



FRED DAILEY

Fred Dailey, often called “Mr. Polo,” was passionate about two things in his life: hospitality and polo. Fred didn’t start out in the hospitality business. He was born in Chicago and worked as a reporter in the heyday of the gangster era. Following service in World War II, he married Elizabeth Murphy – known as “Murph” – who would be his business partner as well as his wife. He moved to Hawai’i after the war, supposedly to retire – but never really made retirement a reality. He applied his imagination and restless energy to the rapidly developing world of Hawai’i tourism in the 1950s.

The Dailey family developed the spectacular Waikikian Hotel in 1956. Dailey challenged Pete Wimberly, the building’s architect, to design “the most Polynesian hotel in Polynesia.” Placed right at the entrance to Waikīkī, the hotel provided a visual confirmation that the visitor was in a special place. The dramatic lobby was flanked with a series of bungalows designed to feel like Hawaiian *hale*. Alongside the hotel, Dailey developed the Tahitian Lanai, another distinctive project that became wildly successful in the Waikīkī restaurant scene. Rounding out the Dailey’s hotel operations, the family opened the smaller Driftwood hotel.

In his very active social life, Daily played polo with his tourism industry colleagues in Kapi’olani park and later organized the Mokolē’ia Polo Club in 1964. The polo matches attracted celebrities from around the world, including an appearance by Britain’s Prince Charles in 1974.

Apart from the family business, Fred contributed his expertise in marketing and public relations through active involvement in the Hawai’i Visitors Bureau, the Hawai’i Hotel Association, and Skal.