

FIVE-0 FOREVER

Jack Lord and Company Continue to Bring Hawaii Fame

By Ron Jacobs

Hawaii *Five-0* debuted 25 years ago, replacing *Juvenile Jury* on CBS-TV. Jack Lord starred in the first episode, "Full Fathom Five," which aired on September 26, 1968. Lord played Steve McGarrett, originally described by the series' producers as "Head of the special investigating unit that handles cases which are too big for local law enforcement agencies. Tough on criminals but known to the citizens of Hawaii as 'The Cop Who Cares,' McGarrett and his *Five-0* team are ready to move quickly and efficiently in pursuit of criminal elements on the Island."

The first program featured guest star Kevin McCarthy, James MacArthur as Danny Williams, Kam Fong Chun as Chin Ho Kelly, Gilbert "Zoulou" (formerly "Zulu") Kauhi as Kono Kalakaua, Maggi Parker as May, and Richard Denning as the governor.

Today, a quarter of a century after the action-adventure series premiered, *Hawaii Five-0* and its characters still are recognized around the globe.

Veteran *MidWeek* columnist Eddie Sherman says there are several reasons for its continued success. "First, there was Leonard Freeman, a brilliant producer and writer. The network believed he could handle *Hawaii Five-0*, which would be shot on loca-

tion, like *Route 66*, which Lenny also produced. He became *Five-0's* creative force and had the last word on everything.

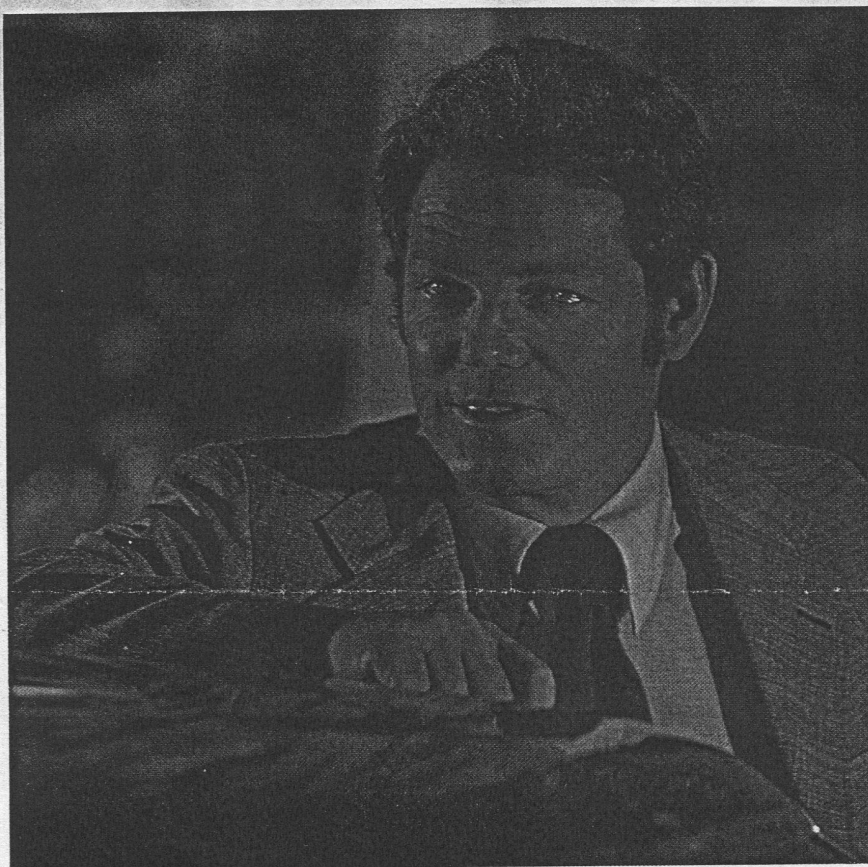
"The locale was another big reason. *Five-0* was the first series filmed entirely in the Islands." (*Hawaiian Eye* was set in Hawaii, but was shot on a Hollywood back lot.)

