

202 (The Midlands) Field Hospital

(Restructured as 202 (Midlands) Multi-Role Medical Regiment in 2023)

Introduction

202 (The Midlands) Field Hospital was one of ten Army Reserve hospitals in the UK before major mergers and restructuring occurred in 2023 under the Future Soldier programme (*see below*). The unit dates its formation back to 1 April 1967, when it came into being as **202 (Midlands) General Hospital RAMC (Volunteers)**, as a result of re-organisation of the Territorial Army and creation of the Territorial and Army Voluntary Reserve. Restructured in 2023 as **202 (Midlands) Multi-Role Medical Regiment**, it remains based in Kings Heath, Birmingham, in Roger Nutbeem House (named after Major Roger Nutbeem, from Redditch, a regular officer previously attached to the unit, and one of three RAMC personnel who died during the 1982 Falklands War whilst serving on RFA *Sir Galahad*).

Future Soldier re-organisation (2023)

Major changes occurred across the Army Medical Services from 28 February 2023 under the Future Soldier programme, with a reduction in the number of Close Support Regiments and the formation of Multi-Role Medical Regiments (MMR), with field hospitals merging with medical regiments to form single units under a unified command.¹⁻² Four Reserve field hospitals were merged (though not 202), and nine MMRs were created in the Army Reserve.³⁻⁴ There are now two Regular and nine Reserve MMRs, in addition to four

¹ Future Soldier (programme published 25 November 2021; British Army Website <https://www.army.mod.uk/learn-and-explore/army-of-the-future/readiness/future-soldier/> (accessed 17 October 2024). Future Soldier Guide https://www.army.mod.uk/media/15057/adr010310-futuresoldierguide_30nov.pdf)

² It was announced in Parliament on 15 October 2024 that the three corps of the Army Medical Services (the Royal Army Medical Corps, the Royal Army Dental Corps and the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps) will amalgamate on 15 November 2024 to form the Royal Army Medical Service. See: <https://www.army.mod.uk/news/the-royal-army-medical-service-created-to-ensure-british-army-healthcare-is-fit-for-the-future/>

³ The four Reserve Field Hospitals that merged were 201 with 212, and 207 with 208. See separate histories.

⁴ The nine Reserve MMRs are numbered 202, 203, 206, 210, 214, 215, 243, 254 and 256 MMRs respectively.

Regular Medical Regiments and three other Reserve units.⁵ 2 Medical Brigade in Strensall has been re-designated as 2 Medical Group, and has the Reserve units under its command.

202 (The Midlands) Field Hospital restructured during 2023 to form **202 (Midlands) Multi-Role Medical Regiment** on 9 September, thereby becoming the first Reserve MMR to form up, marked by a parade in Centenary Square where the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Chaman Lal, took the salute from the new Regiment's Commanding Officer, Colonel Clare Dutton MBE.⁶ The unit is now designated as a 2,1,1 MMR, made up of two hospital squadrons, one medical squadron and one support squadron. It retains all previous locations and has also taken under its command locations in Nottingham (from 212 Field Hospital, on 1 April 2023) and Leicester and Derby (i.e. 222 Squadron from 254 Medical Regiment, on 1 August 2023), doubling its recruiting area. It may yet expand to include Northampton and Peterborough.

It is now established for 305 personnel and its composition and locations are as follows:

Regimental HQ – Birmingham

224 (A) Hospital Squadron – Birmingham, bearing the lineage of 224 Field Ambulance RAMC (V), see Annex

147 (B) Hospital Squadron – Nottingham (previously a detachment of 212 Field Hospital)

222 (C) Medical Squadron – Leicester (and Derby),⁷ previously 222 Medical Squadron of 254 Medical Regiment, bearing the lineage of 222 (East Midlands) Field Ambulance (V), *see separate history*

145 (D) Support Squadron – Birmingham

The unit emblem

The unit emblem of 202 Field Hospital depicts the civic symbols of the principal cities from where it drew its members and in which (or nearby) were its four detachments: Birmingham, Shrewsbury, Stoke on Trent and Oxford. These 'tinctures' are bisected by a Red Cross. From a heraldic point of view this is not to be confused with the symbol of the Red Cross organisation since it is not laid over a white background.

The Red Cross used in this way depicts the heraldic symbol for the Cross of St George (202 Field Hospital being an English unit), as well as representing the predominant colours of both Southern Command and the South Midland divisions – both of which had elements of the unit attached to them during the First and Second World Wars.

Birmingham's proud military medical heritage

Birmingham, which also hosts the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine and the Role 4 facility at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, has a proud history of association with the Volunteer medical services and the Royal Army Medical Corps. Following the formation of the Territorial Force in 1908, the South Midland Division was established, and this raised two of its three Divisional Field Ambulances in Birmingham, as well as a

⁵ See Current Units, on Friends of Millbank website <https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/current-units>

⁶ Ceremony celebrates 202 Field Hospital and creation of new regiment <https://www.army.mod.uk/news/ceremony-celebrates-202-field-hospital-and-creation-of-new-regiment/> (accessed 17 October 2024)

⁷ The Derby location has now become a local Training and Administration Centre for 202 MMR, just like Stoke, Shrewsbury and Abingdon, enabling personnel to attend their closest location on training evenings and for admin tasks. These locations also enable the Unit to retain links with local NHS trusts.

