

**Peter Ball**

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**From:** "Dr John Batt" <REDACTED>  
**To:** "Peter Ball" <REDACTED>  
**Sent:** Saturday, 11 June 2016 1:43 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to child Sexual Abuse Case study 40. Australian Defence Force.

Hi Peter,

Thanks for this – well written and to the point. It is a much better epitaph than the one written suggesting that Dad was outspoken about alcohol and transferred as a result. He was outspoken but for all the right reasons. It was not the whole story. It is also an indictment on Rowan Strong who if he had have dug a little deeper should have asked as an historian why a chaplain who had good/excellent reports from all other commanders was transferred from a base that it was later found to have a very chequered history. Having studied post-graduate history at Melbourne University – one of the first things that we are encouraged to do is to look behind such anomalies. So much for a critical historical approach to the subject that Strong suggests is his methodology.

One memory I have is I being with dad at Leeuwin one very hot summer afternoon and they were disciplining a recruit by making him run around the oval with his rifle above his head. He kept on dropping to the ground exhausted – finally dad went over and spoke to the person in charge and a heated argument ensued. The boy was relieved of the punishment but he got a very irate call from I presume the commander who did not like him interfering. It was probably out of place but abuse is abuse – difficult to stand by and do nothing.

I remember as a young boy of 10 over hearing a very heated phone call between dad and the commander about his transfer. Dad told him that he should not be treating the recruits the way that he did and told him that these boys were only young and should not be treated so harshly. I remember other fragments of the conversation as well. History has judged him correct.

Glad to talk some more if you would like to do so.

Regards

John

Rev Dr John Batt

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