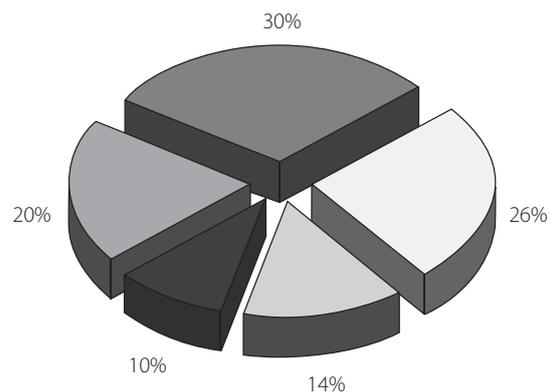
MCF has already stepped out in faith with increased staff worker hours, and we are now poised to direct future growth in donations directly to increased support (both financial and spiritual) to our small groups around the country. This will see the fraction spent on administration fall away dramatically as this area has already been primed for growth, and is funded. We know there are many opportunities in every small group to see God's work completed, and MCF wants to be there to support your good ideas.

So we invite you to join our vision. Make a difference in the ADF by becoming an MCF Centurion (application form on page 10) or alternatively you may consider a one-off or ongoing donation. All donations over \$2 to MCF are tax deductible, but more importantly your donation helps MCF grow its capacity to build God's Kingdom in the ADF.

Current Allocation



The Future



- Organising Seminars/Conferences
- Providing Resources
- Support to Small groups
- Coordination and Administration
- Tithing to Military Christian Ministries





Solid Rock Ministries

Mrs Janet Mumford
solidrockmin@optusnet.com.au

It was a Friday afternoon (my favourite!) and I had one of those rare moments where all was peaceful, I remember thinking to myself "Ahh, peace". Our five children (plus a friend) were happily playing so I stretched out to read a book for a few minutes. The peace was interrupted by the sound of the phone. It was my husband calling from an ambulance to let me know that he'd been in a head on car accident, the car was a write off and he was off to hospital. This all occurred 2 weeks before he deployed and for the next few months circumstance after circumstance left me feeling very much that my faith was under fire. The temptation to give up, the temptation to turn my back on God when he seemed so far away and the temptation to compromise when I was so tired of the battles were just some of the temptations I faced as my faith was under fire.

What helped me through? Often it was the scriptures that I had memorised during less volatile times. I continually reminded myself that God "will never leave me or forsake me" (even though it might feel like He has) and that God knows the plans He has for me and they are for good and not for evil, to give me a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11). There were many more, but you get the idea. In the midst of the battle and in the midst of temptation I reminded myself of these scriptures, they are truth and gave me hope.



Being honest with Christian friends was vital. Many of my Christian friends are not in my current location, but through email, text messages and phone calls I kept myself accountable to them and I was very blessed by their prayers and encouragement and unconditional love. The Solid Rock group that I belong to was an

unending source of love and encouragement and at times I also needed to call on my pastor for prayer.

The times when I wondered if I had any faith at all were the times to go back to the message of salvation. Whatever else was happening I could believe that Jesus had died on a cross for me. He had become the needed sacrifice for my sins and that through his death and resurrection I was forgiven and assured eternal life. If I had faith for nothing more, I had faith in what Jesus had done.

If your faith is under fire can I encourage you to go back to basics, reach out to other Christians for encouragement and prayer and be honest with them and God about how you are feeling and what you are going through. If you are in a quieter season, use this time to memorise God's word so that you will be prepared when challenges to your faith come. My prayer for you is that God would increase your strength, faith and courage as you face the battles in your life.



HomeGuard Australia

Anne Iuliano

Ever wonder what your mum or dad think about you being in the Defence Forces??

It's likely that your parents are very supportive and extremely proud of you...but that they occasionally worry that you're safe or doing okay. And wish that they could just give you a hug.

Well, one thing they can do for you is PRAY!

HomeGuard Australia is a new **prayer network for parents of Australian Military Personnel**. Its purpose is to connect such parents, encouraging prayer for their sons and daughters, especially those on the front lines of war.

It also provides support to, and friendship between, the parents. It is a highly confidential and secure network, founded by an ordained minister and chaplain, who also has a son in the army.

So **tell your parents** to check out **www.homeguardaustralia.org.au**

It will help both them and you!



Evangelism Update

CAPT Katie Chapman

I would like to start by thanking MCF for the opportunity to be the Evangelism Coordinator for the past two years. I have thoroughly enjoyed the role. I hope that the resources we have purchased can help all members, in all kinds of conditions, to demonstrate God's love confidently, to have the right tool or resource to lead someone to Jesus and then have the support and resources to develop and mentor new and seasoned Christians alike!



I encourage all of you to look at the resources on the website and use them. Different approaches will be required for different groups, especially if it is transient with posting cycles.

A suggested action plan for a relatively stable group looks like this:

1. Going Public DVDs.
2. Pray for God to give the members of your group just one person each to talk about God with.
3. Use of the right resource for you (Gospel Talk/Christianity Explored or Explained/Alpha series etc.)

4. Use of confirmatory resources such as the Faith Under Fire DVDs/The Case for Christ DVD/the Lennox vs. Dawkins DVD etc.

5. Inclusion of the new disciple in your weekly bible study!

A suggested action plan for a transient group or individual looks like this:

1. Borrowing of resources that appeal to you as an individual and where you need growth (i.e. Bait of Satan/Barbarian Way/Screwtape letter/Velvet Elvis etc)
2. Look at the different evangelism resources and identify which one appeals to you.
3. Get an MCF mug or something and be OPEN about your faith. Encourage others in your group and workplace to be open about theirs too.
4. Pray that God will give you the right tools, words, and person for you to disciple.
5. Trust God and crack on! Work through personal growth as well as hopefully mentoring someone else. If you don't get anyone keep developing yourself until they come along – which they will if you pray for it!