Mounted Brigade Field Ambulance and the 1st (Southern) General Hospital. This hospital was the thirteenth of 23 RAMC Territorial Force General Hospitals founded throughout the UK.

First World War

The 1st (Southern) General Hospital was mobilised on the outbreak of war, 4 August 1914, setting up wards in various departments of the 'new' Birmingham University at Edgbaston, such that by 11 August a 520 bed hospital was fully operational and staffed. The first casualties arrived on 1 September. The hospital rapidly expanded in size, opening annexes elsewhere. In summer 1917, the hospital was divided in two, with the Dudley Road section (with a capacity of 1,650) being named the 2nd/1st (Southern) General Hospital. Tony Green's comprehensive unit history, *A Jolly Good Show - The Heritage and History of 202 Field Hospital*, documents the work of both hospitals in Birmingham throughout the war.⁸ Reginald Barrett-Cross, in his 1985 manuscript on the lineages of TA medical units, erroneously states that both hospitals were deployed to France in 1914.⁹ He appears to have mixed their names up with the two Casualty Clearing Stations also raised in Birmingham, namely the 1st South Midland CCS (which became No. 56 CSS), raised in spring 1914, and the 2nd / 1st South Midland CCS (which became No. 61 CCS), mobilised in March 1915. These units were the ones deployed to France, serving there until after the Armistice, when they were disbanded.¹⁰

Second World War

The 14th General Hospital TA was raised in Birmingham immediately before the Second World War. It deployed to France in 1940 for a short time before withdrawing to Boulogne at the time of the Dunkirk retreat. Following a short period back in the UK, the hospital was deployed to India, where it spent the rest of the War.¹¹

Post war

During the reformation of the Territorial Army in 1947, Birmingham was given the task of recruiting two Field Force Units for the Royal Army Medical Corps, namely a Field Ambulance and a Field Dressing Station (and for a time also, a section of a Parachute Field Ambulance). These were 147 (Midlands) Field Ambulance and 22 (Western) Field Dressing Station, with their headquarters at Acocks Green.

In August 1965 the Ministry of Defence concluded that the Territorial Army no longer provided appropriate reserve backing for the Regular Army. The two Field Force Units had no place in the new Territorial Army

⁸ The 1st Southern General Hospital, in: Tony Green. *A Jolly Good Show - The Heritage and History of 202 Field Hospital* (2008), pp.122-129.

⁹ R L Barrett-Cross. *Lineage of the Territorial Force Medical Services*. 1985 (typescript held in the Reading Room, Museum of Military Medicine, Keogh Barracks). Barrett-Cross mistakenly states that the 1st (Southern) General Hospital was in Etretat from December 1914 to 12 January 1919, and that the 2nd (Southern) General Hospital was at Le Havre from 15 August 1914 to 31 May 1919. He also mistakenly states that the 2nd Southern General Hospital became 56 General Hospital in France from 22 April 1917. (see p.76)

¹⁰ 1st South Midland Casualty Clearing Station (see: Tony Green, *op cit*, pp.116-119), and 2nd / 1st South Midland Casualty Clearing Station (see: Tony Green, *op cit*, pp.119-121)

¹¹ This information was provided to the author by 202 Field Hospital and has not been independently verified. There is no reference to the 14th General Hospital TA in Tony Green's history of the unit

and Volunteer Reserves structure, so it was decided to raise a TA General Hospital in Birmingham once more. This was a considerable task; most of the Medical Officers of the existing Units were not experienced in hospital work; the Non-commissioned Officers and other personnel had little or no experience and there were no Nursing Officers. Furthermore, the existing headquarters building was inadequate and was to be disposed of by the Ministry of Defence.

Nonetheless, 202 (Midlands) General Hospital RAMC (Volunteers) was formed on 1 April 1967 in Kings Heath, effectively through the disbandment and amalgamation of 147 (Midlands) Field Ambulance and 22 (Western) Field Dressing Station.

202 (The Midlands) Field Hospital – its history at a glance

- Formation of 202 (Midlands) General Hospital RAMC (Volunteers) (1 April 1967)
- Re-organisation into 800-bed role (1985)
- Move to new location in Roger Nutbeem House (1992)
- Re-formation as 202 (Midlands) Field Hospital (Volunteers) on amalgamation with 224 Field Ambulance RAMC (Volunteers), and formation of new squadron in Stoke on Trent (1 April 1995)
- Formation of new squadrons in Shrewsbury and Oxford (1999)
- Awarded the Freedom of the City of Birmingham (2002)
- Op TELIC 1 (Deployment to Kuwait & Iraq, 2003)
- Exercised the Freedom of the City of Birmingham (2004)
- Op HERRICK 10A (Deployment to Afghanistan, 2009) (included Op PANTHER'S CLAW)
- Military Civilian Health Partnership Awards 2009 & 2011
- Formation of 2 Troop, A Squadron in Coventry (2011)
- Op HERRICK 19B (Deployment to Afghanistan, 2014)
- Restructured as 202 (Midlands) Multi-Role Medical Regiment (2023)

202 (The Midlands) Field Hospital - A History in depth (1967 – 2022)

1967 – Formation

The hospital was officially established on 1 April 1967 at Dawberry Fields Road in Birmingham as 202 (Midlands) General Hospital RAMC (V).¹²



The original unit shield

1985 – Re-organisation

On 1 April 1985, five TA field hospitals, including 202, were re-organised from 700-bed to 800-bed general hospitals.

