

Hamill 'scallywag' claims rejected

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On the eve of a film premiere about his fight for justice over the death of his brother, Hamilton man Rob Hamill has dismissed suggestions Kerry Hamill was running drugs before being killed by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia.

Brother Number One is a documentary film that follows Mr Hamill's tireless campaign on behalf of his brother Kerry, who was one of three international sailors slain in 1978, after being captured by Pol Pot's genocidal Khmer Rouge regime.

The film will premiere in Auckland tomorrow.

But a recently released book explores the possibility Kerry Hamill and his two sailing partners were off Cambodia to carry out some sort of drug smuggling mission.

Rob Hamill described author Dave Kattenburg as a "scallywag". The investigative journalist's new book, *Foxy Lady - Truth, Memory and the Death of Western Yachtsmen in Democratic Kampuchea*, raises questions around the capture of Hamill and fellow sailors Canadian Stuart Glass and Englishman John Dewhirst.

Mr Hamill said he was finding the book "hard" to read and had not finished it yet.

"It doesn't change a thing about my brother," he said.

"He was an amazing guy who was far too young to die."

Foxy Lady is named after the boat Kerry Hamill was sailing on when captured. He later died in a Khmer Rouge death camp.

Rob Hamill attended the successful trial of the camp commandant for crimes against humanity.

Mr Hamill said he knew his brother had never been involved in any illegal activities prior to the ill-fated August 1978 trip, and his research had found no evidence of drugs on board *Foxy Lady* when the boat were captured.

His family had no reason to think anything other than that he was innocent.

He said even if his brother was about to go on a "pot run" he had done nothing to justify being murdered following months of torture in the Khmer Rouge's Tuol Sleng death house in Phnom Penh.

Mr Hamill said he was anxious about how audiences would receive *Brother Number One*,

but he was confident Australian film maker Annie Goldson had done a superb job of directing it and that viewers would get an "emotional understanding" of his search for the truth.

"It's quite incredible.

"We did 200 hours of filming for a 90-minute documentary," he said.

"The few people who have seen the film have used terms like 'blown away'. I hope that is replicated."

Brother Number One will be shown at SkyCity Theatre tomorrow at 1pm and on Wednesday at 3.30pm in Auckland as part of the New Zealand Film Festival.

Screenings of the documentary are yet to be confirmed in Hamilton, but those registering at www.brothernnumberone.co.nz will be notified when that information becomes available.