

Lord, Jack

Lord and lady

By COBEY BLACK
Advertiser Columnist

We take it for granted, this blessing of blue sky. While across America, during Christmas week, the only patch of tropical sunlight to brighten snowbound homes is a TV screen filled with Hawaii Five-O.

That's another thing we take for granted. Few of us appreciate the worldwide impact of Hawaii's own television series though the clues to its popularity require little detective work:

One out of every four new visitors to Hawaii has been lured here by seeing Hawaii Five-O.

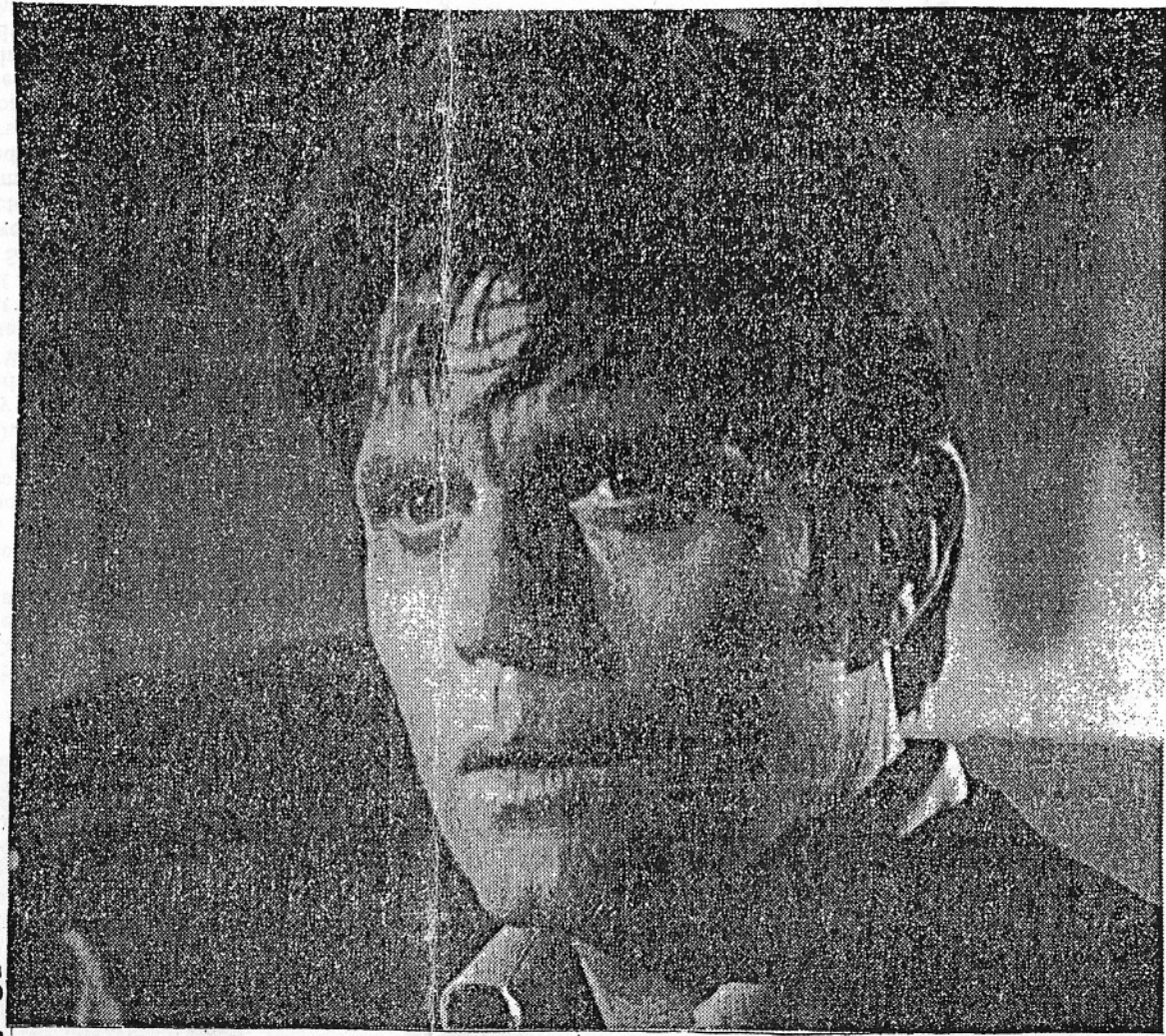
Over 30 million Americans watch the show each week, and that number is increased tenfold, to 300 million viewers, in 73 foreign countries.

