

The 10th Mountain Division Artillery

World War II

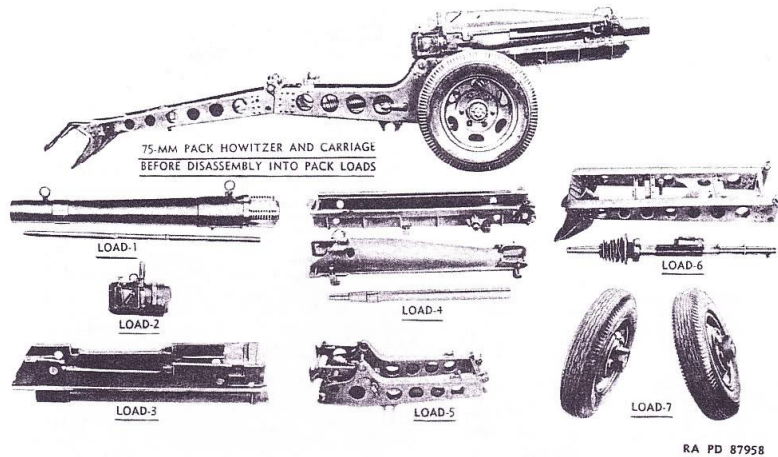
Activation

Like the 10th Mountain Division, the 10th Mountain Division Artillery (DIVARTY) traces its lineage back to Fort Lewis, Washington. The 2nd Battalion (BN), 99th Field Artillery (FA) Regiment (Pack) was activated on 1 June, 1940 and was redesignated the 98th FA BN (Pack) on 20 January, 1941. The battalion's commander, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) David L. Ruffner, and its' Soldiers helped form the initial cornerstone of what would become the 10th Mountain Division Artillery.

During the winter of 1941-42, the 98th FA was joined by the 87th Mountain Infantry Regiment on Fort Lewis. Both units began training together at Fort Lewis and on the slopes of nearby Mount Rainier. For the Soldiers of the 98th this was their first experience with winter training. However, Fort Lewis was not ideal for mountain and cold weather training and in the

fall of 1942 a move to a more appropriate training site was announced.

While the 98th trained at Fort Lewis, the 602nd Field Artillery Battalion (Pack) was activated on 20 July, 1942 at Camp Carson, Colorado and on 5 September, 1942, the Mountain Training Center (MTC) Artillery was also activated at Camp Carson under the command of newly promoted Colonel Ruffner. Six weeks later on 16 October, the first Soldiers



A 75-mm Pack Howitzer and its seven major components.

and mules of the 98th FA BN arrived at Camp Carson. Arriving at the same time was the 99th FA BN (Pack), activated on 1 June, 1940 as the 1st BN 99th FA Regiment (Pack) at Fort Hoyle, Maryland,* and the 601st FA BN (Pack), activated on 16 April, 1942, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

The MTC Artillery along with the 98th, 99th, 601st, and 602nd FA BNs moved to Camp Hale on 16 November, 1942.** By the 15 July, 1943 activation of the 10th Light Division (Alpine) Artillery the existing battalions were replaced by the 604th, 605th, and 616th FA BNs (Pack) and were joined by the 727th Antiaircraft Artillery Machine Gun BN and the 576th Antitank Battery.

* - LTC George P. Hays, future commander of the 10th Mountain Division, was the first commander of the 99 FA BN from 1940-41. One of LTC Hays' battery commanders was Captain William O. Darby, commander of the 1st Ranger Battalion and future 10th Mountain Division, Assistant Division Commander.

*** - The 98th FA BN would not go to Camp Hale, instead its men and equipment were reassigned to the Pacific Theater. Eventually reaching Port Moresby, New Guinea where the Artillerymen were redesignated as the 6th Ranger Battalion under the command of LTC Henry A. Mucci. The 6th Ranger Battalion would gain fame for their raid on the Cabanatuan POW Camp in the Philippines.*

Combat

A move to Camp Swift, Texas preceded DIVARTY's reorganization and redesignation as the 10th Mountain Division Artillery on 6 November, 1944. By December, 1944 DIVARTY left Camp Swift and by January, 1945, was in Italy. After a brief stay in Naples, DIVARTY moved north by boat to Livorno and then to Staging Area Number 3 outside of Pisa. Here DIVARTY and the three FA BNs were issued vehicles as the Division's mules had not accompanied them overseas. Additionally, each FA BN's C Battery traded their 75-mm howitzers for 105-mm howitzers.

DIVARTY's first month in Italy consisted of pre-combat checks and training, supporting infantry patrols, defensive fires, and enemy harassment. On the night of 18 February, 1945, forward observer (FO) teams from the 605th FA BN accompanied the Soldiers of the 86th Mountain Infantry Regiment (MIR) on their assault of Riva Ridge. The following night the 604th and 616th FA BNs supported the 85th and 87th MIRs during their assault on Mount Belvedere. DIVARTY, with various attached artillery units, continued the fight through the northern Apennine Mountains and into the Po River Valley.



