



It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that Guardsman Craig Andrew Roderick of the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards was killed in Afghanistan on Sunday 1 July 2012.

On 1 July 2012, he went on patrol to a checkpoint known as Kamparack Pul to help organise a meeting (shura) with the local detachment of Afghan National Civil Order Police. Having completed their task and on leaving the compound, was attacked by small arms fire and fatally wounded. He was based in Forward Operating Base Ouellette in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand province, Afghanistan. Guardsman Craig Roderick was deployed to Afghanistan on 26 March 2012 as a member of a Police Advisory Team within the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group.

Guardsman Roderick was born on 2 April 1990 in Cardiff. Before he joined the Army he went to Pencoed to learn bricklaying. He said to his friends that he joined the Army because he liked to keep fit and wanted to go to Afghanistan. He started his training at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick on 22 February 2009 and passed out from Catterick in September 2009 joining the Welsh Guards at their home in Aldershot, Lillie Barracks.

Guardsman Roderick was an exemplary member of the Welsh Guards. Almost every person he spent time with, commented on his infectious smile and wicked sense of humour. He had a hugely bright future ahead of him and there is no doubt that he would have progressed through the ranks. His enthusiasm was truly boundless, his approach and attitude to work faultless to the last.

Guardsman Roderick will be remembered alongside the other Welsh Guardsmen who have both given their lives in service of our country, amongst the ranks of the bravest of the brave.

Guardsman Roderick leaves behind his parents Mike and Sadie, two sisters Katie and Lucinda Emily, step-brother Jay, Grandmother Margaret, and girlfriend Zoe.

The family of Guardsman Roderick paid the following tribute:

"Words cannot describe how the loss of our precious Craig has affected us all. The vast void left

by this tragedy will never be filled.

"Everyone who knew him will miss his big smile and his sense of humour. He was the best son, brother or friend you could have wished for, we were privileged to have known him. He will always be missed and never forgotten."

Lieutenant Colonel Dino Bossi, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Guardsman Craig Roderick died doing the job that he loved - he had joined the Army expressly to go to Afghanistan and was in his element out here thriving on the austere conditions, the hard physical work and the mental challenge of soldiering. He was an integral and much loved member of a close-knit team. Always keen on his fitness Guardsman Roderick could be relied upon to be at the front of any physical task or endurance event.

"Here in Afghanistan that stood him in excellent stead and he revelled in being able to overcome adversity. Brave, honest and loyal, he was the sort of man anyone would be glad to have in his fire-trench when the going got tough. Cardiff City was an enduring passion, but his Police Advisor Team, was the team he supported most fervently and with unremitting pride. His Police Advisory Team, Number Two Company and all those that knew him across the length and breadth of the Battalion feel his loss keenly.

"Though grievous to us, our loss is as nothing when compared to that currently being endured by his family, for whom the events of 1 July will be unbearable. For those Welsh Guardsmen left behind, we cherish Craig's memory and will honour it going forwards with his example before us. Cymru am Byth!"

Major Julian Salusbury, Company Commander, Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Soon after arriving in the Battalion, Guardsman Roderick was identified as an excellent young soldier. Fit and energetic, he was a proud guardsman with a bright future. Quite simply, there was never a dull moment with Guardsman Roderick. He threw himself into his life as a soldier and worked and played hard. Generous, friendly and one of the boys, he was always the first to confidently offer me a shot of tequila on a Company night out. He was much liked and will be sorely missed.

"Guardsmen Roderick worked hard throughout Mission Specific Training to learn the skills needed to deploy on an operational tour. He said that he joined the Army so that he could go to Afghanistan - he relished the chance for adventure. He was employed in the demanding Police Advisory role requiring the utmost patience and professionalism - Guardsman Roderick displayed both with aplomb. His honest, straightforward and inclusive nature endeared him to his Afghan partners: he was a key part of the team.

"Guardsman Roderick well understood the inherent risks of being a soldier - his death is keenly felt by his brother guardsmen in Number 2 Company. Guardsman Roderick, without doubt, made a difference to the daily lives of the ordinary Helmandi people and, knowing this, we

continue with our mission - we have made a difference and will continue to do so.

"At this most difficult time, our thoughts and prayers are with Guardsman Roderick's family. Cymru am Byth."

