

William O. Prince Advertising Federation of Greater Hampton Roads 1984 Silver Medal Award Honoree



The 1984 recipient of the Silver Medal Award, presented by the Advertising Federation of Greater Hampton Roads, was William O. Prince.

Bill Prince began his working life as a copy boy in the advertising department of *The Portsmouth Star* in 1950. In a short time the ad staff discovered his artistic ability and had him doing ad layouts for various accounts. His layouts were so tight that they could easily have been photographed and run in the paper instead of being typeset.

With his ability, and an unusually conscientious mind, Prince soon became a full-fledged ad staff member serving some of the paper's key accounts. He remained in this position until the Korean War, where he served in combat in the fire direction center of an artillery battery of the US Army I Corps on the western front.

Upon return, he rejoined the newspaper and remained until one year after its merger with the *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch* in 1955. During this period he joined with four others to organize Tidewater Engraving Company, which operated successfully for several years.

When Portsmouth people organized *The Portsmouth Times* in 1956, Prince went to the newspaper as Assistant Retail Advertising Manager, later being promoted to Retail Advertising Manager. The new paper lasted one year, so Bill helped to organize Major & Bie, Inc., a fledgling advertising agency, and was its first commercial artist.

Major & Bie, Inc. became Seamark, an advertising and public relations firm, in 1970. Prince was promoted to Executive Vice President and was an equal owner with Tom & Mackie Bie. He held the additional post of Treasurer, overseeing the agency's financial affairs, counseled in production techniques and handled some of the firm's largest clients.

A perfectionist and workaholic by nature, Prince was widely regarded as a master technician in print production throughout the Hampton Roads area. He was consulted by printing firms – and other advertising agencies – on particularly thorny subjects. Two of the clients he served were major international companies which often had “crash” projects which demanded first quality material within seemingly impossible time frames.

They learned from long experience that Bill Prince would, somehow, pull the project through on time.

Prince was promoted to President of Seamark, Inc., in 1983. He later served as Chair of the Silver Medal Committee of the Tidewater Advertising Club (now AAF Hampton Roads).

With all his dedication to his craft, Bill had time to serve his community and mankind. He served on the Board and the Board of Trustees of his church, Aldersgate United Methodist Church for over 20 years. He's a Pastmaster of America Lodge No. 330 and served as Public Relations Chair of the Portsmouth Area United Way. Prince worked with the Tidewater Council of the Boy Scouts of America, and various committees with the Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce, Children's Hospital of the Kings Daughters, Portsmouth Child and Family Services, the USO and Little League Baseball.

Bill is a respected professional in his field, a man of unusual integrity and an unselfish member of the community. He is married to the former Marjorie Lee Thomas.