

REMARKS
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
PRESENTATION OF JOSEPH HENRY MEDAL
TO DAVID E. FINLEY
JULY 19, 1967

Pres. Ireland

Dr. Ripley, Members of Congress, ~~Mr.~~ ^{*Dr.*} and Mrs. Finley, distinguished guests.

— According to a recent decision of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian, the Joseph Henry Medal is to be conferred from time to time on scholars, members of the Smithsonian staff, and others who have rendered distinguished service to the institution. The medal is named for Joseph Henry, an outstanding scientist and

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first secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, from 1876 to 1878.

= I have the privilege of awarding it today to David E. Finley for his extraordinary contributions to Washington and to the nation in the field of fine arts.

— As you all know, David Finley served as Director of the National Gallery from the time it opened in 1941 until 1959. But his contribution to that great institution began many years earlier.

∟ He was a close personal friend and assistant to Andrew Mellon, who first conceived the vision of a national museum of art in Washington, and whose own collection forms the nucleus of the National Gallery collection today. ∟ After Mr. Mellon's death in 1937, David Finley brought his plans for the National Gallery to completion.

∟ Through his personal efforts, the Gallery went on to acquire many of the finest private collections of art in the United States. The result is that we have in Washington today one of the world's greatest museums of art.

∟ But Mr. Finley made the National Gallery more than a repository for paintings by past masters.

∟ Under his direction it became an active cultural center, providing free concerts and instruction. ∟ James Mitchner has written that during World War II the Gallery served as a "glorified USO" where service men and defense workers could temporarily forget the drudgery of life in wartime America.

∟ The National Gallery has also taken the lead in bringing modern science and technology to the service of artists and curators.

Mr. Finley left the National Gallery in 1959, only to begin museum-building again. As chairman of the United States Commission of Fine Arts he played a leading role in preserving the Old Patent Office Building which will house the new National Portrait Gallery and the Smithsonian's National Collection of Fine Arts.

David Finley's supurb taste, combined with his extraordinary administrative ability and sense of public service have endowed this capitol and the nation with a great cultural treasure. As a member of the Smithsonian Board of Regents, it gives me great

pleasure to present the Joseph Henry Medal to David E. Finley. *(ask Finley to stand)*

CITATION

David Edward Finley, devoted friend of art in all its manifestations, you have served the City of Washington and your Country for thirty years as an arbiter of taste, a moulder of form, and a conservator of all that is eclectic. The Regents of the Smithsonian Institution delight in honoring you with the first award of the Henry Medal for your services to this Institution and to the Nation.

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