



eNews Dec 2022/Jan 2023

From the new MCF-A Patron - MAJGEN Sue Graham CSC



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am humbled to have been asked to serve as MCF-A Patron and I look forward to working with the MCF Executive and Council over coming years to support MCF continuing its mission to promote the Christian faith in Defence. I am really enthusiastic about the initiatives and goals for MCF-A outlined within [Towards 2025](#) and look forward to seeing MCF-A continue to evolve, particularly in fostering greater engagement with veterans and former Defence Organisation members, families and increased representation of women in leadership roles at all levels.

MCF has been a constant presence and encouragement to me throughout my military career. I joined the ADF in 1990 firstly, through Army Reserves before transferring to the full time Army in 1997. Particularly after joining the full time force, and moving away from the known security of my family home and circle of Christian friends, the fellowship and encouragement I received through lunchtime bible study groups and MCF monthly mail outs while serving overseas have been hugely important to me. The encouragement or promptings from MCF fellowship and timely reminders of God's truth have always been the right nudge at the right time.

The Christmas season has come far too quickly this year for me and I suspect many of you will feel the same. My hope is that in the rush that seems now synonymous with December that you may still find the quiet moment to reflect on the wonder of the Christmas story – God's presence on earth through His only Son. I am conscious that for some you may be required to serve away from family and friends over this time or Christmas may be a period of difficulty due to loss or disharmony. At these times of being far away from the familiar or in tough circumstances, I have always found Romans 15:13 my go to verse: *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

May you all be filled with all joy and peace as you trust in Him and I look forward to continuing the important work of MCF with you in 2023.

Beyond 2022 – David Coleman, MCF-A Secretary

The 2022 AGM took place on the evening of 14 Nov, via zoom, to facilitate maximum participation for members noting the geographically dispersed nature of MCF-A. As with most AGMs, we considered various administrative matters such as the financial statements and endorsed the 2022-23 budget, but the AGM is more than just administration. At the meeting we set or agree the direction of the ministry for the next year.

We welcomed our new MCF Patron, MAJGEN Sue Graham, who was present at the meeting, provided a short introduction and shared how she has benefited from MCF throughout her military career. During the day

Sue is Head of Business Transformation in the Defence ERP Program and we are grateful for her involvement and willingness to serve as our Patron.

The new Council was elected who will lead MCF through 2023. All of the 2022 Council members were willing to continue, so the new Council is the same as last year though there was considerable discussion and some reshaping of the three Member's Representatives roles. The three Member's Reps positions remain, but their focus will shift towards support of MCF members, veterans and their families and each of the Member's Reps is now supported by an advisor. The Council sees this as a way of strengthening the level of support provided to MCF members, current and former.

The Council is grateful to all who attended or contributed to the meeting and helped to shape the future direction of MCF in building the Kingdom of God in Defence.

The MCF-A AGM minutes will be available early 2023 and advertised in the eNews once available.

What is MCF-A 'MATES'?



Member Assistance Team and Emergency Support (MATES) - In November a team of MCF-A Members (Darren, Tracey, Cath and Steve) headed to Rochester to help out an MCF Member, Cam (and his wife Mary-Ann), on the journey to recovery in Rochester. Cam and Mary-Ann are the Salvation Army Officers at Rochester and Cam is a 4 CSSB soldier.

Rochester was largely destroyed by a flood in October which affected 90% of the population. The MATES Team assisted with cleaning outside the Salvation Army facility and helping a veteran and his wife strip out the walls and other parts of their house in preparation for re plastering. The MATES Team was *fully self-contained*, so not to burden those being assisted, camping in Cam and Mary-Ann's front yard and hosting *them* to dinner for two of the three nights they were there.

It was a great time of fellowship as well as the hard work.

It is hoped that this will be an idea that takes off and grow within the MCF-A as we reach out to MCF members and their families who need assistance. I encourage you all to feel free to reach out to other MCF members at any time.

Godspeed Steve, MCF-A Chair

For more info or to register your assistance or need for help contact mcf.office@defence.gov.au any time.

You don't need to register to give assistance but we love to know how you're supporting and encouraging each other to give others ideas of how they can do similar. Stories and photos are very welcome, just get permission from those in the photos for use by MCF-A.



Leita helping gurney the sheds which were flooded



Darren and Tracey stripping out a kitchen



Steve and Cath cleaning the gutters



Cath and a volunteer cleaning the giving bins

MCF Dinner/BBQ reflections



Canberra BBQ - On Saturday 5th November around 40+ people visited MCF-A in the grounds of the historic St John's Anglican Church and School House Museum in Reid, just off Anzac Parade, Canberra. It was the most beautiful spring day, after many days and weekends of rain! The grounds had just been attended to, so looked splendid, and there was plenty of room for the kids to run around. A huge thanks to Rev Dave and the St John's folk for their hard work and warm welcome!

