

Jim Thorpe:

World's Greatest Athlete

Join us for a fascinating presentation on the life of famed Native American athlete Jim Thorpe. Thorpe (Sac and Fox, 1888–1953) was the greatest all-around athlete of his age and probably any other. An Olympic gold medalist in track and field, he also excelled in football, baseball, basketball, and lacrosse.

Thorpe biographer **Robert W. Wheeler** will share stories about the athlete from some of the many Thorpe contemporaries whom he interviewed. Rare photographs and voice recordings of Jim Thorpe, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Jack Dempsey, Burt Lancaster, and others will add drama to the presentation. The controversy surrounding Thorpe's Olympic medals will be explored, and **Dr. Florence Ridlon** will describe the quest—in which she played a key role—to have the athlete's Olympic gold medals and records restored. **Rob Wheeler**, creator of www.JimThorpeRestInPeace.com, will tell the story of why Jim Thorpe is buried in a small town in Pennsylvania that is named after him and discuss the movement to return Thorpe's remains to be buried on Sac and Fox Nation land in Oklahoma.

This program is presented in conjunction with the exhibition, *Best in the World: Native Athletes in the Olympics*, now on view at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. This exhibition was made possible with the generous support of Running Strong for American Indian Youth.



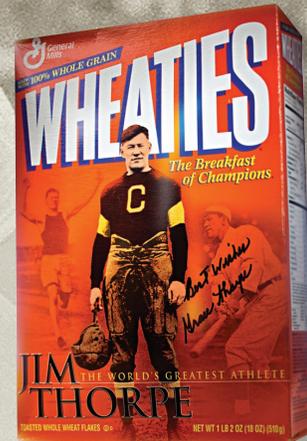
From left to right:
Florence Ridlon,
Rob Wheeler, and
Robert Wheeler.

Jim Thorpe leading the training aboard the S.S. Finland carrying the U.S. Olympic team from New York City to Stockholm, Sweden, for the 1912 Olympics. Photo courtesy Wheeler/Ridlon Family Collection.



Jim Thorpe at the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden. Photo by Branger/Roger-Viollet/Getty Images

Thorpe during competition at Stockholm. Note the mismatched shoes. Thorpe's track shoes had gone missing, so he borrowed one from another runner and found one in the trash. He put an extra sock on one foot to make it fit.



Jim Thorpe Commemorative Wheaties Box, signed by Thorpe's daughter, Grace, from the NMAI collection. Photo by S. Voss.

DATE AND TIME

Friday, August 17, 2012
2:00 p.m., Rasmuson Theater

LOCATION

National Museum of the American Indian
Rasmuson Theater
4th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20024

Live webcast at
<http://nmai.si.edu/multimedia/webcasts/>

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Metro: L'Enfant Plaza, Maryland Avenue/
Smithsonian Museums exit

For further information, please contact
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