

Thank You for Your Service

A salute to the military service of past and present members of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians.



LEFT: The Palm Springs International Airport, located on the Agua Caliente Indian Reservation, functioned as a training base for the U.S. Air Force during World War II.

near the Salton Sea and the El Mirador Hotel transforming into a 1,600-bed hospital and POW camp. Today, the region invites all to remember its military roots and honor those who have served, and currently serve, during an annual Memorial Day Flower Drop & Air Fair and Veterans Day Parade. ●

NATIVE AMERICANS HAVE served in almost every major conflict in U.S. history for more than 200 years, beginning as early as the War of 1812. They served as auxiliary troops during the Civil War, fought in World War I (despite not being granted U.S. citizenship until almost a decade after), and contributed significantly to the Allies' victory in World War II thanks to their assistance in transmitting messages and developing secret codes using indigenous languages. The Code Talkers, as they came to be

known, demonstrated significant courage and signified the essentiality of Native languages, which the federal government had sought to eradicate only decades earlier through assimilation. Approximately 44,000 Native Americans served in WWII alone, a remarkable figure, considering the entire Native population was less than 350,000 at the time.

Tribal members of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians have made their own mark on military history. Those who have served include Anthony Andreas,

Anthony Andreas Jr., Richard Miguel, Richard M. Milanovich, Lawrence Pierce, Robert Saubel, Eugene Segundo, Edmund Chad Siva, and Albert Welmas. Not only have they served in the Armed Forces in various branches and positions, but what is now the Palm Springs International Airport — located on the Tribe's reservation — functioned as a base for the U.S. Air Force, and later the Navy, during WWII. The entire Palm Springs region became a wartime hub, with bomb pilots training

31,000

American Indian and Alaska Native men and women on active duty today, serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere around the world.

140,000

living Native Americans who are veterans.

18.6%

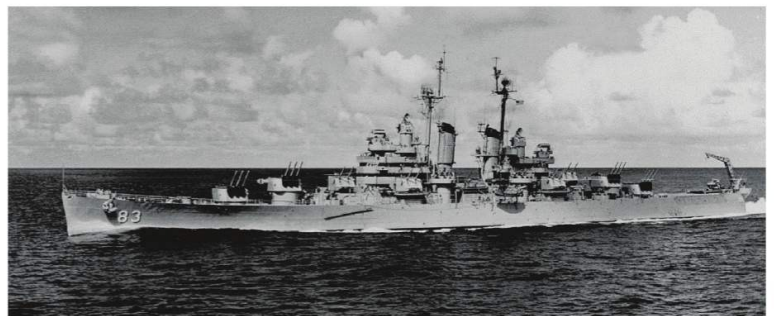
of Native Americans served in the post-9/11 period.

Source: Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian



Lawrence Pierce

Pierce joined the Navy in December 1946 to avoid the punishment of losing his Palm Springs High School class ring, which was a gift from his mother, Carrie Pierce. He was first sent to the Navy training center in San Diego for nine months in 1947 before being stationed at sea as a Telemán on the USS Manchester, a Cleveland-class light cruiser, during the Korean Conflict. Due to the explosive sounds of warfare aboard ship, he partially lost his hearing. He also served on the USS Salem, USS Northampton, USS Des Moines, USS Newport News, and the USS Valley Forge. He served more than 10 years as a Telemán First Class and received several medals.



