

40 Commando Royal Marines
Corporal Christopher Lewis Harrison was 26 years old; he was born in Watford, and lived in Taunton with his wife Rebecca. He entered Royal Marines Recruit Training at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines on 13 March 2003, passing for duty on 18 December 2003.
Corporal Harrison had previously served with the Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines, and had qualified as a Heavy Weapons (Mortars) specialist in 2005. In 2007 he deployed with 40 Commando Royal Marines on Operation HERRICK 7 and he had recently returned from an amphibious exercise in the Mediterranean and the Far East. In January 2010 he was selected for, and successfully passed, Junior Command Training at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines. Returning to 40 Commando he then deployed on Operation HERRICK 12 as a Mortar Fire Controller with Bravo Company, based at Patrol Base SHUGA.

During a deliberate Operation on the morning of Sunday 9 May 2010, Bravo Company was conducting a patrol alongside the Afghanistan National Army, in order to help provide security for the local population of Sangin. At approximately 0620 hours local, south of Patrol Base SHUGA, Corporal Harrison was fatally wounded in an explosion.
Lieutenant Colonel Paul James, Commanding Officer 40 Commando Group, Combined Force Sangin said:
"Corporal Chris Harrison embodied the best of his generation; fit, bright, dedicated and incredibly courageous. He died leading his fellow marines in an Operation to disrupt an insurgency threat in Sangin. A larger than life character, both in stature and personality, he was one of the few men who was known across the whole of 40 Commando. He achieved legendary status amongst his cohort having overcome snakebites in Brunei and delivering rapid and accurate mortar fire support on this, his second deployment to Afghanistan. He is a man who will be sorely missed by all. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, family and friends. Corporal Chris Harrison was, and will always be, the model Commando."
Major Mark Totten, Officer Commanding Bravo Company, 40 Commando Royal Marines said:
"Cpl Chris 'H-Bomb' Harrison was a towering Mortar-man, whose physical presence matched his professional competence; but his sheer character outweighed them both. He was extremely popular across the entire Commando Unit, especially Mortar Troop and had the knack of making friends easily, no matter whose company he was in. He was undoubtedly the focal point of Troop morale. Chris was a junior Mortar Fire Controller but was the complete master of his brief and his professionalism was immediately apparent when he arrived in B Coy. His competence was a reassuring hand on the shoulder of those he shared a patrol base with; they knew he could rapidly bring his skills to bear in support of them. He led from the front, not just through his impressive physical presence but with character and grit; he possessed the commando qualities in spades and was always first to volunteer, especially in the face of danger. He confronted danger like he approached everything else, with an infectious sense of humour. On operations in Helmand he was determined to be in the thick of it and was immensely proud of what he achieved. He was a Bootneck in every sense, took life by the collar and got the very most out of it. He will be mourned and missed as we push on in his spirit."
Corporal Harrison's wife Rebecca said:
"This is the most devastating news of my life I have lost the most fantastic husband I could ever have wished for. Even though I knew and fully supported what Chris did as a Royal Marine and the dangers he was facing, I am still broken by his loss. Chris was my life he was my motivator and my inspiration, my rock, the one person with whom I shared everything. It hurts me beyond words knowing that I will never have my beloved husband by

my side ever again and we will never raise the family that we so desperately craved to complete our lives together. He will forever live in my heart." Corporal Harrison's parents, Martin and Gill said: "We have lost a wonderful and loving son and brother who was devoted to 'Becky' his wife, and all of his family. He was an outstanding young man with qualities way beyond his young years. Although he had to be tough, demanding and in peak physical condition to do his job as a Royal Marine he was also caring, kind and considerate to those he truly loved. We are extremely proud of our son Chris and what he achieved in his short but exceptional life, we will preserve his memory forever." Corporal Harrison's older brother Russ (28) said: "Chris was an outstanding bloke and Royal Marine who absolutely loved his job, his mates and his wife. Although this is the worst possible news for all of our family, I know that Chris would want his mates still serving out there to keep their minds focused on the job, come back safe and have a massive drink of port in his honour. His humour, generosity and kindness will be dearly missed by everyone especially me. All of my memories are of him and the massive grin on his face, and I know that is how he would want to be remembered. RIP mate, I will never forget you. x" Major Richard Muncer, Officer Commanding Command Company, 40 Commando Royal Marines said: "Corporal Harrison was an outstanding Royal Marine and Junior Non Commissioned Officer who it was a privilege to have commanded. He was one of the key personalities in Mortar Troop, who was immensely popular and respected across the Unit. Everything he undertook during his time with the Royal Marines was always done with unwavering commitment and enthusiasm; he set the best of examples to us all and exemplified the spirit of being a Royal Marine Commando. Corporal Harrison was exceptionally good at his job, which he loved, and his infectious sense of humour meant that he was always at the centre of things. He will leave a gap that will be very difficult to fill at 40 Commando, especially within Command Company and Mortar Troop." Lieutenant Matthew O'Sullivan, Officer Commanding 4 Troop, Bravo Company 40 Commando Royal Marines said: "Corporal Harrison was attached to 4 Troop from the start of our Op HERRICK 12 tour. His role within the Troop was to assist in the Fire Support Role, co-ordinating mortars and other air assets in order to aid troops on the ground. This role was of paramount importance providing feedback from surveillance assets regarding insurgent activity in the area and more importantly the ability to protect troops on the ground when under contact by providing smoke screens and fire missions." "From the beginning of the tour, Corporal Harrison was a key figure in the Troop planning process for future operations, and also at the forefront of Troop banter. His manner was that of an older brother to the majority of Marines, by keeping up morale with his loud sense of humour and also showing a fierce determination to protect the Marines working alongside him." "Corporal Harrison will be deeply missed by all of 4 Troop; his wonderful personality and high professionalism made a distinct impression on all the Marines in PB SHUGA and all our thoughts and prayers are with his family and wife who he spoke dearly of throughout his time in Afghanistan." Sergeant Simon Smith, Mortar Line Commander, Bravo Company, 40 Commando Royal Marines said: "Cpl Chris Harrison, Mortar Troop - a man who was immensely popular. Cpl Harrison fulfilled the role of 'B' Mortar Fire Controller to the full. Although relatively junior he excelled in his timely, accurate reporting and battle appreciation. A huge figure, Chris led from the front; his huge frame seem to pale any large Bergen into insignificance. Chris was a true Bootneck both at work and ashore. His sense of humour always revealed itself before, during and after a few ales. Apart

