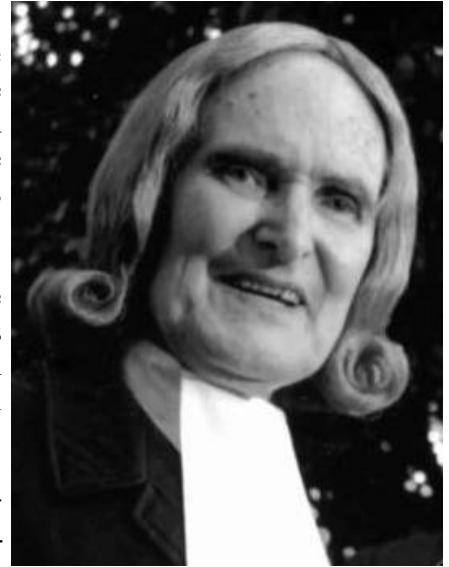


BILL VANCE'S JOHN WESLEY PORTRAYAL

Bill Vance was born in 1923 on a small farm outside Ft. Worth, Texas. His love affair with the airplane began at about the same time. Later, when in the first grade in public school, he was cast in a play as "Jack-in-the-Box". At the appointed time during the performance, he popped out of the box on cue and discovered a rival for the airplane---an audience. Since that early beginning to the present day, he has willingly and enthusiastically served both masters - airplanes and audiences.

The elementary school years in the days before television afforded ample opportunity for sharpening his dramatic talent in numerous school plays. This dramatic activity continued throughout Junior and Senior High Schools and on into college. At Baylor University, he had the opportunity to study under Mr. Paul Baker, late of the Dallas Theater Center.

In addition to the school activities, he appeared in numerous civic theater productions and worked in a summer stock company. He won the "Best Supporting Actor" award for 1992 from the Ft. Worth Theater. He began his religious drama ministry in 1967 when he joined the Covenant Players of Los Angeles as a remote player, winning several awards for his activities. That was followed shortly thereafter by the formation of his own resident company of players. The Covenant Player activity was replaced when, as a member of First United Methodist Church of Hurst, Texas, he began writing and producing his own plays for the church. This activity has expanded to well over 100 plays presented on local, Conference, Jurisdictional, and National levels. In the Bicentennial year of 1984, he wrote and produced four major plays for 1) the United Community Centers of Ft. Worth; 2) the South Central Jurisdiction UMWomen's Quadrennial meeting in Wichita, Kansas; 3) the South Central Methodist Jurisdiction's Quadrennial meeting in Lubbock, Texas; and 4) the Bicentennial Drama, "I REMEMBER THE CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE", published by Abingdon Press.



His first appearance as "John Wesley" was the Annual Meeting of the Metropolitan Board of Missions of Ft. Worth, Texas, in 1975. Since that time "John Wesley" has appeared in over 600 churches, District meetings, Annual Conferences, national conventions, and seminars all over the nation to over 100,000 people. In 1988, he presented "John Wesley" in Central Hall United Methodist Church in London, England as a part of the 250th Anniversary Celebration of Wesley's Aldersgate Experience. His latest appearance as John Wesley was rather unique. He served as the model for Kenneth Wyatt's 1993 painting "JOHN BENJAMIN WESLEY---MAN OF VISION". Mr. Wyatt, noted for his painting "OFFER THEM CHRIST", and "THE APOSTLES," created this work for the Methodist program, "VISION 2001."

The flying part of Bill's career began with the US Air Force in 1949. Commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in 1950, he served on active duty for four years as a jet fighter instructor. Upon completion of his active duty, he joined the Air Force Ready Reserve. He retired in 1977 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. His airline career began in 1954 with Central Airlines (merging with Frontier Airlines in 1967). He retired in March 1983 as a Captain, flying both the Boeing 737 and the MD-80.

Bill's wife, Lee, is a retired Diaconal Minister of Education in the United Methodist Church, and they have four adult children. In addition to her own duties in the church, she assists her husband in his religious drama activities.

(Photo courtesy of Dallas Morning News, Kim Ritzenthaler - photographer)

-<http://www.wesleylive.com/BV%20bio.html>

(5/30/09)