COURTESY THE FAMILY OF LAWRENCE PIERCE



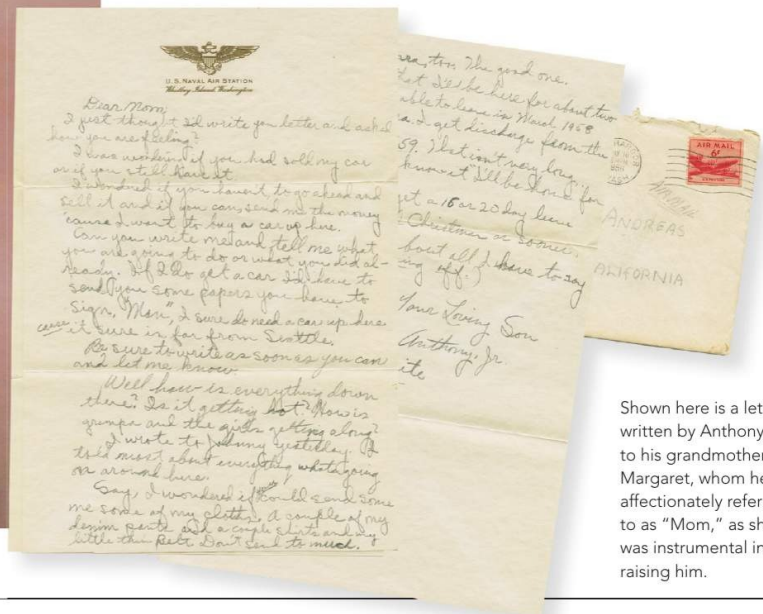
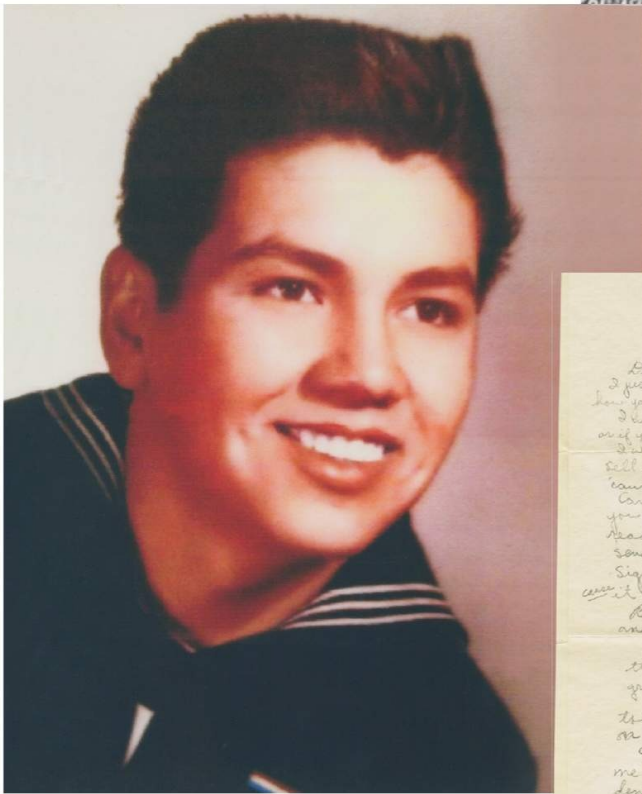
Anthony Joseph Andreas

Anthony Sr. (right) was born in Banning, California, on July 30, 1911. He attended Banning High School, where he became a star athlete, excelling in football and baseball. He was even given the nickname "Biff" after a famous football player at the time. Anthony Sr. married Virginia Ruth DeSoto in March 1938. They had four children: Anthony, Shirley, John, and Deanna. In 1945, he joined the Army, along with his brother Dan, serving in WWII. He also spent time in the Philippines as an MP. He kept in touch with his mother, Margaret, through letters and was honorably discharged in June 1946.



Anthony Andreas Jr.

Like his father, Anthony (below) also served in the U.S. military. He joined the Navy from 1956 to 1960 and was stationed at Naval Air Station North Island on Coronado Island. He was an airman on the USS Hornet aircraft carrier working with ammunition for heavy guns and aircraft.



Shown here is a letter written by Anthony Jr. to his grandmother, Margaret, whom he affectionately referred to as "Mom," as she was instrumental in raising him.

COURTESY THE FAMILY OF ANTHONY JOSEPH ANDREAS

