THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM

Purpose

By Ronald E. Fischer

The purpose of this article is to examine both, the history of the development, and examples of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, our nation's highest civilian award for public service. It is second in the Presidential Award Series only to the Medal of Honor.

Historical Background Information

During World War II the President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, felt he needed an award to recognize civilians that contributed to the war effort with awards other than those used by the military, such as the Army and Navy Distinguished Service Medals, that were used during World War I. The first result was the Medal for Merit which was awarded some 145 times to prominent Americans, but was never used after World War II. Many of the elements of the design of the medal and ribbon came from the Legion of Merit.
The Medal of Merit awarded during WWII

Award Document for the Medal of Merit
MEDAL OF MERIT CITATION

MEDAL OF MERIT CITATION

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE MEDAL FOR MERIT
TO
CHARLES F. TAFT

CHARLES F. TAFT, for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services to the United States, as Director of the Office of Community War Services, has made an immeasurable contribution to the welfare of the people of the United States, and is hereby awarded the Medal of Merit.

The President of the United States of America, in the name of the Congress, do hereby授予

Charles F. Taft

the Medal of Merit, for extraordinary service in the performance of outstanding services to the United States.

The citation reads:

Charles F. Taft, for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services to the United States, as Director of the Office of Community War Services, has made an immeasurable contribution to the welfare of the people of the United States, and is hereby awarded the Medal of Merit.

The medal is a rectangular medallion with a gold and silver design that features a portrait of the Statue of Liberty in the center and the words "MEDAL OF MERIT" around the circumference. The ribbon is a green and gold striped ribbon.

The medal was first awarded in 1942 to recognize the contributions of civilians and military personnel during World War II. Since then, it has been awarded to more than 2,000 individuals, including foreign citizens and American military and civilian personnel.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is the highest civilian award that can be given by the President of the United States. It was established by Congress in 1963 and is awarded to individuals who have made meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States, to world peace, or to cultural or other significant public or private endeavors.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is a larger and more elaborate version of the Medal of Merit, with a gold and silver design that features a portrait of the Liberty Bell in the center and the words "PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM" around the circumference. The ribbon is a gold and red striped ribbon.

Over the years, the Medal of Merit has been awarded to a wide range of individuals, including scientists, artists, educators, and military personnel. The Presidential Medal of Freedom has been awarded to individuals from a wide range of fields, including politics, business, entertainment, and sports.

The award of the Medal of Merit to Charles F. Taft is a testament to his contributions to the welfare of the people of the United States and his dedication to community service.

Medal of Merit Citation

General Eisenhower, the SHAPE Commander, wanted a medal that could be awarded to civilians and partisans that risked their lives to rescue allied airmen that had been shot down and kept them safe until they could be smuggled out of Europe. This request started the development of the Medal of Freedom that was awarded in four grades, Chief Commander with Gold Palm, Commander with Silver Palm, Officer with Bronze Palm, and Legionnaire with no device, all similar to the Legion of Merit. All four grades could be awarded to foreigners, both military and civilian, while only the lowest grade, without device, could also be awarded to American military and civilian personnel. The ribbon the Medal of Freedom is similar to the Legion of Merit, but with two additional white stripes. The design of the medal's obverse contained the head of the Statue of Liberty that is located on top of the dome of Capitol building in Washington, D.C., and the medal's reverse features the Liberty Bell from Philadelphia. Unlike the one war use of the Medal of Merit award of the Medal of Freedom continued to be used by the Presidential from time to time for award to prominent Americans. Over the years there were over 7000 awards made of the Medal of Freedom. The President later used it for awards to prominent Americans. In 1956 Dr John Von Neumann for Scientific
Achievement in many projects supporting the National Defense and February 21, 1957 Admiral Richard E Byrd was awarded the medal for his Antarctic Exploration including the IGY efforts beginning in 1956.

