

Football Findings

*Artifacts From The First 100 Years of
American Football*

Grace Thorpe

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Recently on eBay I found this 1931 wire photo of Jim Thorpe and his daughter Grace. Years ago I was doing research on the World Famous Indians basketball team and I called Grace Thorpe and had a nice conversation about her dad and people who might know about the WFI basketball team. She put me in touch with the Marion, Ohio Historical Society which had a couple of clippings about games the team played. This was about five years before someone discovered a ticket stub from a WFI basketball game that got coverage in the New York Times and a segment on History Detectives on PBS.

Grace led quite a life in her own right – below is her obituary from the Boston Globe in April 2008.

Grace Thorpe, a tribal judge, anti-nuclear activist, and the daughter of Olympic great Jim Thorpe, died Tuesday of heart failure at the Claremore Veterans Center. She was 86. Ms. Thorpe was a direct descendent of Sac and Fox chief Black Hawk and was of Potawatomi, Kickapoo, and Menominee heritage, according to Park Brothers Funeral Service. She was a World War II veteran, having served as a Women's Army Corps corporal in the Philippines and Japan. She was awarded a Bronze Star for her actions at the battle of New Guinea. She was a personnel interviewer for General Douglas MacArthur at his headquarters in Tokyo during the occupation of Japan.

She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and a paralegal degree from the Antioch School of Law in Washington, D.C. She also was an Urban Fellow of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and completed MBA course work at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah. She was a tribal district court judge.

Ms. Thorpe served as a congressional liaison to the US House of Representatives American Indian Policy Review Commission. She was also known as a champion of the environment, serving as director for the National Environmental Coalition of Native Americans.



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