Sherman, who played everything from a corpse to himself on *Five-0*, said, "The other key ingredient was Jack Lord. Lenny liked Jack's acting in *Stoney Burke*, and knew he'd make the perfect McGarrett."

Dick Kindelon worked on *Five-0* for the entire series, serving as casting director for the last five. He remembers Freeman's optimism: "At our first production meeting, Lenny told us *Hawaii Five-0* would run for five years. Of course, everyone thought that was outrageous."

Twenty-five years later, HAWAII Magazine readers continue to ask the whereabouts of *Five-0* cast members and what they're up to these days. Here is our silver anniversary *Hawaii Five-0* report.

According to Marie, Jack Lord's wife of 40 years, the actor is living the post-*Five-0* life he always imagined. "Jack says he had his 15 minutes of fame and now he's happy to stay at home,



James MacArthur hailed from a "spaghetti western," but he's most recognized for his role of *Five-0's* Danny "Dan-O" Williams.

leading a quiet existence," she said. "He was a human dynamo from the age of 15. Nowadays he's content to just relax, read and be quiet.

"Jack is really a very shy man. When he proposed to me, he predicted that he would probably end up teaching art at a small college somewhere. We have a beautiful home and he enjoys it. He's happy as a clam."

Jack Lord has given few interviews since *Hawaii Five-0* signed off in 1979, but Marie dismisses rumors of ill health. "He walks three miles on the beach every morning and he goes shopping just like always. I only wish that he would keep on painting," she said.

Lord was born John Joseph Ryan on December 30, 1928, in New York City. A seaman in his teens, he later ran an art school in Greenwich Village and exhibited his work at American and British museums. Lord's first screen credit was *Cry Murder* in 1950. Before landing the McGarrett role, he also appeared in *The Court Martial of Billy Mitchell*, *God's Little Acre* and *Dr. No*.

Harry Endo (police chemist Che Fong), remembers Lord as difficult to work with, but also a perfectionist whose chief

concern was quality. "Once, I didn't memorize a few lines because the script said 'refers to clipboard.' I thought I could read them. Well, Jack didn't think so, and he chewed me out, called me every name in the book. But afterwards, he sat down next to me and said, 'I'm not mad, I just want you to be good.' The next morning he went over all our lines with me."

"Jack played the part of a tough cop and sometimes he came off that way. But he accepted responsibility for everything, even more so after Lenny Freeman died. No matter how stressful things got, Jack knew his part. He memorized everything, his lines were never written on cards. I had three or four pages. Jack had to learn the entire script every week.

"He called us his 'community of players.' We woke at 7 a.m., but he was up by 4:30. He worked harder than anyone. Hollywood people said there has never been a show with such good production values, and much of that is due to Jack."

Just as Lord's portrayal of a stone-faced cowhand caught Freeman's eye, so did James MacArthur's performance in the American "spaghetti western," *Hang 'Em High*. The producer's instincts were

excellent. For all but the last season, it was MacArthur, as the clean-cut Danny Williams, who was ordered by McGarrett to "Book 'em, Dan-O."

MacArthur began acting in summer stock at age eight. While growing up, he worked on television when his school schedule permitted. He appeared on Broadway and in films, including *Spencer's Mountain*, which he describes as "the fore-runner of *The Waltons*."

MacArthur recalled the start of his *Five-0* career: "Lenny Freeman asked me to be in it. He showed me the pilot, which I liked from the start. It was colorful, fast-paced and exciting. The next thing—bang!—off I went to Hawaii. There I was with lines like, 'I'm calling from a phone booth at the end of Ka-ka-ah-la-la-wah Avenue.' In the beginning, I couldn't pronounce words like 'Kalakaua,' but I have a good ear. And the local guys helped me."

