Lee Robertson turning 100

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The man affectionately known as “Mr. Western” is a century old today.

Amy Bingham sits down with Lee Robertson to talk about his life in this week’s View from the Hill.

“I like my bronze statue and I like the ballroom. I’ve been honored way yonder beyond my expectations.”

Even Lee Robertson is amazed at how his life turned out.

“I wasn’t a very good high school student. I wasn’t a very good college student but I managed to get through all of them.”

The native of Calhoun Kentucky says he had no idea what he would do after high school, but it turns out, plans were made for him.

“Six months later Pearl Harbor was bombed, six months later I was in the service.”

With beach head landings in New Guinea, Morotai and the Philippines, Lee recalls his three years of service in the US Army with great detail. When his time ended in December of 1945, he finally arrived home on an icy Christmas morning.

“It was ice on our porch and I nearly fell down. I come nearer getting killed on my front porch than I did at New Guinea.”

College was never something Lee thought he could afford, that is until a friend mentioned the GI bill. The very next day the two drove to Bowling Green to sign up.

After graduating from Western in 1950, Lee was working as a teacher and coach in Park City when he crossed paths with a former neighbor while living back in Calhoun for his summer job.

“And I said who in the world is that? That lil’ ole gal next door, my neighbor, I went down and checked and it was Joyce.”

After they married in 1953 the couple moved back to Barren County before landing at WKU in 1960 when Lee was named Director of Alumni.

“We had one alumni chapter in Muhlenberg County. Six years later we had 52.”

He held that position for 25 years but didn’t stay retired long. Dubbed “Mr. Western” by former president Gary Ransdell…

“That’s a title I’m realy proud of.”

..he’s served in numerous roles including the job he still has to this day in Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement.

“Something about the job just fit me.”

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

A 100th birthday celebration for Lee Robertson is being held today at the Eva and Jim Martens Alumni Center.

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