Two medals for antarctic exploration are named in honor of Admiral Richard Evelyn Byrd (1888-1956), American explorer and naval aviator and officer. In 1925 he was in command of the naval air unit of the Navy-MacMillan expedition to Greenland. With three aircraft the explored 30,000 square miles of territory. With Floyd Bennett as co-pilot, Admiral Byrd made the first flight over the North Pole in 1926. For their achievement both men received the "Congressional Medal of Honor" and the "Hubbard" gold medal for valor in exploration. Byrd's first expedition to the southern polar area arrived at Antarctica in December, 1928. He established a base known as "Little America" on the Bay of Whales. This base was made headquarters for other expeditions. May 23, 1930, Congress directed the Secretary of the Navy to have gold, silver, and bronze medals made for the officers and men of the Byrd Antarctic Expedition of 1928-1930. The design by Francis H. Packer bears on the words: "Byrd Antarctic Expedition 1928-1930." Reverse bears a sailing ship above a panel inscribed: "PRESENTED TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE BYRD ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION TO EXPRESS THE HIGH ADMIRATION IN WHICH THE CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, HOLD THEIR HEROIC AND UNDAUNTED SERVICES IN CONNECTION WITH THE SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS AND EXTRAORDINARY AERIAL EXPLORATION OF THE ANTARCTIC CONTINENT." Below, is an airplane.

Byrd's Second Expedition led him to Antarctica and Little America in 1933. During this expedition he conducted various researches and collected valuable information of the polar area. He returned to America in 1935. On June 2, 1936, Congress directed that silver medals be made for deserving personnel of the Second Byrd Antarctic Expedition. The design by Heinz Warneke proved to be very appropriate. Observe—Admiral Byrd
petting Eskimo dog. Words: "BYRD ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1933-1935."
Reverse—Inscription on a panel: "PRESENTED TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE SECOND BYRD ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION TO EXPRESS THE VERY HIGH ADMIRATION IN WHICH THE CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HOLD THEIR HEROIC AND UNDAUNTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR SCIENCE UNEQUALED IN THE HISTORY OF POLAR EXPLORATION."
Radio towers at Little America, ship, airplane, and dog sled and team.

The suspension ribbon of the Byrd Antarctic Expedition Medal of 1928-30 has a light blue center stripe bordered by two white stripes 7/16" in width. The center stripe is 1/3" in width. The suspension ribbon of the Second Byrd Antarctic Expedition Medal is a solid white ribbon 1 and 3/8" in width.

While in command of the United States Antarctic Service Department, Admiral Byrd organized a third expedition to Little America in 1939, arriving in January, 1940. Four exploratory flights were made resulting in many discoveries, including several mountain ranges, 900 miles of new coastline, and 150,000 square miles of new territory. The expedition consisting of 158 men returned in 1941. The United States Antarctic Expedition Medal 1939-1941, was established for award to the members of that expedition in recognition of their valuable services to the Nation in the field of Polar exploration and science. Authorized by Act of Congress approved September 24, 1945. The obverse bears a partial map showing—South Pacific Ocean, Little America, South Pole, Antarctica, and Palmerland. Across the center top the words: "SCIENCE, PIONEERING, EXPLORATION." Around the edge the words: "THE UNITED STATES ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1939-1941." The reverse bears the words: "BY ACT OF THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO—(black area for engraving recipient’s name)—IN RECOGNITION OF INVALUABLE SERVICE TO THIS NATION BY COURAGEOUS PIONEERING IN POLAR EXPLORATION WHICH RESULTED IN IMPORTANT GEOGRAPHICAL AND SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES." The suspension ribbon is an ivory center stripe with 1/16" red stripes at either side piped in 1/16" ivory stripes both bordered by a stripe of ice blue.

For a more recent polar feat, the passing of the atomic submarine NAUTILUS under the North Pole in August 3, 1958 at 11:15 p.m. E.S.T., the President’s Unit Citation (Navy and Marine Corps) was awarded to the crew with a gold "N" attached. These awards of the P.U.C., the first since World War II, were formally presented by U.S. Ambassador Mr. John Hay Whitney at Portland. Prior to this, Capt. of the Nautilus, Commander Anderson, was taken to Washington to receive the Legion of Merit personally from President Eisenhower.

Similarly, the crew of the SKATE, received the Presidential Unit Citation ribbon upon the return from the second sub-polar trip. It is not known whether they too received a special device on their ribbons, as in the case of the Nautilus above. The Skate’s Capt., Commander J. F. Calvert, received the gold star to his Legion of Merit, in lieu of his second award of this decoration.

Gary C. Krug
This medal apparently was struck in connection with some Polar Expedition. Since the name Tiffany appears on the medal, they were queried about it. However, they were unable to find anything in their records concerning this piece. Would any reader be able to add any knowledge relative to this piece?

APPROVAL APPROACHING FOR 2 NEW AIR MEDALS

"Washington-The Air Force is about to get its 'Air Force Cross' and 'Airman's Medal', as replacements for the Distinguished Service Cross and the Soldier's Medal, respectively. Legislation authorizing the two distinctive AF medals was approved last week by the Senate Armed Forces Committee. The House approved the two new medals last year. "The new medals won't be ready for a long time, although designs of the medals and ribbons should be available soon. The Air Force already has a distinctive Longevity Service Ribbon and a distinctive Air Force Commendation Medal.

"A 'Good Conduct Medal' for USAF men, probably titled "Exemplary Conduct Medal" is the next objective in the drive for distinctive medals."

AIR FORCE TIMES, 6 July 1960—Irv Abraham

MORE ON NORTH KOREAN MEDALS

By S. G. Yasinitsky

I have an interesting North Korean medal to add to the several illustrated in the March-April issue of THE MEDAL COLLECTOR. My medal is a typical Red decoration, a screw-back affair without a ribbon.