

We Remember When

by Deedri Moore Veehala '74, Earle Kealoha '75 and Kehau Bishaw '73

Remembering... the Leader of the Band

Band director David Lorch (Jan. 15, 1930 – April 28, 2004) taught much more than music to members of the Kamehameha Schools band

On the field at Camp Kokokahi, with a bull horn in one hand, and a whistle in the other, his voice would boom: "Step, kick, step, kick... point those toes!"

When members of the 1966-1976 Kamehameha Schools band remember the late David Myron Lorch, those words are the first thing they remember.

But let's go back, before his days at Kamehameha... Mr. Lorch was born in Grand Rapids, Mich., and carried a master's degree in education. His musical career began on a cigar box cello, followed by a plastic tonette, which led him to his school band.

His choice of band instrument was a clarinet, and at age 13 he was invited to join a professional 12-piece dance band, where he added the saxophone to his repertoire. From then on, music was his passion – a passion that eventually led him to Hawai'i and Kamehameha Schools.

He started his time at Kamehameha making home visits to try and recruit students into the band. Initially, there were only 14 kids signed up for band – in the elementary, intermediate and high schools combined.

Over the next 10 years, he grew the band from 14 members to an outfit that was 160 strong. And under his tutelage, the band developed in variety and talent.



David Lorch at KS.

No matter what instrument, or what level of experience, students always knew that Mr. Lorch believed in them.

Mr. Lorch established a marching band that performed at football, basketball and baseball games playing contemporary selections like "Hogan's Heroes," "Oye Como Va," "Hawai'i Five-0" and "Sweet Caroline."

Marching routines at football game halftimes included creating a human train while playing "Locomotion" (Come on baby, do the Locomotion...) or a human clock face with cheerleaders representing the hands of the clock during a rousing version of "Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is?"

Meanwhile, the "Hawaiian War Chant" and "Aloha 'Oe March" were standard parade selections.

As there was no orchestra director then, Mr. Lorch took on the orchestra as well. He also oversaw the wind ensemble, which was part of the concert band, and the stage band or jazz band. And the Hawaiian ensemble was an integral part of any band concert with performances of *hula kahiko* and *'auana*.

Each entity of the band felt Mr. Lorch's hand upon them at one time or another. No matter what instrument, or what level of experience, students always knew that Mr. Lorch believed in them. He really believed that his own personal commitment to excellence would bring out the best in everyone around him.

He arranged music with solos that highlighted a bandsman's talent, and spent countless hours diagramming every movement of a halftime show, as well as arranging the entire program of music. Over time, he arranged 150 pieces of music for the different bands – some of which are still being played by the Kamehameha middle and high school bands.

In 1976, Mr. Lorch moved to the Big Island,

*He earned his love
Through discipline
A thundering, velvet hand
His gentle means of sculpting souls
Took me years to understand*

*The Leader of the Band is tired
And his eyes are growing old
But his blood runs through
My instrument
And his song is in my soul*

*My life has been a poor attempt
To imitate the man
I'm just a living legacy
To the Leader of the Band.*

– Lyrics from "Leader of the Band"
by Dan Fogelberg





and later worked at Honoka'a, Waiakea and St. Joseph high schools.

In March, a reunion was held to honor this special man who touched so many Kamehameha Schools' students. For most of the more than 100 attendees, it had been 25 years or more since they had seen Mr. Lorch.

Gathering at Kapono's in the Aloha Tower Market Place in March, it was like stepping back in time as the feelings of love, respect, and 'ohana were rekindled. There was no way of knowing at that time that for most it would be their last time spent with Mr. Lorch.

Kahu **Wendell Davis '71** told the crowd, "The thing I remember most is marching band and Uncle Dave telling us to point those toes. And we would kind of look at each other and shrug. We were athletes, and it was just not macho to point our toes! But, we did."

Herbert Almeida '73 emceed the reunion and quoted lyrics from the Dan Fogelburg song "Leader of the Band." **Earle Kealoha '75** shared that "I didn't know what an impact he had on me until years later. I never appreciated it at the time."

Another band member, **Albert Ka'ai '72**, shared his memories of lessons learned not only in music, but of what it meant to be a man. Professional musician and Kapālama Campus music teacher **Alan Akaka '74** credited his love of arranging music to Mr. Lorch's encouragement and unswerving belief in him.