Everyone enjoyed meeting up in person again, or for the first time, as they grabbed a beautifully cooked snag in bread (thanks Dave), a drink from the Sallyman truck (thanks Brett) and strolled through over 180 years of history as they meandered their way through the church, museum and cemetery discovering the connections to Duntroon and Defence. Great fun and fellowship was had by all. We'll look to do something similar early next year as a Welcome Event. Thanks to all who attended and helped out on the day. Julie – MCF Staff Worker



Adelaide Dinner - On Saturday 19 November, I was blessed to attend the Defence Christians Dinner South Australia, held at the Naval, Military and Air Force Club in Adelaide's CBD. There was a wonderful mix of people in attendance from both the military and civilian worlds, all with a common respect, appreciation and yes, love, for those who serve our country (along with their families) so honourably, and often with great sacrifice.

The guest speaker for the night was the Hon Senator David Fawcett MP, former ADF member of over 22 years and Army pilot (flying helicopters and fixed wing aircraft), and the Senior Flying Instructor at the School of Army Aviation in Queensland. Senator Fawcett is now Senator for South Australia and Chair of the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. The Senator provided an update on Defence and was gracious enough to also share some fascinating personal stories.





The Senator (left in pic) encouraged us all to know our history and to know who it is we serve – the Lord God Almighty. He reminded us that Jesus said to pray for our enemies. We must always remember that Jesus spoke to people with grace and forgiveness - and then spoke Truth. The Senator exhorted us all to put on the full armour of God (be prepared!) and have integrity in all that we do - without it, it all falls apart. Remember; our battle is against the spiritual realm and it is vital that we know God's Word and His instruction manual (the Bible).

One of the people at my table was CHAP LTCOL Steve Neuhaus. Steve is the MCF-A Chair and has had a fascinating career, including joining the Army in 1979 for a three-year stint, (and then apparently forgetting to hand in his discharge papers 😊), 19 years as an Australian Federal Police Officer before becoming a Police Chaplain, and then an ADF Chaplain. It was great to also have Steve's wife, Cath, at our table – I could have chatted with them for hours!

A big thank you to Mr (MAJ - Ret'd) Geoffrey (Geoff) Robertson for organising the wonderful evening and to the staff of the Naval, Military and Air Force Club who looked after us all so well. And a special mention to those who travelled all the way from Puckapunyal and Canberra to join us for the dinner.

It would have been wonderful to have an in-depth chat with everyone who was there that night, but unfortunately, there just wasn't time. I am looking forward to next year's dinner!

MCF supporter, Associate Member – Susan Hannigan, Adelaide

MCF Office Christmas/New Year hours

The MCF-A Office will be **closed from Wednesday 21st Dec 2022 until Monday 9th Jan 2023**. There will be *reduced hours from 9th Jan 2023 until 30th Jan 2023*. Emails will be monitored weekly and actioned on need as required. Please excuse the delay in responses.

Update on PNG Bibles – article in Nov eNews



The PNG Defence Force English New Testament Palms and Proverbs Bibles, printed on waterproof paper, have been delivered and were handed over in



a ceremony in November ready to be distributed in 2023. Thanks to Bible Society Australia, LTCOL Jamie Van Heel – SW Pacific AMCF Vice President, RAAF (for flying the Bibles to PNG) and numerous others for making this possible. Praise be to God!

National Prayer Breakfast



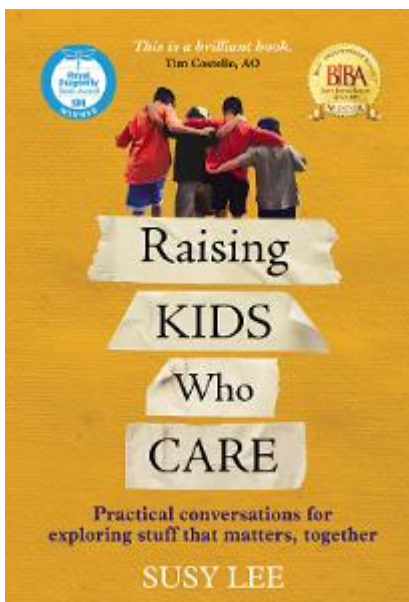
If you missed being part of the Australian National Prayer Breakfast for 2022, you may like to watch it over the Christmas break. A very inspiring story of forgiveness was given by Guest Speaker, Mr Peter Gibb.

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyqB7YB7uNo>

Things that may interest you over the Christmas break

‘Raising Kids Who care: Practical conversations for exploring stuff that matters, together’ by Susy Lee

We all want our kids to have happy, loving lives. As a society though, we need kids who are also capable of thinking and acting beyond themselves to help others have happy, loving lives too. This book gives you what you'll need to work on both.



With stories, research, and advice from other parents to inspire you, the book guides your family through 40 conversations to help kids build friendships, grow in contentment, explore issues, and decide how to make an authentic contribution to the world, together.

