Hollywood Producer/WKU Alum

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A WKU broadcasting alum, who is now a Hollywood producer, is completing a film on the military newspaper, “Stars and Stripes.

Amy Bingham talks with him and one of his former professors about the project in this week’s View from the Hill.

Back in the early 80’s, Steve Barber came to WKU from upstate New York. He quickly got a job at a Russellville radio station and decided to major in broadcasting. Fast forward more than 35 years and he’s making a name for himself in Hollywood.

It’s called The World’s Most Dangerous Paper Route.

“this has been a really challenging film. I’ve been to nine countries. 12 states interviewed 47 people.”

….The story behind the military newspaper Stars and Stripes.

“It’s been published seven days a week every day since 1941, a million copies a day.”

It’s the latest in a string of military documentaries produced by 1984 WKU broadcasting alum Steve Barber who founded Vanilla Fire productions.

“The concentrated subject matter he deals with is the American hero, usually military focused. “

Dr. Bart White was Barber’s professor at WKU more than 35 years ago. He’s now one of his producing partners.

“He was instrumental in me moving to L.A. Because he had a contact out here and I wanted to go to L. A. so he connected me with his contact once I got out here.”

Barber says it was a chance encounter with actor and war hero Eddie Albert in 1997

that eventually led to his first film.

“It exploded ever since and now we’re working on our 7th documentary.”

Which brings us back to his current project narrated by famed 60 minutes journalist Steve Kroft.

“his very first job was with stars and stripes… he was a 22 year old combat reporter, photographer.”

Kroft is far from the first high profile talent to sign on for a Barber film.

“I’ve just been really lucky to get Ed Henry, not once but twice, to get Josh Brolin to get Kelsey Grammer , they believe in the cause.”

And Barber firmly believes WKU is the reason for his success.

“Western Kentucky University was instrumental in my foundation. The education is terrific but whats more important is the relationships. People like Dr. White who is still my friend and now my producing partner 35 years later is mind boggling.”

“The World’s Most Dangerous Paper Route ” is currently in post production and will premiere in Santa Barbara on Memorial Day weekend.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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