



10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION
HUT SYSTEM NEWSLETTER
WINTER HUT SEASON
2025

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

North Powder House

Given that this powder house contained up to thirty tons of dynamite, neighbors were very concerned about the building's design and location and the potential for catastrophic damage if it exploded.

YOU ALREADY KNOW that 10th Mountain owns and operates fourteen huts, but you might not know that 10th Mountain also owns a base of operations in Leadville and administrative headquarters in Aspen, Colorado. Each of these facilities and structures has its own history, quirks, and maintenance requirements, and one in particular (aka the North Powder House, in Aspen) is by far the most historic and complicated.

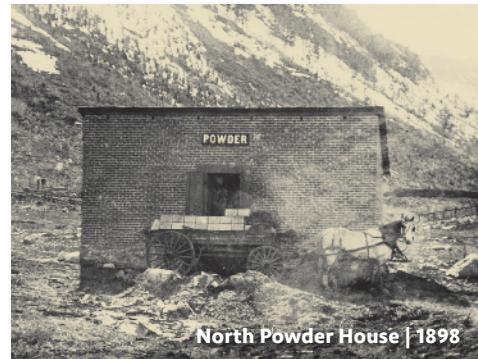
THE STORY | The North Powder House was constructed in east Aspen in 1897 and served to store powder for sale to miners. It is a small, relatively nondescript 336 square foot building with a stone foundation, 17" thick brick walls, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch steel doors, non-dimensional floor joists, flooring, roof rafters, and roof boards.

10th Mountain currently uses this building for archival and operations storage. However, the condition of the exterior brick walls has gradually deteriorated, and 10th Mountain is working to rehabilitate the brick and mortar to help ensure that the building remains in good condition for another 100+ years.

The historic nature of the building carries, as you might imagine, varied obligations/responsibilities including adherence to local, State and Federal historic preservation standards and partnerships with stakeholders such as History Colorado, the State Historic Preservation Office and its State Historical Fund, City of Aspen Historic Preservation Department, Aspen Historic Preservation Committee, Aspen Historical Society, adjacent owners, and the community at large.

To ensure that this work is done correctly, 10th Mountain has contracted Form+Works Design Group (Leadville) to produce architectural drawings and document the scope of work that will be submitted for approvals, and we expect to hire a General Contractor and rehabilitate the brick exterior this summer. 10th Mountain is grateful to History Colorado, the State Historic Preservation Office and its State Historical Fund for its experience, guidance, and generous grants that make this project possible.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE | The story of the North Powder House begins with another powder house located a short distance to the west. There are no records of when



North Powder House | 1898

ASPN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

this powder house was built, or by whom, but in 1891 it was owned by Tomkins Hardware Company and used to store powder for sale to miners.

Given that this powder house contained up to thirty tons of dynamite, neighbors were very concerned about the building's design and location and the potential for catastrophic damage if it exploded.

Citizens began calling for the building's removal in 1891 but the City of Aspen and Pitkin County didn't act until November 1896 when the City of Aspen amended its ordinance regulating the storage of explosives to "... provide that magazines for powder be constructed of brick with walls not less than sixteen inches thick ... and the doors of which shall be lined with half inch steel plates."

Regulations notwithstanding, the powder house remained intact and in use until May 31, 1897, when it completely collapsed. Thankfully, the thirty tons of powder inside did not explode. However, the building's demise interrupted business for Tomkins Hardware and Morrell Hardware Company (owners of the powder) and particularly the Denver powder firm that sold the powder wholesale to Tomkins and Morrell.

This Denver powder firm was sufficiently motivated such that in 1897 it covered all costs to construct two new identical powder houses built to the City's new design standards and in a better location a short distance away between two small ridges. Records indicate that L. McKinnon managed the design and/or construction, and J.M. Dills constructed the two buildings.

Today, these buildings are known as the North Powder House and the South Powder House and both are standing firm with no evidence of structural deformity and inform us of the 1890's history of

citizen involvement, business influence, politics, design standards, and sturdy construction.

Little information is available about this building's history from 1897 until 1973 when Fritz Benedict, an Aspen architect and founder of the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association, purchased both powder houses and 1.8 acres of surrounding land and proceeded to construct the Benedict Professional Office Building comprised of 10,000 square feet of commercial office and residential space and integrated both Powder Houses into the design.

In the late 1980's, Fritz and his wife Fabi gifted the North Powder House to their son Nicolas Benedict, and in 1993 Fritz and Fabi gifted 700 square feet of office space in the Benedict Professional Office Building and a small storage area to 10th Mountain to serve as its administrative headquarters, plus 7,000 square feet of nearby land for 10th Mountain to use for its affordable employee housing. In 2000, Nicolas Benedict continued the Benedict family's generosity and donated the North Powder House to 10th Mountain.

