

# MWPGM Robert E. Ford

Robert E. Ford was a beloved member of Kinmundy Lodge #398 for many years, and his passing left a deep void in our hearts. Over the course of his life, he achieved many impressive accomplishments and touched countless lives.

Initiated, passed, and raised at Kinmundy Lodge #398, Bro. Ford was an honorary member of more than 43 other Illinois lodges and several Grand Jurisdictions in the United States and abroad. He served Kinmundy Lodge as Worshipful Master in 1966 and 1967, as Most Worshipful Grand Master in 1990 and 1991, as Past Grand Master since 1992, as Grand Examiner in 1992, as Past Grand Examiner since 1993, on the Grand Lodge of Illinois Foreign Jurisdictions Committee since 1994, as Grand Representative of Hawaii since 1996, on the Grand Lodge of Illinois Masonic Foundation Committee from 1998 to 2006, as the Chairman of the Grand Lodge of Illinois Masonic Homes Endowments Committee from 1999 to 2002, on the Grand Lodge of Illinois Floor Work Manual Committee in 2005, was a member of the King Solomon Society from 2008 to present, received his 50 Year Award on March 19, 2013, and was a Master Mason for 51 years.

As Grand Master, Bro. Ford sought to maintain personal contact with all Illinois lodges, writing personalized letters to every Master and Warden of each lodge. He brought the Illinois Masonic Bowl statewide and started training programs for Job's Daughters, Rainbow Girls, Demolay, Lodge Officers, and District Deputies. Bob started the Certified Lodge Instructor's program and changed the Honored Lodge requirements to a point system such that lodges deserving recognition received it.

Bro. Ford was a true Master Builder, and he improved the Masonic experience in Illinois while uniting Masons into a sacred band, or society of friends and brothers. But he didn't stop there. He also brought the Comprehensive Assistance and Recovery Effort (C.A.R.E.) program started by R. Wor. Bro. Earl Washburn to Illinois and later helped bring it to the national level as the Illinois Masonic Student Assistance Program (IMSAP). Thanks to Bob's efforts, many Illinois students have received preemptive counseling, which has led them to healthier and happier lives.

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Bob was not only a great leader but also a kind and generous man. He remained active in teaching and performing ritual, floorwork instruction, and degree work throughout his life. Whenever he turned up at a meeting, there was an increase in the amplitude of audible greetings as groups of men flocked to shake his hand. And if you were fortunate to be his chauffeur or protege, you were met with equal cheer and joy. His infectious love of people was evident outside the lodge room as well. On numerous occasions, Bob would spot a young person working hard at their job and, finding out they were supporting a young family, would hand them a \$100 bill to brighten their day and encourage them to believe in the goodness of humanity.

We miss Bob dearly, but we take comfort in the fact that his legacy lives on. Each Kinmundy Lodge member has fond memories of Bob, and it is our duty to ensure that these memories are submitted in writing to the Secretary and made a part of the lodge records. We will always be grateful for the many ways in which Bob enriched our lives, and we are proud to carry on his legacy of leadership, kindness, and generosity.