

One of the biggest influences on Colorado skiing history was the 10th Mountain Division. The 10th Mountain Division of World War II trained just 30 miles south of Vail at Camp Hale. Known as the "Ski Troops," the toughened soldiers learned to survive at high altitudes in sub-zero weather. They traveled with 90 lb. packs on their backs; scaled sheer cliffs and skied across treacherous mountain passes. The 10th suffered heavy casualties in Europe, but became one of the most decorated divisions in World War II.

It was a great day for Colorado when the 10th came marching home. Scores of ski troopers came back to the high mountains of Colorado to live. The veterans served in every aspect of the sport from mountain operations, to patrolling, teaching, coaching, and manufacturing equipment. There is scarcely a ski area in the state that did not benefit from their expertise.

Their vision shaped new ski areas and their innovative improvements lured skiers from around the world to Colorado slopes. In a few years time they had laid the foundation for Colorado's multi-million dollar ski industry. Sadly, Camp Hale is gone now, but the memories of the camp and all of the dedicated people who trained there live on at the Colorado Ski & Snowboard Museum.

Many films run continuously at the Museum, and there are lots of exhibits to see. When you are in Vail, please make sure you stop by and say hello. You'll love the Museum...it's an amazing trip through skiing's past that you'll never forget.