Until recently, no one knew about the Alaskan Tlingit code talkers. (Even their families didn't know of their secret service!)

The Tlingit language was one of the Native languages used during World War II to transmit messages.

In 2013, Congress awarded silver medals posthumously to Tlingit code talkers Robert “Jeff” David Sr., Richard Bean Sr., George Lewis Jr., and the Jacobs brothers.

Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our society can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices.

-Harry S. Truman
In 1942, Ross was one of a handful of female mathematicians hired by Lockheed Martin Aircraft Corporation.

She worked on the P-38 Lightning, one of the fastest airplanes (at the time) and the first military airplane to fly faster than 400 mph!

She would go on to become the first Native American female engineer, and the first female engineer in the history of Lockheed.

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Formed as a National Guard unit in 1923, the **Thunderbirds** were deployed to North Africa in June 1943.

After invading Sicily and participating in the invasions of Salerno and Anzio in Italy, the division invaded southern France and fought in fierce combat in the Vosges Mountains before crossing the border into Germany.

There, the unit liberated Dachau concentration camp, freeing more than 30,000 prisoners.

General George Patton said to the Thunderbirds, “You are one of the best, if not the best, divisions in the history of American arms.”
Van Barfoot was a Choctaw Indian from Mississippi, and a second lieutenant in the Thunderbirds.

On May 23, 1944, during the breakout from Anzio to Rome, Barfoot knocked out two machine gun nests and captured 17 German soldiers.

Later that same day, he repelled a German tank assault, destroyed a Nazi fieldpiece and while returning to camp, carried two wounded commanders to safety.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty.

Mary Golda Ross attributed her successes to the rich heritage of her Cherokee people and the importance of tribal emphasis on education. From a young age, she gravitated toward mathematics and science.

“I was brought up in the Cherokee tradition of equal education for boys and girls. It did not bother me to be the only girl in the math class.”
Design your own coin to honor the service of American Indians and Alaskan Natives in World War II.