Medal of Freedom Legionnaire, Officer with Bronze Palm, Commander with Silver Palm, and Chief Commander with Gold Palm

Award Citation for an Officer Award to British Civilian for World War II

In 1955 the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare submitted a proposed act to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Sam Rayburn “To provide for the conferring of an award to be known as the United States Medal of Merit.” In President Eisenhower’s State of the Union message delivered on January 6,
1955: “I shall… propose that awards of merit be established whereby we can honor our fellow citizens who make great contributions to the advancement of our civilization and of this country.” The letter went on to describe the need for a National United States Medal of Merit Board. The Distinguished Civilian Service Awards Board, was established by Executive Order No. 10717 of June 27, 1957 to administer the President’s Award for Distinguished Civilian Service for Civil Service employees, but the United States Medal for Merit never was created.

Upon John F Kennedy’s inauguration in 1961, efforts began at development of a new award that would be appropriate for an annual honors list, similar to what the British were doing. There was also much criticism of medal designs originating from the Army’s Institute of Heraldry, in a Time Magazine article of May 19, 1961 centering around the award of the first NASA Distinguished Service Medal to Commander Alan Shepherd. The DSM used the seal of the Agency and was described as looking like something that came out of a “Cracker Jack Box.” This medal, and its companion the Exceptional Service Medal, were eventually redesigned becoming part a family of NASA awards. The concept of the Medal of Freedom was appealing but the current design was not dignified enough for the intended purpose. The old medal appeared “stark-plain, bronze and undistinguished” for its new purpose. The President and his wife worked on the concept for the next two years and they turned over the implementation to the Institute of Heraldry to come up with a new design, more “beautiful and fitting”. What they were looking for was a European Sash and Star style of award suitable for heads of state. The second order was to be worn on a neck ribbon, similar to the Medal of Honor. The design was to “be the same for both degrees, with the higher order in a larger size. The colors red, white and blue were to be utilized. The design was to be and impressive, dignified medal that would compare with similar awards of other countries.”

By 18 Nov 1962 Recommendations Relative to the Proposed President’s Medal began to be developed.

1. The medal to be presented only by the President of the United States.

2. To be the highest honorary award this country can bestow on United States and foreign diplomats and government dignitaries.

3. To be awarded without respect to nationality.

4. To be comparable in prestige and honor to the Medal of Honor. However, if both the Medal of Honor and the President’s Medal are received by the same person, it is recommended that the Medal of Honor take precedence.

5. The medal to be awarded in either of two ways; i.e., with a sash or with a neck ribbon, depending on the position of the recipient.
6. The medal with sash be awarded only to:
   a. Head of Government or Chief of State.
   b. Prime Minister or equivalent position.

7. Medal with neck ribbon may be awarded to the following categories of individuals:
   a. Ambassadors from other countries (with or without portfolio) and foreign diplomats.
   b. Chief of Military Staff or comparable position.
   c. Civilians of outstanding importance whom it is desired to honor because of material contribution to the advancement of the interests of the United States.

8. Because this is an award to honor an individual, not based on a specific act, it is recommended that second awards not be made. It is considered inappropriate because once a person has been so honored a repetition of the honor would seem to imply that the honor was not of an enduring nature.

9. A lapel button to be provided and to consist of a metal and enamel miniature of the central element of the medal.

On 12 December the Program Director of the Institute of Heraldry wrote a Memo for Record, Subject: Special Project for Design of Medal (White House). It outlined the history of the project to date starting with a request by General Clifton, Military Aide to the President, requesting the Heraldic Officer of the QMC to submit proposed designs for a “high level Decoration” to be awarded by the President. He requested criteria for award of the Medal of Freedom, the Medal of Merit, the Legion of Merit, and the National Security Medal. An initial proposal for a design was submitted in March of 1962. Discussions were held in Sept and later 9 Nov 1962. The result was the implementation letter of 11 Dec 1962. Some General Clifton’s guidance included a proposed National Honor Day, possibly 4 July each year. The award be only granted by the President, and he could grant it with only a few hours notice. The name of the award would have the words Presidential and Freedom in it. There could be up to three degrees. The award would look impressive, including the packaging and could cost $200.00 or more. The artistic value would be the main consideration. The Order of the British Empire was discussed and to be used as a point of departure. He wanted a firm proposal by 3 PM 20 December 1962.
Authority for Medal, Badges and Ribbons

