

Your say

Email: opinions@northernstar.com.au
 Post: PO Box 423, Lismore, NSW 2480
 Fax: (02) 6624 7265

Tommy's sister 'sets the record straight'

I AM writing in response to letters from Phil Witchard, his siblings and others concerning the past operations of the Church of England North Coast Children's Home in Lismore.

How dare these people question the right of Richard 'Tommy' Campion and others to relate the horrific and abusive upbringing they endured in that hell hole.

You are indeed a fortunate family. Others were not so fortunate.

Life was one of continuous beatings, demoralising verbal abuse, sexual abuse and degrading acts not in keeping with normal nurturing care, and the constant rhetoric of how unwanted and unworthy we were.

Let us get the record straight.

Never at any time has Richard Campion understated the tremendous impact Jean O'Neil had on his life and on the lives of many others.

The time spoken about by Richard and many others are the days of Matron Martin, of which the Witchard family have no understanding or comprehension of what was endured during these debilitating times.

It seems to me the issue has been channelled to the one era in the home that was to many, but not all, a positive and nurturing life.

Yet the brutal years that cannot be denied have been misconstrued as a slur on Jean O'Neil.

Yes, Richard did return after the reunion to the children's home. Why? To take a TV to the children.

Go thank Richard Campion, for it was in his pain that Jean

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O'Neil vowed never again to separate a family.

In her own words it was her 'one regret' and that has been documented.

Richard Campion is my brother. It took seven years and eight months to hold him in my arms again, and for many years we continued to bury our pain.

I love him and I am proud of his courage.

His life lessons were brutal and horrific, and still he taught himself the fundamental mean-

ing of goodness, kindness and compassion to others.

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