A howitzer crew firing in the Apennine Mountains.

The Division's rapid advance through the Po River Valley was facilitated by DIVARTY's 2½-ton trucks. Once at the Po River, Soldiers of the 616th FA BN, along with their howitzers, crossed the river under fire in assault boats with the 87th MIR. The push north continued to Lake Garda, where DIVARTY supported the infantry assaults around the lake with counter-battery fires. As the fighting moved to the north end of the lake, DIVARTY suffered its greatest tragedy of the war. On the night of 30 April, twenty-four Soldiers of the 605th FA BN drowned when their DUKW, amphibious truck, sank just off shore. Two days later on 2 May, 1945, the German Army in Italy surrendered.

DIVARTY remained in the vicinity of Lake Garda for a time before moving to the Italian-Yugoslav border. Taking up positions around Udine, Italy on 20 May, 1945 DIVARTY helped secure the Morgan Line against westward expansion by Yugoslav forces. By the end of July the Division left Italy for the US to begin training for the invasion of Japan. However, Japan's surrender on 15 August, 1945 brought World War II to an end and on 30 November, 1945 DIVARTY was inactivated.

Cold War

Training Division

On 1 July, 1948 the 10th Infantry Division (ID) was reactivated at Camp Funston on Fort Riley, Kansas as a Training Division. As part of the Division, DIVARTY was reactivated along with the 25th and 35th FA BNs.* However, DIVARTY, as a separate command remained unmanned. As part of the Training Division, the 25th and 35th FA BNs conducted the eight week specialist basic training cycle. The Soldiers assigned to the FA BNs received training as clerk-typists, supply specialists, mechanics, field wiremen, radio operators, drivers, or other occupations whose training was completed at other installations.

Combat Division

In January, 1954 the 10th ID was designated by the Army to participate in Operation Gyroscope. The Division would rotate to an overseas duty station and relieve a Division to return stateside. By the spring of 1954 the 25th and 35th FA BNs' training missions ended as the Division prepared to convert to a Combat Division.

On 15 June, 1954 DIVARTY assumed command of the personnel and equipment of the 37th Infantry Division Artillery. The 10th DIVARTY consisted of three direct support battalions; the 25th, 35th, and 40th FA BNs,* one general support battalion; the 85th FA BN, and the 43rd Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) BN.

After an extensive training period DIVARTY was ready for its new mission the following summer. On 30 July, 1955 in Wurzburg, Federal Republic of Germany, DIVARTY assumed the mission of its predecessor and took up positions at the center of the American defensive line in Western Europe. DIVARTY's individual battalions took up positions in Aschaffenburg (40th FA), Schweinfurt (35th FA), Bamberg (25th FA and 85th FA), and Erlangen (43rd AAA).



Honest John rocket launcher.

Advances in technology and doctrine brought about an Army wide reorganization. Even though the 10th ID's time in Germany was coming to an end, the Division was reorganized as one of the Army's new *Pentomic* divisions on 1 July, 1957. The 2nd BN, 7th FA and 2nd BN, 9th FA replaced DIVARTY's former battalions. 2-7 FA's five 105-mm howitzer batteries provided direct support to the Division's five battle groups. 2-9 FA provided general support with its two 155-mm howitzer batteries and conventional/nuclear capabilities with its 8-inch howitzer battery and *Honest John* rocket battery. In the summer of 1958, DIVARTY returned to the US having completed their

Operation Gyroscope rotation and was inactivated on 14 June, 1958 at Fort Benning, Georgia.

* - The 25th, 35th, and 40th FA BNs traced their lineages back to the 604th, 605th, and 616th FA BNs, respectively, of the 10th Mountain DIVARTY of WWII.

Light Infantry Division

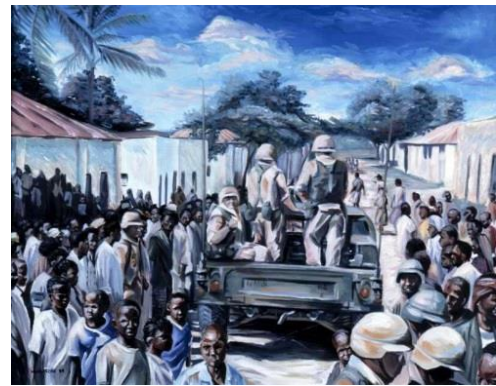
Light Artillery

Following the 10th Mountain Division's reactivation on 13 February, 1985 at Fort Drum, New York DIVARTY was reactivated on 2 May, 1987. DIVARTY supported the Division with two active direct support battalions; the 1st BN, 7th FA (1-7 FA) activated on 1 July, 1986 and the 2nd BN, 7th FA (2-7 FA) activated on 1 July, 1987, and a third "Roundout" direct support battalion from the New York National Guard's 27th Infantry Brigade, the 1st BN, 156th FA. All were equipped with the M102 105-mm howitzer. On 1 September, 1988 Battery E, 7th FA (E-7 FA) was activated as DIVARTY's general support battery and was equipped with the M198 155-mm howitzer. The 10th Target Acquisition Detachment (TAD) added the Q-37 and Q-36 radar systems when it was activated on 16 March, 1991.