Although unable to attend the reunion, Rev. **Wendell "Skip" Wright '70** e-mailed some of his thoughts: "I have not seen him in years, yet his touch in and on my life is as fresh as the day I first walked into the band room as a freshman in September 1966 – asking if I could be a part of the band. I will never forget the warmth of that smile that greeted me and how he simply said, 'Welcome aboard!'"

Steven Kahili '76 wrote "Head's up and keep those toes pointed!" while **Michael Crabbe '75**, speaking on the phone with Mr. Lorch, reminisced about band camps, with skits and toad races, marching routines, and the songs...so very many songs.

Although David Myron Lorch has left this earthly life, his music and legacy go on and that is reflected in the number of his students who became band directors themselves. They include **Aaron Mahi '71**, **Dawn Lopez Cone '73** and **Gerald Carrell '77** to just name a few.

Above left – Mr. Lorch in his heyday with KS music teachers, from left, Dale Noble, David Lorch, Sheryl Akaka '65, James McClendon, Robert Nelson and Nona Beamer '41. *Above right* – At the March reunion at Kapono's are, from left, David Valente '75, Peter Kang '75, Brian Kalani McFeely '75, David Lorch, Cynthia Char Dollar '75, Charles Souza '75 and Haunani Daniels Valente '75.

Others became professional musicians, like **Roland Cazimero '69**, **Dennis Kamakahi '71**, **David Kauahikaua '73**, the late **Wendell Warrington '74**, **Danny Kiaha '76** and many more – not to mention all the rest of us who live music each and every day.

From all the people whose life Mr. Lorch touched, *aloha mau no*. Even though he is now gone, he will be in our hearts forever.

The David Myron Lorch Scholarship

The legacy goes on in the form of the David Myron Lorch Scholarship Fund. Two Kapālama Campus students were recently named the first \$500 recipients: **Troy Andrade '04** and **Elizabeth Mahi '04**.

The selection criteria is quite simple and reflects David's passion to teach music: he wished that the scholarships be given to graduating seniors who are members of the band or orchestra planning on continuing on to college, seeking a degree in the music field.

If you would like to contribute to the scholarship fund, a check may be sent to the:

Ke Ali'i Pauahi Foundation,
Wally Chin, director of finance,
567 S. King Street, Suite 160,
Honolulu, HI 96813

with "The David Lorch Scholarship" in the memo section of the check. Gifts are tax deductible and an acknowledgement letter will be mailed to the sender.

Mahalo.



David Lorch Scholarship recipients Troy Andrade '04 and Elizabeth Mahi '04 with KS Illustrator Robin Racoma, daughter of David Lorch.

Nā Hōkū award for "I Mua E Nā Pōki'i"

In May, the Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts presented a 2004 Na Hōkū Hanohano award for Compilation Album of the Year to the Kamehameha Schools Hawaiian Cultural Center Project's compact disc titled "I Mua E Nā Pōki'i."

The CD, co-produced by Kapālama Campus Performing Arts department head **Randie Fong '78** and HCCP coordinator **Jamie Merseberg Fong '78** along with **Kenneth Makuakane '73** and Tasha Tavares of Makuakane Enterprises, features original compositions from past Song Contest Hō'ike productions that have been rearranged and adapted for today's listeners.

The CD was also nominated for album cover design and liner notes awards.

"This recognition is a wonderful affirmation of our cultural strength and resolve as a people. May these *mele* inspire us to do all that we must to survive and flourish in our homeland; to go forward and drink of the bitter waters, for there is no retreat," Randie Fong said.

The CD is available by mail for \$10.

Please make checks or money orders payable to Kamehameha Schools. Include your name, mailing address



and phone number, including area code, and mail your order request to: Kamehameha Schools, Hawaiian Cultural Center Project, 1887 Makuakāne Street, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817-1887.

For more information about "I Mua E Nā Pōki'i" or HCCP, please contact HCCP Web site editor Camille Naluai at 808-843-3594, e-mail kaiwa@ksbe.edu. or visit the HCCP Web site at www.kaiwakiloumoku.ksbe.edu.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

567 S. KING STREET, 4TH FLOOR, HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96813

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT No. 419

HONOLULU, HI