The highlight of his *Five-0* years? "There were many great moments, but we also worked long, hard hours. One funny incident stands out. We were shooting in the middle of downtown Honolulu. Our permit said we had to be out of there by 3 p.m. Three o'clock passed and we were still shooting. A Volkswagen van pulled up. Our director John Peyser yelled: 'Hey you, get out of my shot!'"

"A man jumped out of the VW and yelled back: 'Hey you, get off of my street!' It was Frank Fasi, the mayor of Honolulu."

MacArthur enjoyed working with the local actors in *Five-0*. "Some didn't have that much experience to start, but they learned fast and before long, we had a little stable. They turned out to be good actors and were great to work with."

MacArthur still maintains an apartment in Waikiki and recently moved from Colorado to Palm Desert, California, where he lives with his wife, former professional golfer H.B. Duntz, and seven-year-old son, Jamie. "We wanted to be close to our mothers, so they could visit from New York and share the warm climate." (MacArthur's mother is the legendary actress, Helen Hayes.)

How does "Dan-O" feel about his home base for more than a decade? "Hawaii is extraordinary," he said. "There's no place like it in the world I've travelled in."

Five-0 was holding auditions for the pilot when a friend of mine made an appointment for me to read for the part of Wo Fat," said Kam Fong Chun.

"When I walked in, Lenny Freeman was talking with director Paul Wenkos. He looked at me and said, 'That's *him* standing there, that's Chin Ho Kelly. He looks like him, he stands like him, he smiles like him!'"

"Chin Ho was supposed to be a Chinese-Irishman, but Lenny liked how I looked. Can you believe that? I was signed to a seven-year contract as a regular without even reading for the part. That's why I keep getting those checks!"

The actor's lifelong interest in dramatics began at Kalakaua Intermediate School. After graduating from McKinley High School, where he was active in theater productions, Kam Fong went to work at the Pearl Harbor shipyards. He arrived at Dry Dock No. 1 within 45 minutes of the December 7, 1941, attack.

On June 8, 1944, Kam Fong Chun suffered a personal tragedy from which he almost did not recover. Two B-24 bombers collided in mid-air over his Kalihi house. "Everything came crashing down, barely missing Kalakaua School. My wife and children were killed—I lost my family in five minutes. All I wanted to do was die."

Eventually remarrying, he joined the Honolulu Police Department and served in the Patrol Division for 18 years. After switching to a career in real estate in 1962, Kam Fong resumed acting. "My first role was in a Honolulu Community Theater production of *The Great Sebastian*. I played a *haole* in that one."

More stage work followed, but the actor missed out on several movie roles. "I had a beautiful part in *The Hawaiians* with Charlton Heston, playing the head of the Chinese. But they changed the story line and I ended up on the cutting room floor. Then I got the part of a boat captain with Elvis Presley in *Girls! Girls! Girls!*, but when the producer saw me, he fired me because I was too big. I was ready to go to Hollywood and work as a waiter."

As it turned out, he didn't have to. Producer Freeman spotted him and Kam Fong lasted 10 years on *Five-0*, the longest run by a local actor. He still receives fan mail from around the world. Recently,



Kam Fong was an audience favorite as Detective Chin Ho.

Kam Fong was interviewed on a Mainland radio talk show. Listeners voted Chin Ho Kelly the most popular character on *Hawaii Five-0*.

Gilbert Kauhi has many names. To *Hawaii Five-0* fans, he's "Kono Kalakaua," one of four original members of the elite *Five-0* unit. To locals,



Ex-beachboy Zoulou played Kono Kalakaua, one of the four original members of the *Five-0* unit.

he's "Zoulou," musician and stand-up comic. Honolulu radio listeners remember him as "Big Z." And classmates from Kamehameha (one of nine schools he attended in 10 years) still call him Gilbert.

By whatever moniker, the ex-beachboy made a name for himself. Zoulou was born in Hilo. When he moved to Oahu, he performed in school plays before dropping out in his sophomore year.