FRITZ BENEDICT was a WWII 10th Mountain soldier and in 1981 founded the 10th Mountain Division hut system beginning with the construction of two huts in 1982. Those first two huts were immediately in high demand with over 1,500 user nights the first winter and the system has expanded to its current 40 huts and 73,000+ user nights annually.

This success is due to Fritz' vision and perseverance, and it seems fitting to help preserve this Powder House because, simply, he would do the same if he were here today. 

—BEN DODGE | Executive Director



10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION HUT ASSOCIATION | FEBRUARY 2025

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10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION HUT ASSOCIATION © 2025

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | Ben Dodge

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The 10th Mountain Division Hut Association is a privately funded not-for-profit organization located in Aspen, Colorado. The purpose of 10th Mountain is to plan, finance, build and manage, for public use, a mountain hut system that promotes understanding and appreciation of the natural mountain environment while developing individual self-reliance. We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have. 10th Mountain Division Hut System Newsletter (Vol. XXXII, No. 1) is published twice/year (February and August) by the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association, a 501(c)(3) organization, 1280 Ute Avenue • Suite 21 • Aspen, Colorado 81611. Printed with soy-based ink on recycled paper. Designed by Curt Carpenter

Huts for Vets

WHAT A SEASON! As the **Huts for Vets** 2024 season concluded, we reflect on the incredible memories fostered on our trips. Fifty veterans sauntered into the backcountry of the White River National Forest, finding its beauty remarkable and restorative. For the first time, **Huts for Vets** held programs at the **Peter Estin Hut**, gracing us with spectacular new views and challenging hikes for the participants and staff. Our organization also partnered with Sky's the Limit Foundation on a collaborative experience incorporating families in nature, reinforcing that wilderness is elemental to healing for all.

As we approach our 2025 season, we seek to expand our outreach not only to veterans but enveloping the healing aspects of nature with their spouses and children. The military family unit incurs an extraordinary emotional toll during the veteran's time in service; healing is often needed for everyone. With this expansion, our organization is asking for new partnerships and support from you! With your help, we can enact a greater healing impact for our nation's veterans and their families.

The 10th Mountain Division Hut Association is an



HUTS FOR VETS

integral element of our program, and we are beyond grateful for their continued support in providing the healing space for our veterans. A trip to a 10th Mountain Hut is therapeutic enough. We relish this partnership with the Hut Association—thank you! If you know a veteran who could benefit from our program or would like to support our mission, please visit our updated website at www.hutsforvets.org. 

—CHRIS JOYCE | Program Director & USMC Veteran

MARTEN BOYLES | WELCOME TO THE BRAUN HUTS

ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2024 my wife Phebe and I welcomed our son Marten into the world! We are beyond thrilled to have him in our lives and are already looking forward to his first hut trip in April with our good friend and Braun Huts board member Greg Shaffran and his wife Leah and their new daughter Evi!

To a new parent taking your kid to a hut sounds about as easy as a mission to the moon. These sleepless hut trips are one of the most rewarding family experiences you can share, and I was very lucky that hut trips were a large part of my childhood.

Each year around Thanksgiving we would do a trip with four other families that involved our heroic parents loading up the pulk with a turkey, a birthday cake for my brother, and often me once I was "too tired" to ski any further. I was the youngest of this cohort proudly equipped with the hand me downs that had made their way through the whole group.

Setting off on a trip to a new hut that was some either some unfathomable distance away or "just around the next switchback" was quite an adventure. Nothing quite comes close to the feeling of family and community when you finally get to the hut on a short early winter day and warm up by the fire as night falls.

I have a memory of having to wait by the stove of the Betty Bear for the frozen laces of my Nordic boots



Phebe, Morgan, and Marten Boyles

to thaw before I could get them off my frozen feet!

Exhaustion and cold would soon vanish from all the youths as soon as the talk about helping prepare dinner was mentioned. We would all flee outside to begin an epic project of building a jump or the largest snow cave labyrinth possible. The parents were just as excited to adventure and each trip would involve an epic ski tour or even one low snow year exploring the caves near the Gates Hut.

Hut trips were what first sparked my passion for backcountry and Nordic skiing. The wonderful world of huts was what I first wanted to share with Phebe and our friends when we moved back after college.

We feel so lucky that amidst our increasing digital age we can share this wonderful world of huts with our son. It is so special traveling through the forest hearing the squeaky crunch of cold snow under your skis, watching the glittering frost on the snow surface, smelling the pine trees and finally the wood smoke knowing that the hut is close and filled with family and friends! 