Presidential Documents

Title 3 --- THE PRESIDENT

Executive Order 11085

THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM

By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1 Prior orders. The numbered sections of Executive Order No. 9586 of July 6, 1945, as amended by Executive Order No. 10336 of April 3, 1952, are hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 1. Medal established. The Medal of Freedom is hereby reestablished as the Presidential Medal of Freedom, with accompanying ribbons and appurtenances. The Presidential Medal of Freedom, hereinafter referred to as the Medal, shall be in two degrees.

“Section 2. Award of the Medal. (a) The Medal may be awarded by the President, as provided in this order, to any person who has made an especially meritorious contribution to (1) the security or national interests of the United States, or (2) world peace, or (3) cultural or significant public or private endeavors.

“(b) The President may select for award of the Medal any person nominated by the Board referred to in Section 3 (a) of this Order, any person otherwise recommended to the President for award of the Medal, or any person selected by the President upon his own initiative.

“(d) The principal announcement of awards of the Medal shall normally be made annually, on or about July 4 of each year; but such awards may be made at other times, as the President may deem appropriate.

“(d) Subject to the provisions of this order, the Medal may be awarded posthumously.

“Section 3 Distinguished Civilian Service Awards Board. (a) The Distinguished Civilian Service Awards Board, established by Executive Order No. 10717 of June 27, 1957, hereinafter referred to as the Board is hereby expanded, for the purpose of carrying out the objectives of this Order, to include five additional members appointed by the President from outside the Executive Branch of the Government. The terms of service of the members of the Board appointed under this paragraph shall be five years, except that
the first five members so appointed shall have terms of service expiring on the 31st day of July 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1968 respectively. Any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which his predecessor was appointed shall serve for the remainder of such term.

“(b) A chairman of the Board shall be designated by the President from time to time from among the membership of the Board appointed from the Executive Branch.

“(©) For purposes of recommending to the President persons to receive the President’s Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service and to carry out the other purposes of Executive Order No. 10717, only the members of the Board from the Executive Branch will sit. The names of persons so recommended will be submitted to the President without reference to the other members of the Board.

“Section 4 Functions of the Board. (a) Any individual or group may make recommendations to the Board with respect to the award of the Medal, and the Board shall consider such recommendations.

“(b) With due regard for the provisions of Section 3 of this Order, the Board shall screen such recommendations and, on the basis of such recommendations or upon its own motion, shall from time to time submit to the President nominations of individuals for award of the Medal, in appropriate degrees.

“Section 5 Expenses. Necessary administrative expenses of the Board incurred in connection with the recommendation of persons to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom, including expenses of travel of members of the Board appointed under Section 3 (a) of this Order, during the fiscal year 1963, may be paid from the appropriation provided under the heading ‘Special Projects’ in the Executive Office Appropriation Act, 1963, 76 Stat. 315, and during subsequent fiscal years, to the extent permitted by law, from any corresponding or like appropriation made available for such fiscal years. Such payments shall be made available for such fiscal years. Such payments shall be without regard to the provisions of section 3681 35 Stat. 1027 (31 U.S.C. 672 and 673). Members of the Board appointed under Section 3 (a) of this Order shall serve without compensation.

“Section 6. Design of the Medal. The Army Institute of Heraldry shall prepare for the approval of the President of a design of the Medal in each of its degrees.”

Section 2. Other existing orders. (a) Section 4 of Executive Order No. 10717, establishing the terms of service of the members of the Distinguished Civilian Service Awards Board, is hereby amended to read “The members of the Board shall serve at the pleasure of the President.” And the other sections of that Order are amended conformably to this Order.
(b) Except as otherwise specifically provided in this Order, existing arrangements for conferring medals and honors shall continue in effect.