Lieutenant John Scarlett, Coldstream Guards, Police Advisory Team Commander, Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"The first thing that springs to mind when I think of Guardsman Roderick is that he had a heart of gold. Everything he did, every thought and deed was with the best of intentions. He was the king of cheesy grins and corny chat up lines, the epitome of a gentle soul and natural charm. Since my arrival in the Welsh Guards in January, our team has become very close and it is fair to say that Guardsman Roderick was at the very heart of our tightly knit group. He was a ferociously fit individual and he always gave his best and tried to do what was right for the lads.

"He lost his life in tragic and unfortunate circumstances. My thoughts are with his family and friends. It is important for everyone to know that Guardsman Roderick was playing his part in what is an essential role in Afghanistan and his sacrifice will never be forgotten.

"Rodders, I will miss you 'butt'. The boys will never forget you and we will make sure that you will be remembered for all the right reasons. You have left a massive gap in our lives that will never be filled. I want you to know that 'Chall' and I are deeply proud of you. We will be there for your family whenever they need us and I promise you that your loss will not be in vain. Have fun up there. We will see you on the other side. I expect a pint in hand, a grin across your face and some stories of what we've missed."

Warrant Officer Class 2 Paul Dunn, Company Sergeant Major, Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Guardsman Roderick was an exceptionally fit man and a workhorse on operations. He gave everything for his fellow Guardsman and stepped up to the plate on many occasions to help others who were struggling. In barracks Guardsman Roderick lived life to the full. He trained hard and did the same when out on the town. He was a true No. 2 Company man within the Battalion. He will be missed by us all. Our thoughts are with the family of Guardsman Roderick at this time. Rest in Peace".

Lance Sergeant Laurie Challenger, Police Advisory Team Second-in-Command, Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Rodders' was my favourite Guardsman, a hard working guy who always smiled no matter what. He had been in my team since he'd been in the Welsh Guards. He was very popular with all the men and his stories were something you always laughed at. He first started his leadership skills in my section in Kenya and he reminded me of myself when I was a young commander so I took him under my wing. He again worked very, very hard and I must say with honesty I will never find another harder working man again. He would have gone very far in the Welsh Guards with his fitness and effort. I would have been proud to have seen him go up the ranks. I will miss him

terribly and will never forget him for as long as I live.

"My thoughts go out to his family and girlfriend so again my deepest sympathies to you all. You will be missed my friend, thanks for all the memories. You will always be talked about but I think you already know that. Rest in peace. I'll see you on the re-org".

Guardsman Mark Edwards, Police Advisory Team, Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Craig was a person who could brighten up a room and your day every time he was there. I will miss the times we used to go for runs and try and out-do each other mate and when we went on the town you were the life of the party fella. My heart goes out to your family. Craig, I will never forget you mate. You will always be in my heart and my head forever; never forgotten. Love Ed."

Guardsman Tommy Everett, Police Advisory Team, Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Craig was a close friend, always making the lads laugh with his silly comments. He was a massive morale boost for me and the team. He always tried his best and was always grafting to get things done. A key bloke in the team and will never ever be forgotten. I'll never forget his smile whatever was going on in work, however bad, it seemed that smile will always be remembered. Sleep peacefully Bro; you'll always be remembered."

Guardsman Stewart Harris, Police Advisory Team, Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Guardsman Roderick, Craig, or more commonly, known as 'Rodders' the man that never stopped smiling. Everyone could be down in the dumps and he would walk over with his big smile with all his pearly white teeth out saying 'All right, or what'. He was a light that could not be put out, he could not be broken. He'd put others before himself every time. Every memory I have of him is a good or funny one.

"You have been stolen from us Rod; 2 Company on Muster Parade will never be the same."

Guardsman Joshua Niebling, Police Advisory Team, Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Craig was an awesome lad to have known. He was the morale of the team, always to hand with a smile or a joke to tell. He was a very close friend to me and Richardson and the three of us were barely seen apart from one another.

"Whenever you were with him you couldn't help but feel happier. Whenever you were on stag with him, time flew by as he always had a story to tell of his antics when he was at home. He was always there to talk to if you were having a bad time, keenly listening (although a bit hard of hearing)."

"We will all deeply miss him. Rest in Peace, mate."

Guardsman Jac Richardson, Police Advisory Team, Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Rodders was my closest friend in the team. He, I and Nibs would do everything together; even shave our heads. When I think of Rodders now all I think about is his smile and no matter how hard things got he was always the first to make a joke about it and get the boys to smile. He was a credit to serve with and more importantly a top friend who will be missed not only by the team but all of No 2 Company. He was one of the nicest people I knew and would do anything for anyone. You could ask any of the team and they would say the same thing he was a big part of the team; not just on the ground but a source of morale as well. He will never be forgotten. Rest in Peace, brother."