It's translated into seven languages; subtitled in five more.

As the closing shot of the season is filmed this week, Hawaii Five-O winds up 10 years of production, 240 episodes, at an average cost of \$400,000 each.

That's nearly \$100 million spent by CBS on the third longest running series in TV history, surpassed only by Gunsmoke and Bonanza.

Such is the show that Jack built. "I firmly believe in the metaphysical premise that you seek your place as your place seeks you," said Jack Lord, producer-star and, with the late Leonard Freeman, co-creator of Hawaii Five-



Jack Lord: "I want to do more with my life than be McGarrett. This is the best of all possible times to become a producer, director, writer of wholesome motion pictures."

I tracked him to his trailer hideaway on the set and found him more handsome than McGarrett and less intense.

He'd shucked the three-button suit for a mod zebra-stripe shirt and gold lion's head medallion.

Actor, artist, director, writer, photographer, jewelry designer, he's a man for all seasons who's found his place in the land of no seasons.

"Talk about divine direction," he continued, "I was under contract at CBS as star of a new Western, Cutter's Trail, to replace Gunsmoke on prime time when Chairman William Paley was shown the schedule.

"Where's Gunsmoke?" he asked. "It's my wife's

favorite show.' Needless to say Cutter was cut. "At 7 a.m. one morning, a messenger delivered another script and the request of a reply by 9 a.m. Half an hour later, I turned to my wife, Marie, and asked 'How would you like to live in

HAWAII STATE LIBRARY
Hawaii and The Pacific
Pamphlet

HONOLULU
ADVERTISED

12.22.77



Ten years of production, 240 episodes, at cost of \$400,000 each.



cobey

conviction, I was told by a General Motors executive. I was earning \$18,000 a year when I gave it up to become a fulltime actor.

"My first year on the stage, I earned \$1,400. But by then I had Marie at my side. Without her, I'd never have made it.

"My boss said 'You're bananas. Do you know the odds for success as an actor?'

"Sure, I said, unaware that of the 30,000 members of the screen actors guild, less than five percent make over \$5,000. But Marie's faith never wavered. She is my strong right arm, my inspiration, my fulltime partner and dearest friend.

"The way we met is another wild story. My brother's an artist with a country place in Woodstock.

"I was walking in the woods nearby when I came across a beautiful little cabin of blue fieldstone. When I asked the address of the owner, the handyman tore off the flap of a pale blue envelope and gave it to me. It was a number on E. 48th.

"I wrote a note and the owner called me. 'We have nothing to discuss,' said a lovely but firm voice. 'My cabin is not for sale.' Wait a minute. I'm a sailor, not a realtor, I said. She agreed to see me.

"When the door opened, there was my girl. Marvelous looking, lean, chic, in a gray cashmere sweater and slacks, with hair to her shoulders.

"We talked for four hours. Her name was Marie DeNarde, a fashion designer and a good one, shown in Vogue and Bazaar. I knew she was the only girl for me. She still is."

And Marie picked a winner.

Jack starred in the Broadway production of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," was named to the Cowboy Hall of Fame for his title role in the Stoney Burke TV series, is still seen by millions of visitors to Williamsburg as star of The Story of A

HAWAII STATE LIBRARY
Hawaii and The Pacific
Pamphlet
CIRCULATING

HONOLULU
ADVERTISER

12-22-77

15-1

pearary, the Ryans on my father side from County Cork."

Restless as the sea itself and driven by multiple talents, the six-foot-two aspiring artist won a football scholarship to New York University and majored in Fine Arts.

In college, he founded a Greenwich Village art school, earned a pilot's license, sold three graphics to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and graduated as star of the varsity team.

"During the war, I made training films for the Navy and a talent scout from 20th Century Fox asked if I knew anything about acting.

"What's there to know about acting?" I asked, a question as stupid as "What's there to know about brain surgery?"

But it prompted the strapping ex-sailor to study with Sanford Meisner, "the best drama coach in the world. 'Why are you here?' he asked. 'To be an actor,' I said. 'Have you got 20 years?'

"I'm just beginning to find out what he meant," mused Jack, who also took night classes at the Actors Studio with such contemporary hopefuls as Marlon Brando and Paul Newman.

"Meanwhile I had a full time job selling Cadillacs in a dealership at the corner of 57th and Broadway. For three years, I got five hours sleep a night.

"Selling is nothing more than the transfer of a

Hawaii?" Her answer was "Let's go." The show was sold in a week.

Yet after a decade as dean of TV detectives, the man behind McGarrett is a mystery to most of his fans. I suggested that a private investigation of Jack Lord is long overdue.