John F. Kennedy

The White House

February 22, 1963

The President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service

The President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service (PADFCS) is the highest honor the Federal Government can grant to a career civilian employee. It is in recognition of exceptional achievements that are of unusual benefit to the Nation. The award consists of an inscribed gold medal suspended from a blue and white ribbon, a lapel rosette made from the ribbon, and a certificate signed by the President. Executive Order 10717, as amended by Executive Orders 10979, 11085, and 12014, authorizes this award.

Historical Background Information Continued

The efforts resulted in a chain of meetings with a final choice to be made by the first lady 11 April 1963 with changes including the elimination of red enamel from the design and use medium size eagles in between the points of the star. It was directed that two actual medals be produced by 30 June 1963. A plaster cast of her choice was developed and the President made his choice on 30 April 1963. The president approved the badge without blue edging to the star, and the ribbon with white stars in the center. The second degree award is to be called “The Presidential Medal of Freedom” and the first degree is to be called “The Presidential Medal of Freedom With Distinction.” Recipients of the first degree were to be given the neck ribbon and pendent, in addition to the breast star and sash. Both degrees would be given miniature medals. The service
ribbon would have a centered appurtenance to cover the stars of the design. The lapel device of the first degree would have a gold eagle, while the 2\textsuperscript{nd} degree would use a silver eagle. The hip juncture of the breast sash of the first degree would have a blue ribbon rosetted surmounted in its center with an enameled metallic pin from the glory of the coat of arms of the United States. A contract was let to Medallic Art Company of New York with a requested delivery date of 30 June. First production was to result in 4 Stars, 4 badges, and 4 medals with neck ribbons. The ribbon was made Baily Mills and the Galt Company was to make the Presidential Seals for the boxes.

**Symbolism of the First Design**

1. For years the white star has been displayed throughout the world as the identifying emblem of United States elements in the defense of freedom. It is recognized universally as a symbol of our selfless determination to maintain the freedom and democracy of mankind.

2. The eagles among the points of the star are of a design of the early Federal period of the United States, and symbolize the supporting strengths and convictions of our own early struggle for freedom.

3. The constellation of thirteen stars in a field of blue is from the Glory crest of the Coat of Arms of the United States, representing high idealism.

4. The oak wreath depicts the accolade aspect of the decoration and also emphasizes the quality of strength.

5. The white stars on the blue background of the ribbon allude to the United States themselves. The Multiple, white, five pointed stars in the blue field of the canton of our flag long have held a conspicuous place as symbols of the states of our union.

6. The colors of blue, white, gold, and silver are associated with the president’s seal and flag.
Prototype of first designs of Male and Female 2nd Degree MOF

Prototype of first design of 1st Degree MOF with Distinction
**Historical Background Information Continued**

It appears that Mrs. Kennedy changed her mind when she saw the final product. She had her New York jeweler, Mr. David Webb, who had helped with a Presidential paperweight, look at the design and made some significant changes to the design in the form of a vague sketch. The medium size Federal Eagles were replaced by larger “less war like” eagles that now dominate the current design. The eagles were placed on red pedestals to bring that color into the design. The center star seal was made less prominent and the wreath was eliminated. The detail on the eagle feathers and the rope border were to be less pronounced. The ribbon was changed to resemble the Presidents Award for Distinguished Civilian Service award with Legion of Merit style edges on 29 July 1963. It was pointed out that the white edges of the ribbon would be lost on dress white shirt that the medal that would be worn with. The effect on the schedule and the moral at the TIOH was devastating. Mr. Morris of the TIOH was quite frustrated with the changes, but by 2 August he incorporated the suggestions into a new design while attempting to retain as much as he could the designs original concept as possible. On August Mr. Morris renditions of the modified designs done by Mr. Webb were presented to General Clifton along with a large number of samples of blue ribbon of various colors. It would take 9 weeks from approval for a final sample to be delivered and 4 more weeks to manufacture 31 sets for presentation. It would take an additional 3 weeks if the feathers were to be hand cut. General Clifton did not feel that the eagles needed that kind of detail, but wanted the parts die stamped and burnished. Later that afternoon the President approved the obverse, but wanted to consult with the first lady on the reverse and the ribbon.

