



## Robert "Bob" Ensman

July 29, 1937 - January 18, 2025

Robert "Bob" Ensman was born July 29, 1937 in Findlay, Ohio to parents Eugene and Eva (Apple) Ensman. He spent most of his childhood in Van Buren, Ohio.

Scouting became a big part of Bob's life after his father started a local Boy Scout troop. He reached the rank of Eagle Scout (with two palms, for those in the know) and credited his experiences with teaching him the leadership skills he would use for the rest of his life.

Bob attended Bowling Green State University in Ohio, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Analytical Chemistry in 1959. He married fellow student Judy Baumer that same year and moved with her to Bloomington to join Indiana University as a Chemistry graduate student. However, after an inspiring research project involving the design and construction of an electronic instrument... and the birth of two children... he took a short break to study electrical engineering at Rose Hulman. Upon his return to IU in 1963, he was hired by the Chemistry Department into the brand new role of "Instrument Specialist," where he was invited to organize and staff a new technical group for the department, Electronic Instrumentation Services. His original plan to earn a PhD thus turned into a lifelong career in electronics, supporting chemistry research at IU.

In the early 1970s, he decided to form his own company, Ensman Instrumentation (EI), to do freelance after-hours repair and design work. His most significant project was the EI-400, a "fast-scan / dual channel micro

electrode potentiostat" designed in the 1980s. It was the first commercial instrument of its kind. By 1985, EI had shipped 84 units (made in his basement) to researchers in the US and abroad, resulting in many scientific advances. An estimated additional 25 units were fabricated and/or sold by another company in later years. He also worked with a team of researchers to create a similar instrument to monitor, in real time, dopamine concentration levels in the brains of fully awake, freely moving rats, a device that furthered the understanding of brain function.

Outside of work, Bob was a founding member of St. John's church on the west side of Bloomington, served as the secretary of the Professional Staff Council at IU, and managed to take his family on many camping trips in a pop-up camper (something the kids weren't always happy about at the time, but later came to treasure).

Bob retired in 1997 after 37 years of service to IU, but kept busy doing electronic instrumentation consulting work for several IU Bloomington departments, serving in leadership positions with his Homeowners Association and the IU Retirees Association, and acting as the go-to fix-it guy for his family and his community—in particular, spending hours caring for the neighborhood pond. He and Judy enjoyed driving across the US (in a more comfortable hardtop trailer) and traveling the world, where he found a new hobby in photography. He also greatly enjoyed short camping trips, sleepovers (with pancake breakfasts!), and construction projects with his grandchildren. Bob and Judy moved to Bell Trace Independent Living in January 2021. Bob's physical and mental abilities gradually declined due to Parkinson's Disease, but Judy was there to keep him going. He passed away peacefully in the night on January 18, 2025, at the Bell Trace Health and Living Center.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents: Eugene and Eva Ensman, his brother: Fr. Raymond Ensman, and his son-in-law: Mario Bettencourt. He is survived by his wife: Judith Ensman, sisters: Sue Nocella (partner Jerry Sanders) and Ann Long, children: Lisa Ensman (spouse Anurag Shankar),

Mike Ensman (spouse Christina Ensman), Catherine Ensman, and Patricia Ensman (spouse Mario Bettencourt), and grandchildren: Dhruv Shankar, Brooke Carmichael (fiancé Anthony Back), Rajin Shankar, and Jessica McNear (spouse Jackson McNear).

For anyone wishing to make a donation in memory of Bob, please consider the Parkinson's Foundation, the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, or St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington.

A memorial service will be held at 1:00PM on Friday, January 24, 2025 at Allen Funeral Home and Crematory, 4155 South Old State Road 37, Bloomington, IN. The family will receive friends on Friday from 11:30AM until the time of service at the funeral home.

Online condolences, photos and memories may be shared with family and friends at [www.allencares.com](http://www.allencares.com).

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN **24**. 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory  
4155 S. Old State Road 37  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
(812) 824-5905  
<http://www.allencares.com>

## Memorial Service

JAN **24**. 1:00 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory  
4155 S. Old State Road 37  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
(812) 824-5905  
<http://www.allencares.com>

# Tribute Wall

LE

“ Thanks to whoever planted the trees for Dad! He would have really appreciated that. He loved the outdoors. --Lisa

Lisa Ensman - February 11, 2025 at 12:55 PM

LE

“ Thank you Dad for teaching us so much - from basic plumbing and woodworking to enduring failing health and severe limitations with patience and good humor. By example, you (and mom) taught us to work hard and strive for excellence, to be responsible, giving, and forgiving. We knew you were always there for us, a huge comfort throughout our lives. We'll always remember you! With love, Lisa (Mike, Cathy, and Tricia)

Lisa Ensman - January 26, 2025 at 05:48 PM

MS

“ Milos Novotny and Helena Soini purchased the *Vivid Recollections* for the family of Robert "Bob" Ensman.



Milos Novotny and Helena Soini - January 24, 2025 at 11:27 AM

MB

“ Mary A Brock lit a candle in memory of Robert "Bob" Ensman



Mary A Brock - January 24, 2025 at 12:01 AM

MB

“ I would like to send my condolences to Judy and her family, and share a few memories. Bob was my IU Medical Technology program Clinical Chemistry course instructor, back in 1968. Part of the course included a visit to Bloomington Hospital, where Judy did our tour. Later I worked with Judy for several years there, Judy usually being one of my supervisors. Another more comical memory was somewhere in the 1980's or so. I saw Bob in the hospital parking lot, a few cars down from mine, suprised to see him driving a shiny new sportsy kind of car. I don't remember if it was/were he or Judy, but one of them stated, with humor, that it was his "midlife crisis car."! I am glad that he and Judy got to spend so many good years together.

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**Mary Anne Brock** - January 23, 2025 at 06:46 PM

BW

“ I was neighbors with the Ensmans growing up. Bob and Judy definitely made my childhood better. Bob built an awesome treehouse and we had many good times in it. I wish I could come Friday, but I'm currently in Florida.

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**Brad Watkins** - January 23, 2025 at 01:55 PM

AA

“ 1 file added to the album EI400



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**Andy Alexander** - January 23, 2025 at 10:02 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Robert "Bob" Ensman.*



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January 23, 2025 at 08:13 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Robert "Bob" Ensman.

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January 23, 2025 at 08:13 AM