¹² Ministry of Defence, General Staff Order - Authority: B to A/20/Misc/5164(ASD5c) dated 9 March 1967. Source: Museum of Military Medicine, ASD Cards, BOX: ASD - RAMC AER / TA (2)

1992 - Move to Roger Nutbeem House

During the 1990s, whilst the British Army was moving into a new post-Cold War era, 202 moved into a new building. The old barracks were demolished, to make room for what became the Unit's new home. Due to illness, HRH Princess Margaret was unable to perform the official opening in 1992, so this ceremony was carried out the following year by General Sir Peter de la Billiere. The barracks were named Roger Nutbeem House after Major Roger Nutbeem, a regular officer previously attached to the unit, originally an Army dispenser who had gone on to become second in command of 16 Field Ambulance. He was one of three medics who died during the bombing of RFA *Sir Galahad* during the Falklands War and is now buried in the military cemetery at Tidworth.¹³ The naming ceremony was performed in the presence of Major Nutbeem's widow and daughter.

1995 - Re-formation as 202 (Midlands) Field Hospital (Volunteers)

On 1 April 1995, as a result of the 1994 Defence Costs Study – Front Line First reforms, 202 (Midland) General Hospital RAMC (V) amalgamated with **224 (North Staffordshire) Field Ambulance RAMC (V)**, based in Stoke on Trent (*see Annex*), and was re-named **202 (Midlands) Field Hospital (Volunteers)**. Its new role was in support of the ACE Rapid Reaction Corps NATO. 224 Field Ambulance's lineage was preserved by the hospital's newly created A Squadron, remaining in Stoke on Trent.

1999 - Formation of Shrewsbury and Oxford Squadrons

On 1 July 1999, the Oxford detachment of 243 Field Hospital was re-designated as D Squadron of 202 Field Hospital. D Squadron later moved to the new Edward Brooks' Barracks, Shippon, outside Abingdon.¹⁴



On the same date, a new squadron (C Squadron) was formed at Shrewsbury.

2000 – Increase in establishment

In 2000, the Government announced that the Army Medical Services were being enhanced by over 2000 personnel, resulting in an increase in 202's establishment of 120 doctors and nurses.

¹³ SAMA 82: Falkland Veteran's Charity – Memorial Page for Roger Nutbeem <https://sama82.org.uk/nutbeemr/>

¹⁴ The Abingdon location has now become a local Training and Administration Centre for 202 MMR, just like Stoke, Shrewsbury and Derby, see above.

2002 - The Freedom of the City

On 3 December 2002 it was resolved, in recognition of its association with the City of Birmingham, that 202 Field Hospital would be honoured with the Freedom of the City (*see Freedom Scroll below*).



2003 – Op TELIC 1 (Kuwait & Iraq)

On 1 November 2002 the Unit's successful participation in that autumn's Exercise LOG VIPER, where it was responsible for the initial erection and provisioning of a 200-bed hospital, resulted in its being validated for R5 status (ready for mobilisation at 5 days), becoming the only TA Field Hospital with this capability. This had a direct bearing on the decision to mobilise 202 Field Hospital for Op TELIC in early 2003.¹⁵ It thereby became the first TA Field Hospital to deploy into a war zone in the post-Options for Change era, a deployment which proved to be an outstanding success, despite the challenges.¹⁶

The Unit was mobilised as a formed unit, under command of Colonel Barrie Smith, to Camp Coyote in Kuwait in mid-March 2003. On 17 March it took over the 200-bedded hospital constructed by 33 Field Hospital just before the outbreak of the ground war. During the war-fighting phase between 19 March and 21 April, some 1366 patients were admitted to the hospital with 63 requiring intensive care. A further 1000 patients were treated by the emergency department but not admitted. The operating department treated over 160 patients, 23 being children. The specialist burns unit treated over 60 cases.¹⁷



Battlefield Ambulance outside 202 Field Hospital, Camp Coyote, Kuwait (painting by Tony Green, on display at 'D' Detachment, Edward Brooks Barracks, Shippon, near Abingdon)

¹⁵ Unit Historical Record, 1 April 2002 – 31 March 2003, Commanding Officer's Comments

¹⁶ 202 Field Hospital Post Operational Report Operation Telic 13 March – 25 July 2003, Commander's Overview

¹⁷ Tony Green. A Jolly Good Show, *op cit*, p.247.