Humanitarian and Peace Missions

As units in DIVARTY activated, training on Fort Drum was constant. Additional training at Fort Benning, GA, supporting the Division's 2nd Brigade and rotations to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), and the National Training Center (NTC) occurred regularly. DIVARTY tested its ability to rapidly deploy around the world and engage the enemy through the Return of Forces to Germany (REFORGER) exercises. Fire Support Teams (FISTers) from DIVARTY also deployed with their maneuver battalions to Honduras and the Sinai Peninsula.

As the Cold War ended DIVARTY adapted to an ever changing mission. In September, 1992 DIVARTY deployed to Southern Florida to assist in relief efforts following Hurricane Andrew. DIVARTY acted as a coordination hub between the local government and relief agencies and provided manpower for recovery efforts. Shortly after returning from Florida DIVARTY deployed to Somalia in support of Operation Restore Hope in December, 1992. DIVARTY formed Task Force Kismayo's headquarters which was in command of two infantry battalions while the 10th TAD operated in Mogadishu and DIVARTY FISTers deployed with their maneuver elements throughout Operations Restore and Continue Hope.



"On The Town" by Jeffery T. Manuszak

After returning to Fort Drum, DIVARTY conducted an extensive equipment upgrade that included fielding the new M119 howitzer. In September, 1994 DIVARTY deployed to Haiti in support of Operation Uphold Democracy. DIVARTY Headquarters was designated Task Force Mountain and was responsible for operations in and around Port-au-Prince. Many DIVARTY Soldiers conducted patrols and security operations along with non-traditional operations such as civil military operations throughout the country. All of which allowed the democratically elected Haitian government to return.

Following DIVARTY's return to Fort Drum an Army wide reflagging saw 1-7 FA replaced by the 3rd BN, 6th FA on 15 December, 1995 and 2-7 FA replaced by the 2nd BN, 15th FA on 15 March, 1996. Following the multiple different conflicts in the former Yugoslavia DIVARTY Soldiers deployed in support of peacekeeping operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, and Kosovo. By the new millennium DIVARTY Soldiers had also trained or conducted operations in Saudi Arabia, Panama, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and Great Britain.

Global War on Terror (GWOT)

The terrorist attacks on 11 September, 2001 saw DIVARTY Soldiers deployed around the world. In October, 2001 DIVARTY Soldiers first deployed to Uzbekistan in route to Afghanistan, while other Soldiers deployed to Kuwait, Djibouti, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. DIVARTY Soldiers participated in some of the first battles with Al-Qaida and the Taliban, to include Operation Anaconda.



Members of 2-15 FA in Kirkuk, Iraq with a captured Iraqi Artillery piece.

The expansion of GWOT to Iraq in March, 2003 saw DIVARTY Soldiers from 2-15 FA deployed to northern Iraq during the initial phases of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In the years that followed DIVARTY Soldiers began an almost endless cycle of deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan until DIVARTY was inactivated on 6 August, 2004 as part of an Army wide restructuring.

In addition to DIVARTY, E-7 FA and 10th TAD also inactivated and on that same day the 4th BN, 25th FA was activated, utilizing staff and personnel from the inactivated units.

DIVARTY's inactivation shifted the responsibility of providing fires and maintaining the proud tradition of the field artillery in the 10th Mountain Division to the individual battalions as they joined their respective Brigade Combat Teams (BCT); 3-6 FA (1st BCT), 2-15 FA (2nd BCT), 4-25 FA (3rd BCT), and on 16 January, 2005 the 5th BN, 25th FA was activated as part of the 4th BCT.

Over the next decade the 10th Mountain Division's FA Soldiers deployed no less than twenty-four times to Iraq and Afghanistan. While deployed Division FA Soldiers not only performed their standard missions, but also fired mortars, conducted infantry operations, and often commanded their own battlespace. Many FA Soldiers paid the ultimate price while others distinguished themselves, none more so than Sergeant First Class (SFC) Jared Monti. SFC Monti, a Fire Support Sergeant with the 3rd Squadron, 71st Cavalry Regiment was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on 21 June, 2006 in Afghanistan.

As US involvement in Iraq ended and operations in Afghanistan decreased the Army down-sized and reorganized. On 14 August, 2014, 4-25 FA inactivated. At the same time the Division's three remaining battalions each reactivated their C Batteries. Each C Battery was armed with the new M777 155-mm howitzer, greatly increasing each FA BN's capabilities and firepower.

Reactivation

On 16 October, 2015, DIVARTY once again reactivated, returning to the 10th Mountain Division a command with one of the Division's richest histories and who's Soldiers will continue the proud "Mountain Thunder" tradition.

Written and researched by Doug Schmidt with special thanks to the 10th Mountain Division Resource Center, Denver Public Library, Denver, CO, 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Museum and the National Association of the 10th Mountain Division, Inc.