

'When Calls the Heart' Executive Producer Answers the One Question Everyone's Asking

Brian Bird, executive producer of television's popular series *When Calls the Heart*, knows the power of loyal fans. The half-million identified "Hearties" who follow, promote and praise the No. 1 Hallmark Channel series rose up in outrage at the end of season 5. That's when—only weeks after his marriage to Elizabeth (Erin Krakow)—popular Canadian Mountie Jack (Daniel Lissing) was killed.

"There's a whole bunch of 'Wanted' posters up about me," Bird says about the Hearties' outrage on a recent episode of "Greenelines" on the Charisma Podcast Network. Despite Jack's tragic demise, he said, nearly 5 million viewers tuned into the Christmas-night opener of season 6.

"What we have discovered is that there is a massively hungry audience out there that is underserved," says Bird, whose many credits in film, television and writing include serving as co-executive producer and senior writer for the final four seasons of the CBS series *Touched by an Angel*.

"When I was doing *Touched by an Angel*, there was much more family content on the networks. But in those 15 years or so since, the networks have all but forgotten about the family."

Download the podcast to learn the reasons behind Jack's sudden departure, Bird's views on family-friendly content and the plans for a potential spinoff from *When Calls the Heart*.