In mid-May the unit moved into Iraq, to the Shaibah Logistics Base outside Basra, to relieve 34 Field Hospital, before constructing a more environmentally robust tented facility that would become known as British Military Hospital Shaibah. The unit returned to UK in July 2003 on being relieved by 33 Field Hospital. Besides two articles which appeared in the Journal of the RAMC,¹⁸⁻¹⁹ the unit's major contribution to Op TELIC was recorded by consultant general surgeon Lt Col David Rew in an e-book (Blood, Heat + Dust),²⁰⁻²¹ as well as in a later book by 202's own Tony Green.²² The hospital has also featured in a book commemorating 100 years of the Territorials.²³



*202 Field Hospital at BMH Shaibah on Op TELIC 1
(Tony Green, artist and unit member, reproduced with permission)*

¹⁸ Roberts MJ, Fox MA, Hamilton-Davies C, Dawson S The experience of the intensive care unit in a British army field hospital during the 2003 Gulf conflict. *J Roy Army Med Corps* 2003; Vol 149 (4): pp. 284 – 290

¹⁹ Kerr G, Clasper JC, Rew DA Surgical workload from an integrated UK Field Hospital during the 2003 Gulf conflict *J Roy Army Med Corps* 2004; Vol 150 (2): pp.99 – 106

²⁰ David Rew. *Blood, Heat + Dust – Operation Telic and the British Medical Deployment to the Gulf in 2003* (Avonworld, 2005), Chapters 10-11. Available as a CD-ROM from the Museum of Military Medicine. See footnote below.

²¹ David Rew *Blood, Heat + Dust: Second Edition – Operation Telic and the British Medical Deployment to the Gulf 2003 – 2009* https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/449455/1/David_Rew_BHD_SecondEdition_Complete_3.3.2021.pdf
Also available at: <https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/op-telic-and-op-herrick/>

²² Tony Green. *First in, Last Out - 202 Field Hospital On Operations, 2000 – 2014* (published 2016)

²³ 'A Field Hospital in the Second Gulf War', pp. 253 – 254, in: Beckett, Ian. *Territorials - A Century of Service* (Plymouth: TA 100), 2008



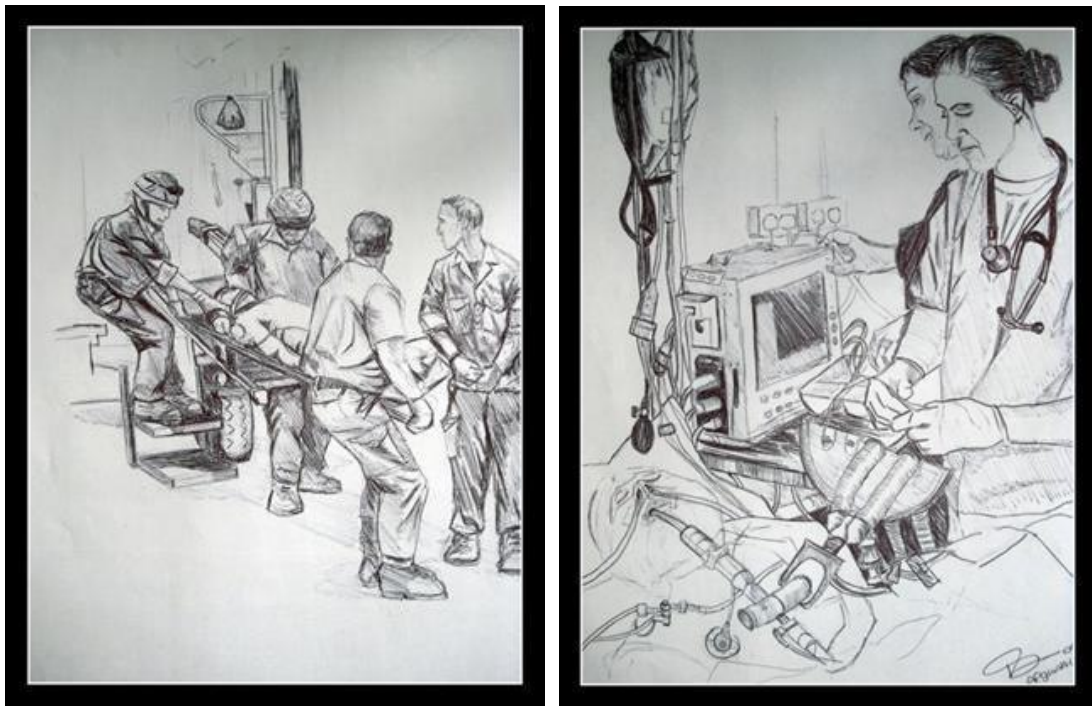
Aerial view of BMH Shaibah, 2003



Reception tent at BMH Shaibah, painting by Tony Green (with permission)

Of note, the OC Nursing during Op TELIC 1, Lt Col Caroline Whittaker QARANC, was subsequently decorated with the rarely awarded Royal Red Cross, First Class, for her leadership in ensuring the outstanding care provided by the Unit to military and civilian casualties during this deployment. She would eventually also be awarded the MBE in the 2026 King's New Years Honours list.²⁴

²⁴ RCN Magazine, 16 March 2026. Lessons on leadership from war zones to the workplace - Q&A with Caroline Whittaker MBE <https://www.rcn.org.uk/magazines/News/Lessons-on-leadership-from-war-zones-to-the-workplace-QandA-with-Caroline-Whittaker-MBE> (accessed 3 June 2026)



Casualty arrival and care on Op TELIC, paintings by Tony Green (with permission)



Unit shield from Op TELIC (courtesy of Peter Samuels)

2004 - With Drums Beating, Bands Playing and Colours Flying

On the 24 April 2004 the unit at last had the opportunity to march through the City of Birmingham and officially receive the Freedom of the City scroll from the Lord Mayor of Birmingham.