In our complex world, we need to be aware of looming pitfalls and be intentional about helping kids navigate their way to compassion and wonder, driven by values and purpose. This path of creative and curious conversations leads to amazing insight and hope for the future.

Imagine knowing what your kids care about, having them listen to what you care about, then doing something about it, together!

Short-listed for Australian Christian Book of the Year and winner of the Christian Indie Award for Parenting.

"We did the 'what's my superpower?' conversation last night and had a blast... laughing, arguing, thinking and TALKING. Tonight we sat outside around the fire and my son led 'listening well'. It made us all think deeply. It's been brilliant!" ~ A reader's family.

For more information about Susy, a list of the conversation topics, and samples, visit <https://www.raisingkidswhocare.info/>

Follow on FB: <https://www.facebook.com/raisingkidswhocare.info>



"Spiritual Readiness: Essentials for Military Leaders and Chaplains"

by Prof. Harold Koenig, Assoc. Prof. Lindsay Carey and Assoc. Prof. Faten Al Zaben

Although plenty of emphasis has been placed on military readiness (munitions platforms and technology), there has been much less attention paid to the readiness of military personnel themselves –called “warrior readiness.” In addition, there is an aspect of warrior readiness that has been almost completely ignored in the training of military personnel, and that is “Spiritual Readiness.” Spiritual readiness (SR) is the strength of spirit that enables the warfighter to accomplish the mission with honour. [Link to more info.](#)



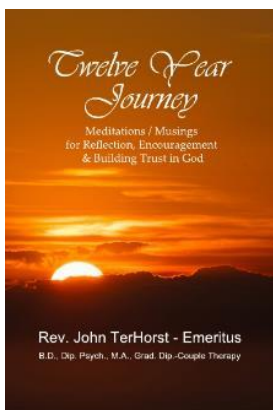
A new ETERNITY film has been produced to celebrate the 90 year anniversary of Arthur Stace writing Eternity on 14 November, 1932.

The 70-minute documentary is the next chapter of the *Eternity* story, showing how the iconic one-word sermon has been used and adapted since it famously appeared on the Sydney Harbour Bridge at the 1999/2000 Millennium Celebrations, and in the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games Opening Ceremony.

The film features interviews with media personalities, authors, artists and creative directors and also includes special comments from Ruth Ridley, the daughter of the 'Eternity preacher', Rev John Ridley, and Elizabeth Meyers, the daughter of Rev Lisle Thompson - the person who discovered Arthur Stace as Mr Eternity.

You can organise your church or Small Group to host a showing of the film. If you would like to also have a Q&A on the film with the maker, contact the MCF Office.

Link to more info on the film and screenings, or to watch the trailer: <https://writteninchalk.com>



Twelve Year Journey

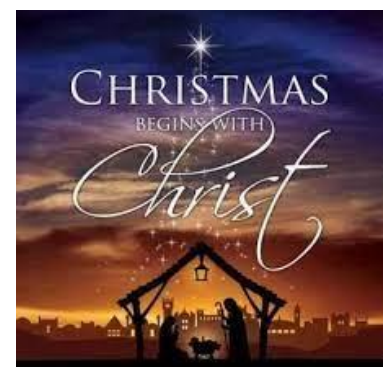
Meditations / Musings for Reflection, Encouragement & Building Trust in God

A collection of meditations / musings for reflection, encouragement and building trust in God by Reverend John TerHorst, Minister of the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia.

(Proudly edited by an MCF supporter – cover photo by an MCF member)

Purchase link: [Twelve Year Journey \(lulu.com\)](https://lulu.com)

A safe and Blessed Christmas season from the MCF-A Office and Exec/Council to you and yours. We look forward to working alongside and supporting you in 2023, expanding God's Kingdom in Defence and beyond.



Other items

Have you posted or moved house? Are you deploying or away from home for a long time?

Posted or moved, please update your details [HERE](#)

Deploying or on a long exercise? MCF-A would love to support and pray for you while you're away. Let us know at: mcf.office@defence.gov.au

Membership

[Membership](#) is free and **open to every Christian**. If you've not had an association with Defence or you don't identify as Christian you can be an associate member via the same link.

Donations

MCF is supported almost entirely through freewill donations by members and supporters. Please look at Supporting MCF in prayer, with your time and through [financial support](#). (Direct debit preferred – details at right side of the webpage link)

Note that donations (over \$2) to MCF-A are tax deductible.

Prayer requests

To put forward prayer points for inclusion in the Prayer Calendar please email the MCF Prayer Coordinator Dr Brendan Pell: brendan.pell@defence.gov.au

You can also send through **urgent prayer points** that are sent on confidentially to the MCF Prayer Warriors, or enquire about becoming an MCF Prayer Warrior, by contacting Brendan.

Contacting the MCF Office

PHONE: 02 6132 7845

EMAIL: mcf.office@defence.gov.au You can also find us on Facebook, ForceNet and Twitter.

To unsubscribe from this newsletter please contact: mcf.office@defence.gov.au