

**HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA
INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION
SOUTHERN SECTION
(CIFSS)**



31st historical “tidbit.”

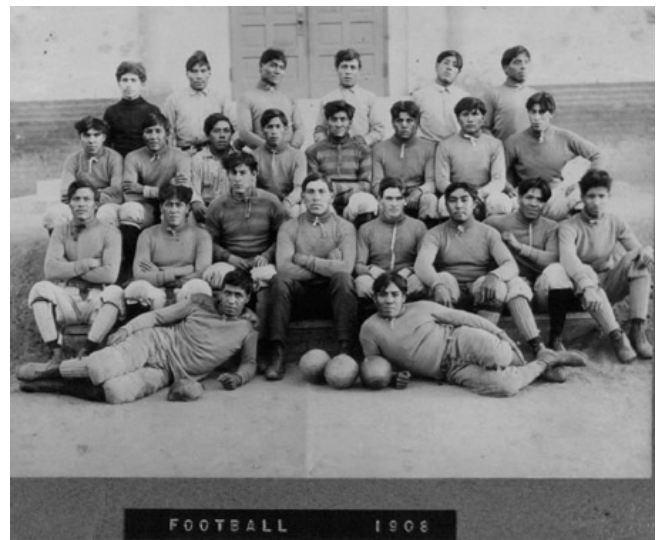
SHERMAN INDIAN HIGH SCHOOL



Welcome to the Sherman Indian High School Website



Sherman Indian
Museum



“SHERMAN TIDBITS”

- Perris Indian School founded in 1892...due to lack of water moved to Riverside sight and merged with Sherman Indian Institute in 1902-1904
- Original buildings were a hospital
- First student from Arizona enrolled in 1902
- Dry goods boxes served as desks...some students had to stand for their meals
- Sherman Institute designed to reeducate Natives for purposes of integrating them into white society
- Native customs were suppressed
- Native languages were forbidden
- Tribal unity discouraged
- Members of same tribe could not share a room
- Men and women were separated and could not talk to each other
- Early education stressed industrial and service trades...machinery, carpentry, painting, printing, wood working, sewing, baking, etc.
- Named after James Schoolcraft Sherman who was Chairman of Indian Affairs in U.S. House of Representatives
- James Schoolcraft Sherman later becomes Vice President of the United States under William Howard Taft
- Sherman was one of the first to wear eyeglasses...called “Sunny Jim”
- In 1908, they had 550 students enrolled
- The students had their own farm on campus
- All students (same as today) boarded on campus
- All students must be native Americans (official documentation from their tribe)
- Over 100 Indian nations have been represented on campus
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) ran the school and recruited students from all over the United States to attend free of charge
- They are called the Braves
- Colors are Purple and Gold which was also their first official school song
- School population decreases as Natives assimilated into American culture...influx of Navajo students increase student population

- In 1964, the school was denounced because it had no rigorous academic standards or leadership...school now led by an all-Indian Board of Directors that stresses academics and expresses Indian concepts
- In the 1960's the name was changed from Sherman Indian Institute to Sherman High School
- School had to be brought up to earthquake codes in the 1970's and the only original building that exists is the Sherman Indian Museum which was entered into the National Register of Historic Places
- 90% of student body is from states other than California...most from Arizona and New Mexico
- 50% of the students speak tribal languages
- Indian Flower Day is May 3rd when students leave flowers at the cemetery
- Los Angeles County has the largest Native Indian population in the United States
- The early football (rugby) teams were very powerful and defeated college teams including USC...circa 1908
- The early Sherman runners, especially the Hopi, were world famous and raced all over Southern California
- In 1925, Covina High School was censured by the San Gabriel Valley League for playing two recently transferred Sherman Institute Indians (Jerry Cole and Willie Roy Arenas) because they were adopted by Covina coach "Chief" Newman, a graduate of Sherman Institute. Covina would play for the State Football Championship in 1925 and 1926. Coach Newman would later coach Richard Nixon at Whittier College
- Sherman High School applied to CIFSS to play other teams in the late 1920's. The school was too small to play in the powerful Citrus Belt League (May 1934 CIFSS Council Minutes... "Mr. Westhaver, of the Sherman Institute, requested they be a member of the Citrus Belt League. The Citrus Belt League stayed the same with a, "...recommendation that the League do all possible to further the athletic interests of the Institute...")
- Sherman was placed in freelance competition until 1939

- In 1939 they were placed in the Riverside League with Elsinore, Hemet, Perris and San Jacinto High Schools. Sherman High School was the largest with a population of 520 and Hemet was next with 216
- The Braves dominated the early sports in the Riverside League
- Sherman Institute hosted the CIFSS Wrestling Championships in 1940 and 1941
- The Braves are currently in the Arrowhead League
- In 1913, Albert Ray, a Pima Indian at Sherman, won the Los Angeles Athletic Club Marathon (actually, a 10 miler) and could have won the 1916 Olympics which were cancelled due to WWI. Ray died in action in that war
- In 1924, the famous Olympian Paavo Nurmi (“The Flying Finn”), while touring the United States, raced against students from the Sherman Institute



- In 1936, Kenneth Comyestewa, was the individual cross country CIFSS champion in the C division
- During the 1970's and 1980's, Sherman dominated the lower division in CIFSS cross country championships winning titles in 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1988 and were runner-up in 1977, 1979, 1985 and 1994. In 1934, Sherman Institute was the CIFSS lower division (c) runner up in boys cross country
- The boys cross country team was the California State Division III Cross County title in 1988