The Nooma series by Rob Bell is an easy, compelling and perfect tool for lunch time Bible studies. The Hard Questions Bible study series is also an excellent series at tackling common questions and opposition to Christian faith. Be proactive, trust God, pray (you can never pray too much!), encourage other people and be proud to be a child of God!



Staff Worker Report

Rev Ann Lock

This is my final report for Crossfire so is written with some sadness as the time to leave Canberra rapidly approaches. My husband Garry and I will be moving to our home at Indented Head, Victoria, in early December to discover life post Navy.

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone connected with MCF. My time as Staff Worker has been interesting and, at times, a steep learning curve. I am grateful for your patience and kindness as I've struggled with acronyms and Defence procedures that are very different to life in church ministry. It has been a privilege to visit many of you in your workplace MCF groups; while email has broadened our communication immensely, there is nothing better than personal contact. I am inspired by the commitment and vision of MCF members to building the kingdom of God in the ADF. This phrase can slip easily off our lips but the reality is a lot of prayer, hard work, and dedication to something far bigger than our own little world. Time and time again I have met MCF people living their faith beyond the walls of the church by sharing the message of Jesus with work colleagues. As I leave, the inspiration of this 24/7 faith will go with me as the gift MCF offers Christians.

I am especially grateful to Jamie van Heel, Mark Bali and Darryl Gibson, the people I work with on a daily basis. Without them, especially Jamie, I could not have done my job! MCF is in competent hands under the leadership of these men who give many, many hours of their own time to MCF work.

Since the last Crossfire magazine there has been much to do as MCF Staff Worker. In June I travelled to Brisbane and Townsville visiting groups at Enoggera, RAAF Amberley and Lavarack Bks. While the days of my visit didn't coincide with Solid Rock Ministries meetings, I also managed to meet some SRM members at the MCF groups. Thank you everyone for your hospitality.



The first MCF Virtual Conference was held on August 17th. This was introduced as a way to increase communication and support between groups. 6 areas participated with at least 17 people listening in from RAAF Williamstown, RAAF Amberley, DSTO and RAAF Edinburgh. RAAF Williams, Canberra,

Enoggera BKS. We 'met' for 75 minutes with people ringing in from each of these locations. There was an opportunity to share what the Lord is doing in each area and to pray for each other. The next Virtual Conference will be in March 2012. Contact the MCF office if your group is interested in taking part.

There are reports of the Defence Christians Dinner and MCF Seminar, Faith Under Fire, elsewhere in this magazine. Combined attendance was 330 with some people at both events, a strong statement that Christians in Defence are alive and active!

The new Staff Worker, Lisa Thomas, will be commencing in the role on 30 Jan 2012. My prayers and best wishes are with her and may God's blessing be with her as she takes on this pivotal role.

And a blessing for all MCF people:
*May God your Creator, your Redeemer and Sustainer,
be the truth on which your life and death are built,
your hope that cannot be destroyed,
your freedom from which love and justice flow,
and the joy that has eternity within it.*

You can email the MCF Office on mcf.office@defence.gov.au. The office will close 1 December and re-open 30 January.



New MCF Staff Worker



Hello, my name is Lisa Thomas. I am the new MCF Staff Worker beginning 30 Jan 12. In 2011 I completed the Bachelor of Theology and the Diploma of Anglican Orders at St. Mark's National Theological Centre. This is the Canberra campus of Charles Sturt University in Barton. At my local Anglican Church I am a lay minister and a pastoral carer, and years before I began study, I had been a public servant with Defence in Melbourne with a RAAF member as my boss. Theological study broadened my understanding of our Triune God and therefore now influences how I pastorally care for all of creation. I recommend everyone stretch their understanding of God, whether in a local bible study or reading books or through formal study.

Having had Bishop Tom Frame, the previous Bishop to the Defence Force, as a Senior Lecturer at St. Mark's, I had heard good things about the ADF. In considering my post study employment I eagerly read the Defence Chaplains' pages to determine if there was a place for me there. That is where I came across the MCF National Staff Worker position advertisement which seemed like a perfect fit for me. I am very excited to be joining the MCF team and to be participating in the ministry God has purposed for MCF to do in planting and watering the Kingdom of God. I look forward to meeting many members in the new year, in person or by email. I hope to connect members with the resources that equip them to minister to their networks. Please contact me in 2012 and let's talk about how I can help you. Blessings, Lisa.



Farewell

PCHAP Garry Lock and his wife Ann (the MCF Staff Worker) are leaving us to return 'home' to Indented Head, Victoria. Both Garry and Ann have served MCF well in their respective roles and we wish them well for whatever their future holds.

Congratulations



LTCOL Andrew and Katrina Schaper were blessed with the safe and happy arrival of Ethan Luke, born 13 Sep 2011. A brother for Livinia and Joshua. [A]



FLGOFF Scott and Jane Minchin welcomed the arrival of their son Cooper, born 16 Sep 2011 [B].

Awards

PCHAP Garry Lock was awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross for outstanding achievement as Principal Chaplain of the Royal Australian Navy. PCHAP Garry Lock with his mother Barbara Forbes. [C]



Areas Reps/Contacts Listing

If your area is not listed or you are interested in starting a group, please contact the MCF Office at:
mcf.office@defence.gov.au

CP3-1-130

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Back cover image by: ABIS Dove Smithett
HMAS Sydney SM2 firing in the Hawaii Exercise Area.



"The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer..."

(2 Samuel 22:2)