On 5 August it was revealed that Mrs. Kennedy had approved Mr. Moore’s rendition of Mr. Webb’s design of the obverse and the reverse. But she could not make up her mind about the ribbon color. General Clifton wanted TIOH to make up two ribbons so that the President and his Wife could chose between the blue color used on the Distinguished Unit Citation and the blue used in the ROTC Superior Cadet Award. Mrs. Landrom, the TIOH Project manager, pointed out to General Clifton that Mrs. Kennedy’s ribbon choice was identical or very similar to 25 different foreign and domestic ribbons including the Daughters of the American Revolution. General Clifton directed that the ribbon be developed as directed, and that the White House did not care whose ribbon was duplicated. TIOH would develop what Mrs. Kennedy finally selected. The General wanted 31 sets by delivered by 1 November 1963. TIOH conveyed the final designs to the various manufactures. The first presentation ceremony occurred 14 days after the events at Dallas, and was held by President Johnson at the White House.

**Presidential Medal of Freedom Requirements**

*(New Design 5 August 1963)*

1. Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction (1\textsuperscript{st} Degree, awarded to both male and female).

   a. The center field of stars on the new design is to be gold and flat in lieu of the original raised and modeled silver stars. The beads previously
surrounding the center field of stars will be replaced by a dike containing slanted hash marks (giving a rope effect).

b. The area between the connecting portion of the large star will now contain a red enamel triangle with a slanted hash mark dike around the periphery.

c. Five Napoleonic eagles will replace the five federalist eagles between the points of the large star and perched on the red triangles.

d. There is to be a narrow dike completely around the five pointed white stars with markings as on the red triangle and center portion dike.

e. Reverse to have “Presidential Medal of Freedom” engraved.

f. The reverse will also contain a serial number. These numbers will start with D1.

g. For the first 12 awards, the recipient’s name will be engraved by the medal manufacturer.

2. Presidential Medal of Freedom (2nd Degree, awarded to both male and female). The hanger bar for the 2 inch pendant for the male award will be formed in an “X” shape and have sufficient room to allow the neck ribbon to pass through. The female recipients 2 inch pendant will be suspended from a suspension ring which will be sewed into the center portion of the ribbon bow.

a. The obverse design will be identical to the 3 inch breast badge with the exception that it will not be dapped. Therefore, the changes as described for the Presidential Medal of Freedom will be the same.

b. The new design will contain a reverse. Note: Previous design did not contain a reverse.

c. This award will also be serialized starting with the number “1”.

d. The medal manufacturer will be required to engrave the recipient’s name on the reverse of this medal for the first 42.

e. The laurel wreath will be eliminated from this award.

3. Miniature Presidential Medal of Freedom (This medal will be received by all recipients.)

a. The obverse of the new design is changed to agree with the obverse of the first and second degree medals.
b. The new design will contain a reverse which will be a replica of the second degree.

c. The pendant will be suspended from a 3/8 inch wire ring in lieu of the hanger bar previously required.

4. Sash badge.
   a. The new design will contain gold stars in lieu of the silver.
   b. They will be stone flush with the blue enamel.
   c. The outside periphery of the badge will now contain a rope like effect in lieu of the previous beaded effect and be gold in lieu of silver.
   d. One piece construction with three prongs and clutches for attaching.

5. Lapel emblem and appurtenances, The eagle will be changed from a federalist eagle to a Napoleonic eagle and will be gold for the first degree and silver for the second degree.