"I was born in Brooklyn, raised on Long Island," obliged the star.

"My father was in the steamship business, and as a teen-age seaman, I spent my summers sketching and painting the coasts of Africa, China, Persia, South America and the Mediterranean from the deck of freighters.

"Acting never occurred to me. My ambition was to be an artist. I remember my father taking me down to meet the captain of my first ship, the old Brazil of the Moore-McCormick line, and as I looked around at the great oak cabin, I thought 'I'm going to like this.'

"After Dad left, the skipper said 'Mister, you'll always have the last word on this ship and it's 'Yes, sir.'

"I loved the sea," recalled the former merchant mariner who graduated from Ft. Trumbull Academy in New London as an ensign and still holds a second mate's license. "It's powerful, moody, wild and wonderful. It's Irish.

"All four of my grandparents were born in Ireland, the O'Briens on my mother side from Tip-

Patriot, the only motion picture shown in perpetuity and now in its 26th printing.

His corporation, Lord and Lady, Inc., owns a piece of Five-O, which has reportedly paid off with six-Os.

"But we live modestly, in an oceanfront condominium, with no servants, no staff, no great estate, and I'm now divesting myself of most of my material possessions.

"I want no part of the Hollywood image that's all flash and no substance. Nor Broadway, where you're a star one week and an unemployed actor the next.

"Security is in the head and in the heart. I've been broke but never poor. I had a devoted family as a kid and I have a solid marriage as an adult.

"Pride of accomplishment is what's important to me. Setting a goal and obtaining it has been my most powerful motivation.

"I really feel it's what's made our country great.

"Where else but in America could an Irish kid from Brooklyn climb to the top of his chosen profession."

Why did you choose acting? I asked the former car salesman who's now driving his seventh Cadillac.

"Because I wanted a shot at the brass ring. Unlike a corporate job, acting's an individual thing."

"There's no backup, no substitution. You're on your own, rolling the big dice.

"I'm an actor because I love to act. It's the love that comes over the footlights, creating the illusion of reality.

"Acting is not reciting lines, it's coming alive under imaginary circumstances. Chaplin did it without a word.

"It's the ability to react spontaneously moment by moment. If hit by an imaginary pebble, react to a pebble. If hit by a rock, react to a rock. In a word, it's magic."

What word describes a decade with Five-O? I wondered.

"A marvelous trip, as the kids would say. When you consider that cast and crew have spent more time with each other than with their families, working with emotions, and still gung-ho, I'd say it's a miracle.

"It takes 80 to 90 hours to make one hour of final film. If you sat in a projection room for 40 hours a week, watching all the episodes of Five-O, you'd be there six weeks.

Even more miraculous is a show business mar-

riage that has survived 26 years and is happier than ever.

"Marie's up every morning at 3:30 a.m. and has a light breakfast of hot tea, papaya and yogurt ready when I get up at 4 a.m. Between 4:30 and 6 a.m., I learn 10 pages of dialogue.

"Then I have a longshoreman's breakfast of eggs, ham, cold chicken, pecan pie, quiche lorraine, eggplant parmesan, whatever's left over in the refrigerator.

"Marie's a superb cook, the only Cordon Bleu graduate with a 19-inch waist.

"I leave for the set at 6 a.m. and we shoot as long as the light lasts. The phones are already ringing when I leave the house and Marie takes over at home.

"I come back to a stack of messages. We go through them over a light supper and are usually in bed by 8:30 p.m."

Jack concedes that it's not a life in which to raise children. "It wouldn't be fair to them." Yet he's most touched by letters from young viewers.

"A memorable one was written on the torn page of a steno pad and began, 'You saved my life.' It was from a girl on drugs who'd seen 'Speed Kills,' a Five-O story of a teen-age girl who jumped off the Pali under the influence of Speed."

"At 4 a.m., after the show, I turned myself in with 20 of my friends," she wrote. "We realized if we didn't, we'd kill ourselves, each other or someone else." Months later, she wrote again, "I'm clean."

Although another year of Five-O is highly likely, an CBS has already bought over \$100,000 in scripts, Jack concludes that "I want to do more with my life than be McGarrett."

"This is the best of all possible times to become a producer, director, writer of wholesome motion pictures.

"I'm sick of the trash that passes for entertainment on the screen, appealing to the lowest mentality, the most depraved element in society.

"I'd like to be involved in making films that are uplifting."

And how would you like to spend your old age?
"Near the ocean, with a studio-workshop, a good library and Marie by my side."