2009 – Op HERRICK 10A (Afghanistan, April – July 2009)

202 Field Hospital deployed a hospital squadron under the command of Lt Col Duncan Phimister to form the core of the Role 3 Hospital at Camp Bastion from April – July 2009, before handing over to a Danish field hospital. Forty-four members of the unit deployed on this tour. This was the first tour that a Deployed Medical Director (Col Peter Mahoney L/RAMC) was added to the establishment in a stand-alone post, alongside the commanding officer.²⁵



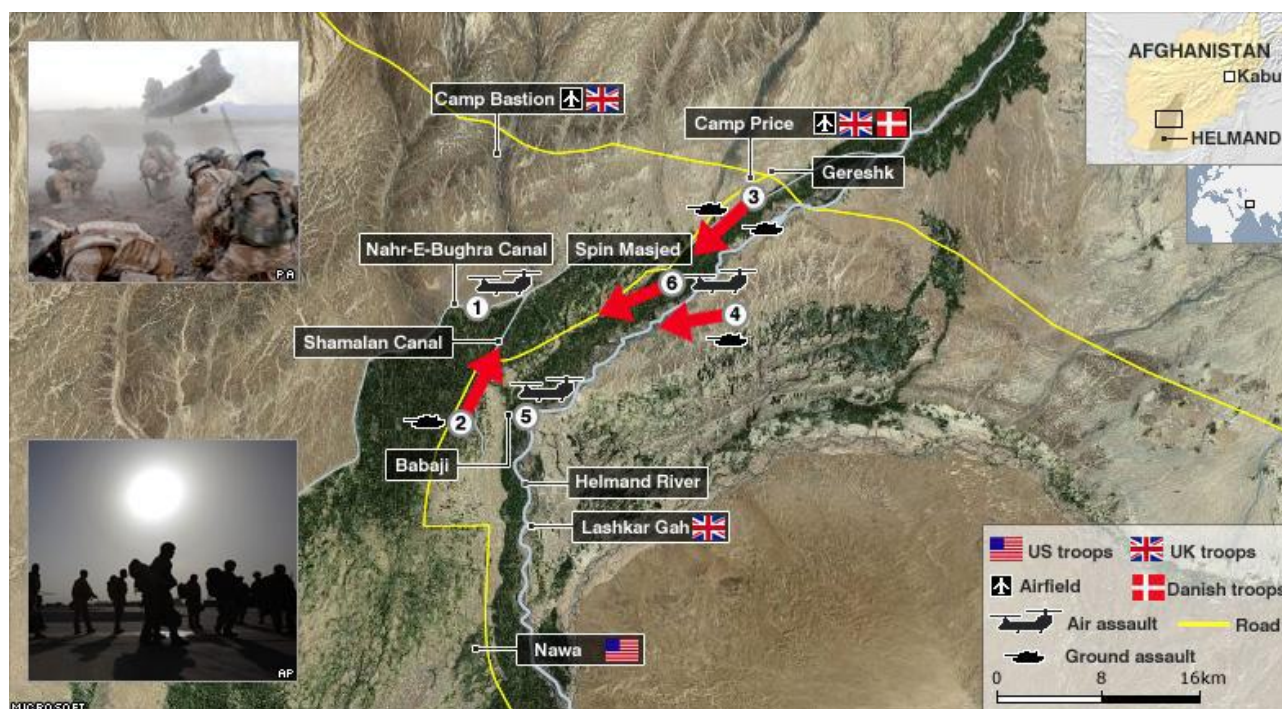
Col Heidi Doughty (Commanding Officer 202 Fd Hospital) 'handing over command' to Lt Col Duncan Phimister for deployment on Op HERRICK 10A

Operation Panther's Claw

HERRICK 10A and the summer of 2009 witnessed the heaviest fighting in Helmand Province since British troops first deployed there in 2006, and Bastion Hospital was correspondingly the busiest it had ever been. Some 3,000 British, Danish and Estonian troops and 600 Afghan National Security Forces took on Taliban insurgents in a five-week operation prosaically named Panther's Claw (Panchai Palang in Pashtun, the local language). The name was chosen from the nickname of Britain's 19 Light Brigade (The Black Panthers), who led the operation. The aim was to drive the Taliban out of the central heavily-populated region between the provincial capital Lashkar Gah and the main town of Gereshk, and thereafter to hold it in sufficient force to prevent the Taliban returning and intimidating the local people,²⁶ thereby hopefully enabling the 80,000-strong population to participate freely in the forthcoming Afghan presidential elections in August.