—MORGAN BOYLES | Executive Director
Alfred A. Braun Hut System

Elderhood and Randonnées

ORIGINALLY TITLED "Aging and Skiing with Grace," I have the aging part covered, but grace implies an elegance I lack, especially when skiing breakable crust with a heavy pack. Even so, turning 74 this season, I remain eager for another winter in the backcountry and the luxury of cozy huts.

From the late 1970's I worked with Fred Braun and the Braun Huts, then with Fritz Benedict and the 10th Mountain Huts. Both men were about the same age as I am now—wise elders breaking trail for me! Now I am on the Board of the Friends Hut, where I am joined by a large cadre of strong septuagenarians. I mention age only to say that there are many seasoned skiers, alone or as a group, competent, confident, and comfortable with the challenges of safe travel in the backcountry.

The transition from my 210 cm Europa 99s, aluminum edges, three pin bindings, leather Asolo boots, and an avalanche cord, to the AT gear which I most often use now has made my touring easier and safer. However, the telemark turn, as the origin

of the sport, still puts a big smile on my face.

My life has been measured by countless days of skiing in the backcountry and enjoying the comfort of the huts. While not as fast as I used to be, age has done nothing to diminish the joy of being out there, breaking a safe trail routed to flow with the terrain, focusing on the weather and snowpack, and immersing in the singular beauty of being on my skis in the mountains. 

—ROB BURNETT

10th Mountain Division Hut Association



all know and love, protect the beautiful spaces that surround us, and encourage our hut users to do the same.

In creating these posters and placing them across the huts, our goal is to inspire hut visitors to think about the impacts of climate change, promote discussion around this pivotal topic, and help advance engagement with POW's expert resources and advocacy efforts.

Want to learn more about meaningful steps you can take today toward becoming a climate advocate? Visit POW's website at ProtectOurWinters.org. 

—KARA LAPPOINT



Rob Burnett, Elizabeth (Holecamp) Boyles, and Fred Braun at Margy's Hut, 1982

Linking the Legacy 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION FOUNDATION

THE 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION FOUNDATION has adopted a motto: "Linking the Legacy."

This mantra stems from a strategic effort to engage with the 10th Mountain Division (LI) headquartered at Fort Drum, New York, to support efforts to re-introduce winter alpine training—the focus of the WWII Division—into the modern soldier's curricula. Since the re-activation of the Division in 1985, there has been little emphasis on winter training. As the military role in global situations changes, and as the young 10th soldiers of today learn more about the legacy of the soldiers that came before them, a new interest in winter alpine training has emerged. Resonating with me personally, this new motto has opened a door of reflection on my journey to link my legacy.

My first hut trip was in 1989. Two dear friends invited me to join them on a climb into the Fowler/Hilliard hut via McAllister Gulch—not necessarily a first time experience I would wish on anyone. The warm weather, sticky conditions and grade of the climb challenged all of us—beginner to expert. As it turned out, the joy of being in that hallowed place far outweighed the pain of the journey.

The following year when they invited me on another trip—I jumped at the chance. It was on that 1990 trip that I realized the significance of place and the legacy gift had been bestowed upon me. My father had passed away 10 years prior, yet sensing his guiding spirit in the hut and in the mountains, I was offered an opportunity to reflect and be grateful.



Nancy Kramer near 10th Mtn. Division Hut holding her father's WWII field medical flag.

Jackal Hut | February 10, 1990

Dear Dad,*

Your spirit and those of your fellow WWII 10th Mountain Division buddies are alive in this home away from home. My ever-increasing awareness of the outdoor/mountain legacy of the 10th brings added meaning to this trip and my journey to Fowler-Hilliard last year.

At the time of your service at Camp Hale and Italy, I am sure you could not have imagined the gift and the infinite value of it you would leave me. Only, as a family, when we ventured to Mt. Rainier for a rollicking slide down Tin Pants Ridge or when I shared my first ascent of Mt. Hood, would you have an inkling that your love of the mountains would be endowed to the next generation.

Gone from this mortal life for nearly ten years, coming here helps me to heal wounds of your sudden departure from this earthly place—your beloved mountains. This place, these mountains and with the presence of your guiding spirit have allowed me time to reflect on our lives—good times and bad (I know I was not the easiest kid to raise—oh but it could have been worse). Yet, in the end, being in a cozy hut, high in the Rocky Mountains reignites the enduring love I have for you and your gift to me—a love of the mountains—a path to creating my own legacy!

Thank You and I love you!

Nancy

Still, after dozens of hut trips, this letter stands as my compelling example of Linking the Legacy! Although my story may be unique, as a descendant, it is only one of hundreds that are and can be made every year. The 10th Mountain Division Hut Association is the conduit for you to ignite your passion for the outdoors and mountains. I hope you find the hut—the trail—the cohorts that will allow you to find a way to Link the Legacy! 