Numismatic Information

THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM

ESTABLISHED BY : President John F. Kennedy

AUTHORITY : Constitutional (Executive Order 11085 of February 15 1963)

AWARD CATEGORY: PUBLIC SERVICE

ADMINISTRATOR : Executive Clerk of the White House

EFFECTIVE FROM : February 15, 1963 to the present

1ST RECEPIENTS : With Distinction: Dr. Ralph J Bunch, on December 6, 1963. Second Degree: Marian Anderson , on December 6. 1963

DESIGNERS : The basic design was prepared by Stafford Potter of the Institute of Heraldry; however, it was modified by Jay Morris (TIOH); President John F. Kennedy, Mrs. John F. Kennedy, and Mr. David Webb(a New York jeweler and friend of Mrs. Kennedy)

ATTACHMENTS : Miniature gilt eagle for miniature medal ribbon, lapel device and Ribbon bar for Medal with Distinction, and silver eagle for the Second Degree.
DESCRIPTION: First Degree, With Distinction
This medal consists of two major elements: a broad sash and a “star”. The sash ribbon is three and three-eighths inches wide and is dark blue edged in white (with blue edging). At the crossing of the ribbon is a rosette, three inches in diameter, formed of the same material, its convoluted edge being the white stripe with narrow blue edging of the ribbon and its center concealed by a disc of blue enamel within a brad gold band, two inches in diameter and containing thirteen stars. The star is a three ¼ inch five-pointed star of white enamel with a gold eagle displayed with wings inverted between each pair of points, head to dexter, each wing tip touching a point and toward the center of the star. In the center is a constellation of thirteen gold stars (one, four, three, four, and one), set flush with the raised circular blue enamel background. The gold rims retaining the blue, white, and red enamels are diagonally incised. All stars are pointed upward. The surface is convex. The reverse of the star is concave, inscribed with the words, Presidential Medal of Freedom in incised letters and bears a stamped serial number starting with D. The star is pined to the recipient’s jacket with 3 clutch pins located at 12, 4 and 8 o’clock. The only difference between the men and women’s version is the lapel pin which is made for a suit coat with a straight narrow cut of blue ribbon while the women’s device has the eagle device in the center with a small cut of ribbon representing a bow.

Second Degree, Men’s
The medal employs a star of the same design as used in the higher grade star, except that its only two inches across and is not convex, except for the center. It is worn as a pendent suspended from a hinged metal rope in a figure eight design on a neck ribbon two inches wide with a dark blue center with narrow white stripes. The reverse center is in the form of a pentagon with the words: "Presidential Medal of Freedom" in a circular band. Beyond the words are rays on the edge of the pentagon and on the back of the star points. In the center is a space for naming, and at the bottom a stamped serial number.

Second Degree, Women’s
The medal is identical to the men’s except at the top of the hinged figure medal rope is a pin with the ribbon sewed to the pin and presented in the front by a folded bow typical of European women’s orders. The ribbon is the same as the Men’s.

PRESENTATION: Most awards are presented at an annual awards ceremony in early December or January. The medals come in hand rubbed walnut wooden case with a Presidential Seal in a sterling oval. The case contains the medal, ribbon bar for men, a men’s or
women’s lapel pin and miniature medal with a silver device. The medal is engraved with recipient’s name, who is provided with an framed Award Document bearing the gold seal of the President, and signed by the President. Currently the Government pays approximately $250.00 for each Second Degree Men’s medal.

**Criteria**

The Presidential Medal of Freedom may be awarded to any person who has made an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, to world peace, or to cultural or other significant public or private endeavors. The President may select for this award any person nominated for this award any person nominated for the award by the board established for that purpose, any person otherwise recommended to him, or to any person he selects on his own initiative. The award may be made posthumously.

**Significance of the Medal**

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is the second highest award of the United States of America, ranking directly after the Congressional Medal of Honor. This medal is the highest award for Public Service and is given at least annually personally by the President of the United States to a cross section of distinguished Americans to recognize a lifetime of service. In its 45 year history the medal has been awarded over 400 times since 1963 at an average of 11 per year. At least 28 of these have also received their own Congressional Gold Medals for their achievements as well.