²⁵ Mahoney PF, Hodgetts TJ, Hicks I, The Deployed Medical Director: Managing the Challenges of a Complex Trauma System. *J R Army Med Corps* 2011; **157**(3 Suppl 1): S350-S356

²⁶ Case for the Defence, *Defence Director*, September 2009



Operation Panther's Claw (BBC News)²⁷

The combat phase of Panther's Claw lasted from 19 June to 27 July. During this period, the 'bloodiest day' was Friday 10 July, when eight British soldiers were killed and at least 30 British soldiers injured, 15 seriously.²⁸

'Doctors, nurses and staff at the field hospital at Britain's Camp Bastion worked round the clock, sometimes 15-16 staff tending to a single badly injured patient' ²⁹

The number of casualties was the most that a British military hospital had had to cope with in a single day since the 1982 Falklands War, and very possibly the largest number in a single day for the whole of the Afghan campaign.

There is no typical day here. The activity fluctuates wildly. Some days you can have 20 casualties, some days four or five. It could be minor – a heat-related illness – or it could be the fallout of a suicide bomb. The other week we had three [suicide bombers] in one day. To get people with their limbs blown off – double amputees – you don't see that back home. But that is what it is like here, there is severe trauma.

Last week was extremely bad. We lost six soldiers, four in one day.

Lt Col Duncan Phimister, Commanding Officer, R3 BSN Hospital³⁰

²⁷ 'Mapping Operation Panther's Claw.' *BBC News* <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8172556.stm> (accessed 17 Oct 2024)

²⁸ 'Camp Bastion's advanced field hospital has experienced its bloodiest week for British troops since operations began in Helmand with wards nearly at full capacity.' *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 July 2009.

²⁹ 'UK hospital in Afghanistan copes with bloodiest day.' *Reuters*, 12 July 2009



Tribute to the Fallen of Op HERRICK 10A, by Tony Green (painted on bluey, despatched from theatre, now on display at D Detachment, Edward Brooks Barracks – one of 14 such paintings on display)

2009 & 2011 – National recognition

Colonel Heidi Doughty's work, both as Commanding Officer 202 Field Hospital and as Consultant in Transfusion Medicine in Birmingham whose initiatives included the development of a massive transfusion capability for the Forces (including operational apheresis), transfusion support for forward resuscitation and transfusion safety, was recognised with the Military Civilian Health Partnership 'Healthcare Reservist of the

³⁰ *Guardian*, 31 May 2009 (quoted in: Darman, P. *Blood, Sweat and Steel – Frontline accounts from the Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq* (London: New Holland, 2010))

Year’ award in 2009.³¹ Colonel Doughty was also honoured with the ‘*Deployed Healthcare Award*’ as part of the Blood for the Battlefield - DES Med & GS Blood supply team/NHS Blood & Transplant in 2011,³² and an OBE in 2013.

Major Moira Kane, serving with 202 Field Hospital on HERRICK 10A, was awarded the Military Civilian Health Partnership ‘*Deployed Healthcare Award*’ for 2009.

2011 – Formation of 2 Troop, A Squadron in Coventry

After an absence of 20 years, the City of Coventry welcomed back the unit on the formation of 2 Troop, A Squadron, 202 (Midlands) Field Hospital (Volunteers) at Westfield House, Radford Road in July 2011. This made it much easier for unit members living between Abingdon and Birmingham to train with the unit.³³ The bulk of the Squadron remained in Stoke on Trent.

2014 – Op HERRICK 19B (Afghanistan, January – April 2014)

*The team worked with the well drilled efficiency of a Formula One pit crew performing a tyre change in the middle of a race. It was an awe-inspiring experience to see the Grand Prix stars of trauma medicine in action.*³⁴

The unit returned to Camp Bastion Hospital in 2014, in the final year of the HERRICK campaign. They were accompanied at the beginning of their tour by a journalist, John Scott, who recorded some of 202’s experiences in a week-long series of reports in the local newspaper in Birmingham:

The hospital command team rushed to a briefing from Colonel Glynn Evans, the man currently in charge of the world’s leading trauma centre.

He is also Commanding Officer of 202 Field Hospital whose 34-strong team of army reserve medics – including doctors and nurses from hospitals in the West Midlands, Staffordshire, and Shropshire – has just started a three-month tour of duty at the hospital in Camp Bastion where 195 medical staff from the UK, USA, Denmark, and Estonia work.

Colonel Evans outlined details of the incident to the 14 members of the hospital command team during an emergency meeting in his office. Ten minutes later they returned to tell him exactly how they would cope with the crisis.

