

86th Congress
Public Law 600
July 7, 1960

AN ACT

To provide for the presentation of a medal to persons who have served as members of a United States expedition to Antarctica.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That each person who serves, or has served, as a member of a United States expedition to Antarctica between January 1, 1946, and a date to be subsequently established by the Secretary of Defense shall be presented a medal with accompanying ribbons and appurtenances, under regulations to be prescribed by the Secretary of Departments under whose cognizance the expedition falls, such regulations to be subject to the approval of the Secretary of Defense. The regulations may include provisions for award to civilian as well as uniformed members and for posthumous awards.

Members of the Armed Forces of the United States who are presented the medal referred to in the first section of this Act may wear such medal and the ribbon symbolic of such medal in such manner as shall be prescribed by regulations approved by the Secretary of Defense.

Background and History of the Antarctic Service Medal

(extracts from “Antarctic Medals of the United States”,
Antarctic Journal of the United States,
November-December 1968, pages 241-244)

- “Of the four medals that the United States Government has authorized in recognition of antarctic expeditionary service, only one – the Antarctica Service Medal – is presently awarded.”

The Byrd Antarctic Expedition Medal
Second Byrd Antarctic Expedition Medal
U.S. Antarctic Expedition Medal, 1939-1941
Antarctica Service Medal – current



QUOTE:

- The ribbon of the Antarctica Service Medal is elaborate in its symbology. The outer bands of black and dark blue comprise five-twelfths of the ribbon’s width, representing five months of antarctic darkness; the center portion, by its size and colors – grading from medium blue through light blue and pale blue to white – symbolizes seven months of solar illumination, and also the *aurora australis*.

Although the former rigors and dangers of antarctic exploration have largely been banished by technology, the words on the reverse of this medal are yet a wise injunction to those who go to the Antarctic:

COURAGE
SACRIFICE
DEVOTION