Zoulou is three-fourths Hawaiian and one-quarter Chinese. He grew up loving water sports. By the age of 12 he was a part-time beach boy. He learned to play guitar and ukulele and became the comedian in a group called "Zoulou and the Polynesians."

After serving in the Coast Guard, Zoulou returned home. "I worked on Waikiki Beach with the legends," he said, "Guys like Chick Daniels, Turkey Love, Panama Dave and the Kahanamoku Brothers." He performed briefly with the Sons of Hawaii, calling the experience "My schooling in Hawaiian music." He had gone from doorman to the main showroom stage at Queen's Surf.

In 1966, Zoulou joined Don Ho at KHVH, then a Hawaiian music radio station. Two years later, he recalls: "I went to a casting 'cattle call' at the Hula Hut. They gave me the part of Kono and I was on the pilot and then on the show for the first five years."

"These days I entertain on cruise ships all over the world and people still remember *Five-0*. In South America they come up and say '*Hawaiiano Cinco-Sero*.' I get letters from England, Israel, Japan, all over."

When not at home on the Big Island, Zoulou plays the international convention circuit and occasionally appears in films. But not as a heavy. "No drug dealers, no pimps. Playing a cop gives you a good-guy image, the fans are always friendly. I enjoy meeting them and sharing their aloha."

When *Five-0* casting director Ted Thorpe spotted him speaking at an athletic banquet, Al Harrington's only stage experience was in Honolulu high school productions and movie



Hawaii Five-0 cast members Zoulu, William Smith, Sharon Farrel, Herman Wedemeyer and Jack Lord, left to right.

VIACOM

bit parts in the Bay Area. For several seasons on *Five-0*, the former Punahou and Stanford football star portrayed villains. He says: "Heavies are more fun, you don't have to hold back as much. Good guys are more controlled, they require a subtlety of expression."

When Zoulu left the series in 1972, Harrington was teaching history at his high school alma mater. Freeman was so impressed with the rugged Samoan, he created a supporting role for him: Detective Ben Kokua, a Hawaiian who returned home after suffering a college football injury.

"The timing was perfect," Harrington said. "I was ready to try my hand in show business after five years of teaching. Lenny Freeman gave me my big break. Working with him was the greatest. He had a warm spirit for everyone and was a giving person, always positive."

Harrington retired last spring after 20 years on the Waikiki entertainment circuit. He is working on a motivational book in Provo, Utah, and preparing to costar in a movie with Jack Palance.

Harry Endo waited a year for his first *Hawaii Five-0* part. "I was a bank executive, so they figured I'd make a good teller," he said. "My big line was 'Do

you have your receipt?' I rehearsed it 5000 times. They liked it so much they expanded the part."

Unlike most of the Asians and Hawaiians who appeared on *Hawaii Five-0*, Endo was born on the Mainland, in Colorado, and grew up in California. After serving in the Army, he attended college and then opened a small business in Whittier, California.

Although Endo's wife was from Hawaii, he had never been there until he visited her parents in 1951. "I looked around and realized I was in the majority, I would get acceptance," he said. Endo took night courses in radio and TV and wrote Hawaii stations. "No one hired me, but we packed up and left anyway. I arrived in Honolulu in 1955 with nothing, but luckily I got a job right away at Channel 4."

Endo's career progressed through broadcasting, public relations and banking for the next 14 years. When the role of forensics expert Che Fong was created in 1969, the part was his. "They built the police lab set at the Diamond Head studio. I did most of my scenes early in the morning, so it didn't interfere with my regular job."

After *Five-0* closed down, Endo alternated between city government and private business. Currently, he is vice president of marketing at Honolulu Federal Savings and Loan Association.

Doug Mossman was perhaps the best prepared of all the local actors on *Hawaii Five-0*. The Honolulu native was on stage by the third grade. "I was inspired by the applause," he said. Mossman continued his acting at Kamehameha Schools, the University of Hawaii and in the Army, where he performed in numerous special services productions overseas. "Whenever I had the chance, I trotted out my ukulele and did the Hawaiian thing," he said.

