



Shriners

NEWS & NOTES

President Gerald R. Ford, Noble Through And Through

(NAPSA)—Gerald R. Ford was a World War II veteran, a House minority leader, a vice president and a president; he was a football star, a Yale Law School graduate and a family man. He was also a Shriner.

On Dec. 26, 2006, the day the United States lost a great leader, the Shriners of North America also lost a Brother and fellow Noble. President Gerald R. Ford passed away at age 93 at his home in Rancho Mirage, Calif.

Ford's connection with Freemasonry and Shriners of North America began at a young age—his father was an active Mason and Shriner. Ford said in a 1976 speech, however, that his meaningful and personal exposure to the Shriners fraternity began in 1934, while playing center on the University of Michigan football team. He was selected to play in the 10th annual East-West Shrine Game, and as part of the game's festivities, he and the other players toured the San Francisco Shriners Hospital (now located in Sacramento, Calif.).

During the speech, given to Mohammed Shriners in Illinois, Ford explained, "It was a tremendous experience for us on the Eastern football team to go to that hospital and see what is done to help unfortunate people, especially young people. And I learned...what great people like all of you do, on a day-to-day basis, to help those less fortunate than yourself."

On Sept. 30, 1949, along with his three half brothers, Ford was initiated at Malta Lodge #465, the Masonic chapter in Grand Rapids,



U.S. President Gerald R. Ford became a Shriner at Saladin Temple on Oct. 24, 1959.

Mich. Through the years, he earned his Fellowcraft and Master Mason degrees, joined the Scottish Rite and other Masonic organizations, and was awarded a number of distinctions and honors. On Oct. 24, 1959, Ford became a Noble of Saladin Shriners in Kentwood, Mich.

Ford represented the Shriners fraternity on a number of occasions. He made a guest appearance on the Shriners Hospitals for Children 75th Anniversary Television Special in 1997. He was also inducted into the inaugural East-West Shrine Game Hall of Fame class on Jan. 12, 2002.

Fellow Nobles have always been proud that President Ford was a member of Shriners of North America. Nobles of the fraternity express deepest condolences to his friends and family, especially his Lady Betty and their children, Michael, Jack, Steven and Susan, for their loss of this great man. He truly was a Noble in every sense of the word.