from his outstanding professionalism, my memories of him will always include his bar antics in Penang on Exercise Taurus, when the RSM christened him 'the madman of Malaysia', after watching him in one of the bars. You will be forever in our thoughts mate."

Sergeant Matthew Bentley and Sergeant Wayne Lyness, Alpha Company, 40 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Chris Harrison was an irrepressible and enthusiastic character who brought great professionalism and a keen will to all of his endeavours. Chris rapidly established himself within the Mortars' world and his almost freakish grasp and rapid reconfiguration of the weapon system saw him quickly earn his place as a commander of his own crew. On OP HERRICK 7 he proved himself to be the consummate mortar practitioner and was invariably first to be ready to fire, his speed surprising all, including the Old and Bold within the Mortars' fraternity. As recognition of this performance he was selected above and beyond his peers to attend Mortar Fire Control training at Warminster, where once again, perhaps unsurprisingly, he received the accolade of top student. Chris was never selfish with these skills and was always ready to pass on his knowledge as well as constantly seeking more information allowing him to improve."

"Eulogies always tend towards the sentimental but from everyone who worked with him or knew him, they would say that he was an altruistic and generous man with a ready smile and a witty quip. He was genuinely the life and soul of any party, his dancing style was definitely all of his own, with mad lunging and reverse elbow moves causing havoc on the dance floor. He leaves a massive gap in all of our lives and he will be sorely missed."

Tributes from 1 Section, Mortar Troop 40 Commando Royal Marines:

"Chris Harrison or 'H-Bomb', was a larger than life character, the troop comedian and an extremely popular lad with everyone who knew him. Known for his outlandish attire and questionable dancing, Chris was always the main focus point of Mortar Troop nights out. When it comes to work, Chris was professional and on the ball with everything he did. A testament to his strength was how he 'yomped' out of the jungle unaided when he had been bitten by a snake. He was on his feet for 12 hours after the bite! Chris was an important member of Mortar Troop, a real character who brought us lots of banter to the Troop. He will be greatly missed by Mortars and will not be forgotten."

Corporal Matt Howells, Bravo Company 40 Commando Royal Marines said:

"As our mortars Bravo, Chris' professionalism was never in doubt. Every time our patrols went out Chris would, without prompting, gain over-watch from his self constructed hide and observe our every movement, anticipating everything. Not afraid to get his hands dirty, Chris was embedded in my section during a patrol into the Green Zone when we came under contact from automatic weapons. In well under a minute, whilst under fire, Chris had got the mortar line laid on ready for a smoke task to cover our withdrawal. Not only 'hoofing' at his job, Chris' humour was also abundant, especially during the many hours spent in the Ops room. He was, without question, a Bootneck."

Marine Jay Brown, Bravo Company 40 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Chris was like an older brother to myself and the other lads in the Troop, he was easy to get on with and was always smiling. He would always have a camera to hand to capture a chad photo of himself, he had a great sense of humour and was always at the centre of any banter especially between the other Fire Support Team lads. He was proud of what he did and was a typical Bootneck, always cracking phys and even the odd bit of bread baking. I feel fortunate to have known him, he will be deeply missed."

Marine Drew Gardiner, Bravo Company 40 Commando Royal Marines said:

"I first met Chris when I joined 40 Commando, since then he has always been a smiling, welcoming face. Always a good role model to younger Marines he

showed true professionalism at all times, while still managing to keep a good sense of humour and letting nothing get to him, which helped other lads out who were feeling down. I will remember him for his cheerfulness in all circumstances and as a great bloke to be around. It truly was a privilege to have known him. He will be missed by everyone who knew him and will never be forgotten."