After his discharge in 1956, Mossman became the first person from Hawaii to attend the Pasadena Playhouse College of Theater Arts. "There were no parts for Hawaiians. I read for everything ethnic: Mexican, Indian, all of them."

Mossman was working at a restaurant in Monrovia when he was called to audition for an Indian role in *Broken Arrow*. "They asked me if I could ride and I said yes, even though I'd never been on a horse in my life." Mossman read his lines so well that he got the part. A stunt man was hired for the riding scenes.

In 1959, three weeks after he answered a casting call for a new series called *Hawaiian Eye*, the young actor was, in his words, "Living my dream. I went from being a busboy to acting in a studio in Burbank. Besides that, I became the show's technical

director. I spent hundreds of hours screening old films, looking for Island scenes. My job was to 'Hawaiian-ize' *Hawaiian Eye*."

After the series ended, Mossman went to New York where he coproduced the Hawaii exhibit at the 1964 World's Fair. He returned to Los Angeles for several years, then came home and worked in television and radio.

Mossman tested for *Five-0*'s Ted Thorpe and was cast in small parts for six seasons. Eventually he was offered the role of a new character, Lieutenant Frank Kamana, a bomb expert who transferred to the *Five-0* unit from the HPD.

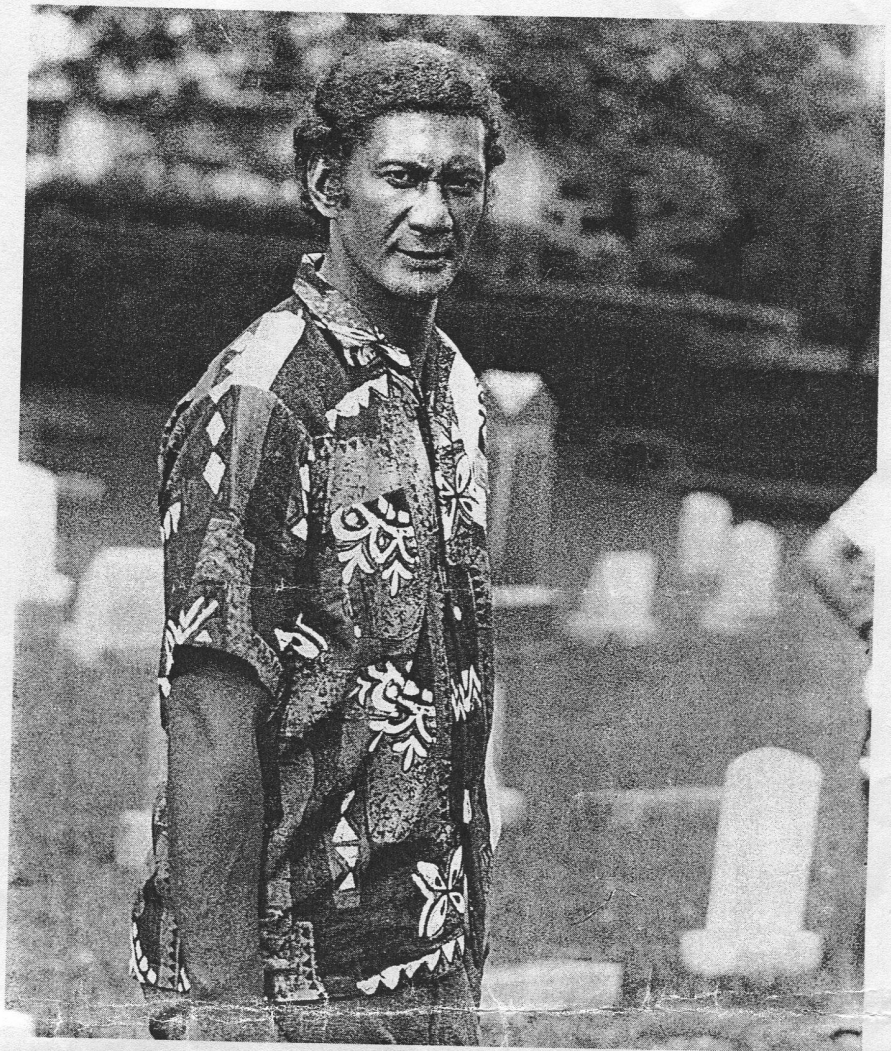
Today, Mossman directs sales and marketing for what he describes as "the ultimate movie," the Hawaii Imax Theater in Waikiki.

