

BILL FRAZIER

The Face behind Frazier

Bill Frazier may seem like an unlikely candidate for owning a winery. Born and raised in the Bronx, Bill did not move from New York until college when he chose to attend Virginia Tech. in Blacksburg, Virginia. Bill began his college career as a soil science major but his talents soon drew him to aviation. He joined the air force and soon found himself stationed at Travis Air Force Base in California. After flying for a number of years in the Air Force and earning honors for his service in Vietnam, Bill decided to become a commercial airline pilot for United Airlines. Bill remained as a pilot with United, where he flew frequently to Hong Kong, Seoul & Australia, for over 30 years until he retired in the late nineties.

Though Bill was a pilot by profession his interest in real estate became a notable side project. Bill owned and rented out apartments, office space and restaurants all over the country. In 1977 Bill moved to Napa where he began searching for property to build a home. In 1982 Bill found a parcel of land on the east side of Napa that he felt was ideal. Not one to sit on the sidelines, Bill teamed up with an architect and construction company and set to work building his new home. The house was finished in 1984 and Bill and his family moved in immediately.

In the garage of this new home is where Bill began making his own wine. Just a hobby at the time, Bill never dreamed he would one day own his own winery. In 1990 Bill finally decided it was time to plant his 9.5 dormant acres to vineyards. His initial intention was to sell the Cabernet and Merlot grapes he planted to other wineries in the valley. However, after making a few batches of highly touted garage wine from his grapes he decided that he would hire a professional winemaker and begin his own winery. Bill asked wine industry professionals all over the valley who, in their opinion, was the best red wine maker in the valley. John Gibson's name kept popping up and soon Bill set out to get John to make the wine he would soon label as Frazier. John came out to the property and was impressed by the rich volcanic soil, hillside vineyards and close-spacing planting style that Bill employed. John agreed to make the Frazier wines and thus, Frazier winery was born.

Since 1990 Frazier Winery has grown considerably. In 1997, Bill purchased an additional 46 acres adjacent to his initial parcel. Of these 46 acres he planted 11.5 to more Cabernet and Merlot. In 2001, Bill completed the construction of the on-site winery and in 2003 the 10,000 sq. ft. cave structure was completed which now serves as both a barrel storage facility, entertainment hall and is home to the tasting room. In 2007, one acre of Chardonnay vineyard was planted; Frazier Winery's first white varietal. In 2008 Bill hopes to plant another 10 acres of the hillside to additional Bordeaux varietals and possibly some new red varietals. One thing is for sure, he won't stop there! With his vision, hard work and perseverance, Bill has grown Frazier Winery from a small, 900 case per year venture to a successful 5,000 case per year operation.