—NANCY B. KRAMER | Chairman
10th Mountain Division Foundation

*Nancy's father was William "Ropesole" Robertson 87-G Medic, 10th Mountain Division, U.S. Army, Italy, 1945

Hard-Working Hut Volunteers | 2024

We just can't say it enough about these folks... **Thank You 10th Mountain Volunteers!**



PHOTOS BY DAVE LEE

Welcome New 10th Mountain Board Members

Ethan Greene grew up in Boulder in a large family that spent ample time pursuing outdoor recreation. Ethan moved to Bozeman, Montana to study snow at Montana State University and work at the Big Sky Ski Resort writing weather forecasts and quickly realized he didn't know much about meteorology. After completed his undergraduate studies in meteorology, he returned to Colorado to study atmospheric modeling and snowdrifts at Colorado State University (CSU). Ethan's studies eventually led him to split his time between CSU in Fort Collins and the WSL Swiss Federal Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research in Davos, Switzerland. In 2005, he joined the Colorado Avalanche Information Center where he currently works as the Center's director. He lives in Leadville with his wife and son—and misses his daughter attending college in Duluth, Minnesota.



Justin Talbot comes to the Board of Directors with a deep-rooted passion for outdoor adventure, coupled with extensive experience in wilderness education and risk management. As the Director of Wilderness Programs and Risk Management at the High Mountain Institute in Leadville, Colorado, he has spent nearly two decades orchestrating expeditions and managing risk in the wilderness. With HMI he has annually visited the huts in the Leadville area since 2006 running winter travel training and other programs.

Justin is also a co-founder and CEO of Galena Mountain Projects, an outdoor apparel and guidebook brand, where he has equipped adventurers with the knowledge and gear, they need to embark on their own journeys with confidence and respect for the environment. Justin is excited to share his insights from two decades of work and play in the Leadville area. 



GALENA MOUNTAIN PROJECTS

LIVE BY LIVING

WE HELP CANCER SURVIVORS and caregivers manage the emotional and physical challenges that cancer and cancer treatment present—things like anxiety, depression, fear of recurrence, "chemobrain," and being physically weak and de-conditioned.

We combine the proven benefits of exercise, the solace of nature, and the camaraderie of shared experience. Our walks, hikes, and retreats help survivors and caregivers connect with nature, each other and their own inner strengths.

Since 2009, we've held over 100 retreats with over 1600 participants and volunteers. Many volunteers are former participants or survivors or caregivers themselves.

Our first retreat was at **Peter Estin Hut**, and we continued to hold retreats at the huts. We're grateful to the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association for supporting us through the Backcountry Explorers Program. 10th Mountain's generosity makes it possible

"When I thought things were so dire 2 years ago... now to think I'd be standing on a mountain at 12,000 feet!"



LIVE BY LIVING

for us to reach more survivors and caregivers.

For people who might struggle with the hikes to the huts or the altitude, we've also added retreats at YMCA centers in Estes Park, Fraser and Deckers, as well as private homes.

Live By Living is a volunteer-based charitable organization. To volunteer for one of our hikes or retreats, support our work, or learn more about us, go to www.livebyliving.org 



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Summit Huts | INDEPENDENT RESERVATION SYSTEM

SUMMIT HUTS ASSOCIATION is thrilled to announce a significant milestone in its 35-year history. As stewards of Francie's Cabin, Janet's Cabin, Sisters Cabin, Section House, and Ken's Cabin, Summit Huts has consistently worked to provide unforgettable experiences for outdoor enthusiasts.

For over three decades, Summit Huts has relied on the expertise of the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association to handle reservations and guest relations. The 10th Mountain has been a leader in hut experiences and a valued partner, sharing insights that have shaped Summit Huts' approach to operations.

"We are immensely grateful to the 10th Mountain Hut Association for their partnership and the support they've provided over the years," said Brandon Bailey, Summit Huts' Board President.

Beginning in the coming months, guests will be able to book their stays directly on Summit Huts' website. "Our goal is to provide our community with direct access to our cabins

and enhanced communication, backed by the same commitment to excellence our guests have come to expect," added Bailey.

As part of this transition, Summit Huts' properties will no longer be available in the 10th Mountain Division's winter lottery. Instead, winter reservations for Summit Huts cabins will be available exclusively on summithuts.org starting September 1, 2025. Summit Huts members will have early access to reservations, with a priority booking window from September 1 to September 14. Beginning September 15, reservations will be open to the public, with members also able to make additional bookings at that time.

The 10th Mountain Division will continue to manage winter 2025 reservations and take bookings for summer 2025. Later this spring, Summit Huts will take over upcoming summer bookings and begin managing new reservations for future dates.

For questions, please contact: Greg Guevara, Executive Director | greg@summithuts.org | 970.389.2902 