To date there have been two individuals who have received the medal twice. Ellsworth Bunker was presented the Medal with Distinction in 1967 and again in 1969 by President Johnson. The other double recipient of the Second Degree and later the First is General Colin Powell. At least two others received the Medal of Freedom and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. These were John Kenneth Galbraith in 1946 and 2000 and General Andrew Goodpaster in 1961 and 1986. There are very few of these medals in public and private hands.

**Now let us look at the medals that are currently awarded:**
Type 2 current Sash and Star set of First Degree Distinction Badge
How the Distinction Badge of the First Degree is to be worn
Type 2  Reverse of Star of the MOF First Degree Distinction Badge named and awarded to Ellsworth Bunker D-2 and Joe DiMaggio numbered D-56

Obverses of the Second Degree Men’s and Women's medals
Reverse of Male 2nd Degree number 14 awarded to Musician Rudolph Serkin at the first ceremony in 1963. Early awarded badges were replated after the name was engraved on the reverse. Later badges are numbered and marked M or L appropriately.
Recent award of the 2nd Degree Men's version to Madeleine Albright by President Obama. The female version is no longer presented, since President Clinton's second term, to prevent possible problems pining on the bow device.

Examples of Award documents used by President Johnson for an individual award, Nixon's one time unit award of the MOF to the Apollo XIII NASA Team, and an award Citation for Robert S McNamara
The President of the United States of America

Awards this

Presidential Medal of Freedom

To

Carl Sandburg

Son of the prairie, he has helped the nation and the world to comprehend and share, in the great affirmation of American life, asserting always, and in the face of disaster no less than triumph, The People, Yes.

The White House
Washington, D.C., September 14, 1964

[Signature]

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The President of the United States of America

Awards this

Presidential Medal of Freedom

To

The Apollo XIII Mission Operations Team

We often speak of scientific 'miracles,' forgetting that these are not miraculous happenings at all, but rather the product of hard work, long hours, and disciplined intellect.

The men and women of the Apollo XIII mission operations team performed such a miracle, transforming potential tragedy into one of the most dynamic events of all time.

Years of intense preparation made this rescue possible. The skill, coordination, and performance under pressure of the mission operations team made it happen. These brave adventurers are alive and on Earth because of their dedication and because of the critical moments the people of that team were wise enough and self-controlled enough to make the right decisions.

Their extraordinary feat is a tribute to many, especially to his perseverance and to his courage.

The White House
Washington, D.C.
April 15, 1970

[Signature]
For seven years, you have administered our complex Defense establishment -- unifying our strength so that we might respond effectively wherever the security of our free world was challenged.

A brilliant analyst and modern administrator, you have brought a new dimension to defense planning and decision-making.

You have grasped the urgent social crisis of our time -- the awakening of hope among the world's poor.

You have understood that while freedom depends on strength, strength itself depends on the determination of free people.

Your seven long years of unshakable loyalty to the Republic, to the President, and to all who served beside and under you in the services, is an example for the public servant and an inspiration for your countrymen.

May your selfless service -- spent in defending freedom -- bring even greater rewards in the larger work you now undertake to promote freedom throughout the world.

THE WHITE HOUSE
February 28, 1968

Presidential Seal in silver, found on top of the wooden case for each of the medal sets
Early walnut cases used a gilt latch for the First Degree Distinction set and the 2nd Degree badges used a silver latch. Current cases use only a stock gilt latch

Supporting Materials and Bibliography:

1. Letter from the Secretary of HEW to the Speaker of the House calling for United States Medal of Merit.
4. Recommendations Relative to proposed President’s Medal date 12 Nov 1962.
12. Symbolism of the design of both Medals and Chronology.
17. Medallc Art Company Letter with Confirmation of Order dtd Aug 1963
22. "Collection Peter & Albert Verstraeten (Belgium) - website "Belgian Militaria" They have an excellent book "The US Medal of Freedom awarded to Belgians for Services during World War II." It contains pictures of medal groups, biographies, and lists of recipients of the World War II Medals.