Moe Keale's acting credentials were the opposite of Doug Mossman's. He was working as an electrician at the *Five-0* studio when casting director Bob Busch invited him to audition. "I told him 'no thanks' and went back to rigging," he said. "He came back again the next day and asked me to come in and read. I told him no again.

"The day after that, an executive came over and said 'Jack Lord wants to see you.' When I walked into his dressing room, he gave me that Jack Lord look. Then he said: 'You will do it.' Hey—I did it!"

Keale portrayed bad guys until he became Truck Kealoha for *Five-0*'s final two seasons. He describes the character as "an educated Hawaiian, a policeman with some heavy college degrees."

He credits the *Five-0* experience for teaching him discipline. "Jack Lord was



Al Harrington's rugged Samoan look was perfect for his role as Detective Ben Kokua.

strict, but everyone benefited from that. We learned that time is money. People who worked on *Hawaii Five-0* do well because Jack taught us, as actors, to always be prepared. And we had the best-trained crew. The local guys impressed everyone. They have a terrific reputation."

A talented musician who began singing as a youngster, Keale, like Zoulou, worked the beach and performed at Queen's Surf. He was a member of the "Puka Puka Otea" Tahitian review. Today the big man with the sweet voice is the leader of the Moe Keaie Band.

Hawaii Five-0 continues to be seen around the world. Its syndicated reruns have gained the show a wider audience than it had as a prime-time original. Even the plots hold up well; many of those same themes continue to plague law enforcement officers today. And, a seemingly ageless Jack Lord will forever appear as the tough but fair McGarrett.

(HAWAII contributing editor Ron Jacobs regrets he was unable to contact actors Herman Wedemeyer and Danny Kamekona to be interviewed for this article. Mahalo to Viacom Enterprises, distributor of Hawaii Five-0, for many of the photographs.)

LIFE BEGINS AT 5-0

From 1968 through 1979, Hawaii Five-0 hired scores of actors who went on to bigger and better parts on TV and in movies. These are some of them—and the names by which Steve McGarrett knew them (and Dan-O booked 'em.)

Ann Archer (Jane Michaels)

—*Fatal Attraction*

Edward Asner (August March)

—*Lou Grant*

Ned Beatty (Caldwell)—*Network*

David Canary (George)—*All My Children*

Gary Collins (Lockman)—*Home*

Bert Convy (Thomas Brown)

—*Win, Lose or Draw*

Hume Cronyn (Avery Filer)—*Cocoon*

Charles Durning (Havens)—*Evening Shade*

Jeff Daniels (Neal)—*Terms of Endearment*

Susan Dey (Susan Bradshaw)—*L. A. Law*

John Hillerman (Bodine)—*Magnum P.I.*

Gavin MacLeod (Big Chicken)—*Love Boat*

Gerald McRaney (Tim Ryder)—*Major Dad*

Ricardo Montalban (Tokura)—*Fantasy Island*

Edward James Olmos (Dancer)—*Miami Vice*

John Ritter (Mike Welles)—*Three's Company*

Martin Sheen (Eddie Calhao)—*Wall Street*

James Sikking (Oscar Ross)

—*Hill Street Blues*

Tom Skeritt (Lew Morgan)—*Picket Fences*

Loretta Swit (Betty)—*M*A*S*H*