³¹ Military Civilian Health Partnership Awards 2009 <http://militarycivilianhealthawards.org.uk/the-awards/2010-2/> (accessed 9 June 2015; not accessible 17 October 2024)

³² Military Civilian Health Partnership Awards 2011 <http://militarycivilianhealthawards.org.uk/the-awards/2012-2/> (accessed 9 June 2015; not accessible 17 October 2024); <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/military-and-civilian-health-personnel-honoured> (accessed 17 October 2024)

³³ *The Medic (The RAMC Magazine)*, 2011;December(Vol 1 no1), 202 (Midlands) Field Hospital. p.33

³⁴ ‘Our man in Afghanistan: John Scott’s first-hand account of a rescue in the desert’ *Express and Star* 11 February 2014 (an account of 202’s experiences at Camp Bastion Hospital on Op HERRICK 19B in early 2014) <http://www.expressandstar.com/editors-picks/2014/02/11/our-man-in-afghanistan-john-scotts-first-hand-account-of-a-rescue-in-the-desert/> (accessed 30 December 2014)



Colonel Glyn Evans, at the Camp Bastion Hospital trauma centre³⁵

This was the first full scale exercise to test the response of the newly formed team but before it could finish, they were facing a real-life drama to which the Express & Star was granted unique access.

Witnessing the speed, skill, and teamwork with which the staff responded made it easy to understand how the hospital is able to boast survival rates of well over 90 per cent, despite treating casualties airlifted to them from the battlefield with terrible injuries.

The team treated almost a dozen life-threatening injuries and many minor casualties from both coalition and Afghan forces in the first six days after being joined by 202 Field Hospital. Now another was being airlifted into their care.

Moments after the Blackhawk helicopter touched down an ambulance was at its side and the casualty was carefully carried to it before being driven – with sirens blaring and blue lights flashing on the 250-yard journey – to the emergency department entrance of the hospital.

The foil-covered casualty was gently moved from the vehicle to a waiting trolley as a squad of medics moved in to 'sanitise' the man by removing any grenades, firearms, or knives he might have unintentionally carried from the battlefield where he was wounded. An interpreter stood by to offer reassuring words in case the patient was a conscious Afghan soldier.

Once that procedure had been completed, he was taken into the Emergency Department where a team of medics immediately surrounded the treatment table. It was led by a consultant who directed everything that followed. Lt Col Heather Tysall, officer in charge of the emergency department explained to me what was happening, pointing out the anaesthetist and the doctor carrying out a head-to-toe check of the patient that is known as a primary survey.

Meanwhile, a fast scan of the body and X-rays were taken. Two nurses were also involved - one administered the necessary drugs while the other poised to get supplies of blood as medics prepared to administer warm blood should a fast transfusion be required.

A team of surgeons stood by ready to step forward and bring their expertise to the treatment of the patient should it be required. Fully staffed operating tables were ready and waiting to launch immediate life-saving surgery if required in the next-door room.

³⁵ Reproduced from *Express and Star* (*ibid*)

The team worked with the well drilled efficiency of a Formula One pit crew performing a tyre change in the middle of a race. It was an awe-inspiring experience to see the Grand Prix stars of trauma medicine in action.

The patient is then normally moved on to either the operating theatre or an intensive therapy bed but this time he needed neither immediate surgery nor an intensive therapy bed.³⁶



Entrance to Camp Bastion Hospital during 202's deployment, Op HERRICK 19B³⁷



202 Field Hospital Staff, Camp Bastion Hospital, Op HERRICK 19B

2023 – Future Soldier re-organisation: 202 (Midlands) Multi-Role Medical Regiment

202 (The Midlands) Field Hospital restructured during 2023 to form **202 (Midlands) Multi-Role Medical Regiment**, the disbandment and formation parade being held on Saturday 9 September 2023 on Centenary Square, Birmingham, under the command of Colonel Clare Dutton MBE. See detail on p.2.

And thus began another chapter in this unit's history.

³⁶ 'Our man in Afghanistan: John Scott's first-hand account of a rescue in the desert' *Express and Star* 11 February 2014 (*ibid*)

³⁷ Image reproduced from *Express and Star*, *op cit*

Commanding Officers, Matrons and Regimental Sergeant Majors of the unit



CO and Matron Appointments board, courtesy of Lt Col Jane Phillips-Wallace, 2023



The Commanding Officer at the disbandment parade of 202 Field Hospital on 9 Sep 2023 was Colonel Clare Dutton MBE (not depicted on panel above when it was photographed)



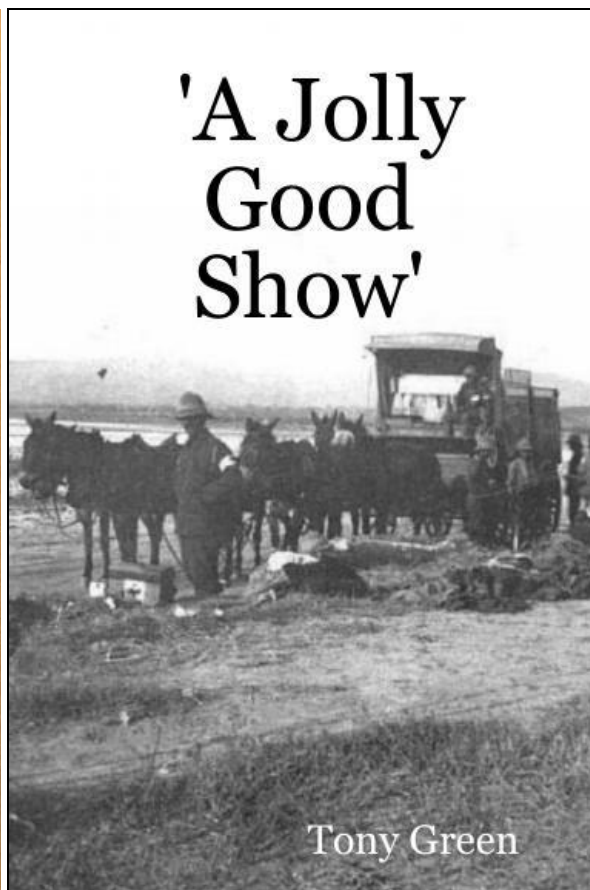
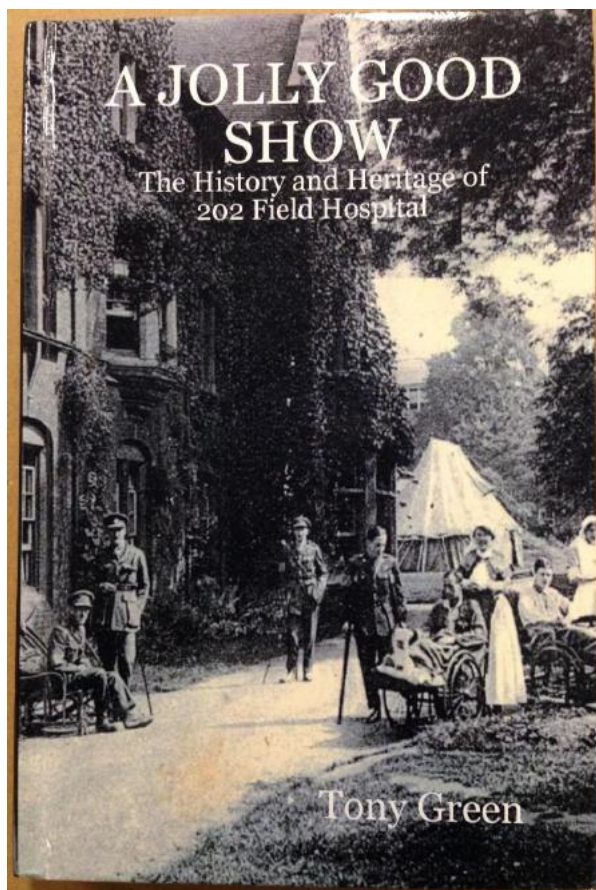
RSM Appointments board (up to 2013), courtesy of WO1 (RSM) JA Pointon, 2015



Board commemorating Medical Victoria Crosses, at 'D' Detachment, Edward Brooks Barracks, Shippon

Sources & Bibliography

1. Tony Green. *A Jolly Good Show - The Heritage and History of 202 Field Hospital* (published 2008) <https://www.lulu.com/shop/tony-green/the-heritage-and-history-of-202-field-hospital/hardcover/product-1mgj98w.html?page=1&pageSize=4> (accessed 3 June 2026). An earlier version, simply titled 'A Jolly Good Show' (published 2007) concentrated solely on the history and heritage of the Stoke and Shrewsbury detachments.



2. 'A Field Hospital in the Second Gulf War', pp. 253 – 254. In: Beckett, Ian. *Territorials - A Century of Service* (Plymouth: TA 100) (ISBN 978-0-9557813-1-5)
3. Tony Green. *First in, Last Out - 202 Field Hospital On Operations, 2000 – 2014* (published 2016)
4. David Rew. *Blood, Heat + Dust – Operation Telic and the British Medical Deployment to the Gulf in 2003* (Avonworld, 2005), Chapters 10-11. Available as a CD-ROM from the Museum of Military Medicine, <https://museumofmilitarymedicine.org.uk/product/blood-heat-and-dust/>
5. David Rew *Blood, Heat + Dust: Second Edition – Operation Telic and the British Medical Deployment to the Gulf 2003 – 2009* https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/449455/1/David_Rew_BHD_SecondEdition_Complete_3.3.2021.pdf
Also available at: <https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/op-telic-and-op-herrick/> (accessed 3 June 2026)

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Unit histories of the UK's Army Medical Services are available on the Friends of Millbank website, see <https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/previous-units> and <https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/current-units>.

If you notice any errors or omissions, or wish to contribute to this history, please contact the author at djvassallo@aol.com.

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Unit shield (courtesy of Captain Wellington Mupesa, Adjutant, 2023)

ANNEX: 224 (North Staffordshire) Field Ambulance RAMC (V)



Unit crests kindly provided by Terry Hissey (left) and Steve Mack (right)

On 1 April 1995, 202 (Midland) General Hospital RAMC (V) amalgamated with **224 (North Staffordshire) Field Ambulance RAMC (V)**, and was re-named **202 (Midlands) Field Hospital (Volunteers)**.

The lineage of 224 (NS) Field Ambulance RAMC (V) is now borne by **224 (A) Hospital Squadron** of 202 MMR.

A history of the unit is contained in the 1986 Handbook preserved in the RAMC Muniments Collection.³⁸

³⁸ 224 Field Ambulance – Handbook 1986. RAMC Muniments Collection.

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/wkpe5d5g/items?canvas=2> (last accessed 3 June 2026)