

MARINE DAVID FAIRBROTHER

KILO COMPANY 42 COMMANDO ROYAL MARINES COMBINED FORCE NAHR-E-SARAJ (SOUTH)

Marine David Fairbrother was born on 23rd February 1987 and grew up in Blackburn with his mother Julie, and sisters Ruth and Emily. He attended Queen Elizabeth Grammar School where he completed 3 A-levels in Geography, Geology and Classical Civilisation before studying a BSc Degree in Geography at Leeds University.

Marine Fairbrother joined the Royal Marines on 2nd November 2009 and was passed fit for duty on 10th September 2010. He was drafted to 42 Commando Royal Marines where he joined Kilo Company, 'The Black Knights', and immediately began pre-deployment training for Operation HERRICK 14. He enthusiastically immersed himself in training and qualified as a Team Medic; a responsibility which he assumed with characteristic diligence and professionalism. His sharp mind and strong soldiering skills made him a natural choice for training as a member of an All Arms Search Team, seeing him conduct numerous compound clearances at significant risk in order to ensure the safety of his comrades.

Early on the morning of 19 September 2011 Marine Fairbrother deployed in support of an Afghan National Army patrol into the village of Old Khorgajat. Just under two hours into the patrol they were engaged with small arms fire from close range and Marine Fairbrother was fatally wounded. Despite the best efforts of his comrades to administer first aid, Marine Fairbrother died of his wounds.

David was a highly motivated Royal Marine who was excelling in his first appointment and had aspirations to specialise in the Landing Craft branch on his return from operations. His passion for testing himself both physically and mentally was epitomised by his hobbies of Skydiving and Waterpolo. He was a Marine with great potential who will be sorely missed.

Julie Fairbrother, David's mother said: "David, not only are you the sunshine of my life but you were a devoted, beautiful and giving son. I am so proud of the determination you had to become a Royal Marine. You were always fun loving, caring and lived life to the full. Not only were you the perfect son but you were my best friend and you will be in my thoughts forever. I love you with all of my heart, Mum xxx"

Ruth, David's older sister & Craig, Ruth's boyfriend said: "'Commando Humour' is one of our favourite marine values to describe you, David. You lived life to the absolute maximum, and we could not help but be so proud of you. You had such a joy for life and so many plans for your future that involved both your career as a Marine, but most importantly, for your friends and family. There are no words to describe the heartbreak. It hurts so much inside to think we won't see you again. We love you so much. Our little brother, all our love, Ruthie and Craig xx

Emily, David's younger sister said: "My brother, my best friend, my hero. The life and soul of

every party. I will miss your silly antics and all the banter we shared. I am so proud of everything you have done in your life, especially becoming a Royal Marine. Thanks to your encouragement and guidance I have enjoyed so many things; waterpolo, swimming and skydiving are but a few. You will be in my thoughts forever. Love you always, miss you. xxx
Emily xxx"

Melissa, David's girlfriend said: "Dave - I am so glad I met you. You have changed my life in so many ways and I will cherish our time together forever. Love always - Is breá i gcónaí. Melissa xxx"

Ben, one of David's best friends said: "Once met, NEVER forgotten! Dave was and will always be a true hero and inspiration to all those who were privileged enough to know him. My best friend and soul mate, Dave, you will always remain a part of me forever and I can only hope that I become half the man you are. Goodbye for now. Ben"

James, one of David's best friends said: "A true friend, a loyal friend, my best friend."

Jaffa, one of David's best friends said: "Dave, we met at a good point in both our lives. Your love for life, friends and family was inspiring. We pushed each other to strive for more at every opportunity. You and your cheeky smile will be sorely missed. Brothers forever. "

Lieutenant Colonel Ewen Murchison MBE Royal Marines, Commanding Officer, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Marine David Fairbrother was a first class Marine and a young man of rare quality. He undoubtedly would have had an exceptionally bright future in the Royal Marines ahead of him. One of the most intelligent Marines in the Unit - his academic qualifications bear testament to this - he joined Kilo Company straight from basic training less than a year ago, where his enthusiasm and commitment instantly marked him out amongst his peers. He was tremendously keen, extremely professional and sought every opportunity to better himself, gaining high levels of competence as a machine gunner and All Arms Search Specialist, which enabled him to quickly establish himself as a pivotal member of his Multiple. Utterly loyal and selfless, he had no qualms about putting himself in harm's way to ensure the safety of his fellow Marines. Resolute in battle, he fought bravely in numerous engagements with a determined enemy and displayed enormous courage and inner strength to daily overcome the omnipresent, silent threat of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). Five months into what has been a particularly demanding tour, he had become highly attuned to local atmospherics and at the moment he was gunned down at short range he was characteristically at the front of his patrol, courageously checking for IEDs with his trademark thoroughness, dependability and calmness in the face of adversity.

"Marine Fairbrother was quite simply an outstanding Bootneck, who embodied all the finest qualities of a Royal Marines Commando. He wore the coveted green beret with pride and all those who knew him are poorer following his early passing. A lively character and immensely popular, he will be remembered for the constant grin he had on his face, no matter how dire the situation and the 'dits' he told to maintain morale. He had many friends who loved him as a

colleague and brother-in-arms and his loss is nothing short of tragic and devastating. 42 Commando have been robbed of another brave young warrior and his death is felt deeply across the whole of the

Unit. He is gone but his sacrifice will not be forgotten. At this unbearably difficult time, our thoughts are with his mother Julie, his sisters Ruth and Emily and his girlfriend Melissa; may they find the strength and courage to face the difficult days ahead."

Lieutenant Colonel James de Labillière DSO MBE RIFLES, Commanding Officer, 1 RIFLES, Combined Force Nahr-e-Saraj (South) said:

"Marine Fairbrother had made himself an institutional part of Check Point SAQRA, a shared checkpoint with the Afghan Uniformed Police in 1RIFLES area of operations. His patrol has experienced a roller-coaster of a tour, enjoying great success but also its share of tragedy over the last five months. I have been humbled by their resilience and professionalism and Marine Fairbrother quite evidently demonstrated both in everything he did. He was much admired, respected and liked, was bright as a button and possessed great character. He now joins those legends who by their work and sacrifice have made astonishing progress possible, and who will never be forgotten by their 1RIFLES brothers in arms. The thoughts and prayers of every member of the Combined Force are with his family and girlfriend Melissa, may they find the inner strength to cope with this most difficult of times."

Major Jase Durup Royal Marines, Officer Commanding, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Marine Dave Fairbrother was a young man with a mischievous smile, a glint in his eye and huge promise. We deployed together with the Advanced Party and shared a tent during theatre familiarisation training; from that day to this I can't recall many times when he didn't have his trademark 'Andy Cap' fag hanging out the corner of his mouth. By midway through the tour the moustache he had been trying to grow since the start was still more of a 'whimper' but he now resembled more of a 1930s 'Spiv'. Unsurprisingly, he has been a key component of the glue that has bound the men at Check Point SAQRA together through some extremely difficult times and his ability to raise a laugh amongst his comrades when the situation looked dire will be sorely missed. Marine Fairbrother excelled in all his endeavours, particularly as a metal detector operator for the Kilo Company All Arms Search Team. He has assisted in the finding of numerous Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and he has repeatedly placed himself at risk on search operations, without hesitation, carrying out difficult confirmations in high threat areas, a task requiring courage and skill. It was during such an operation, where his Multiple were providing force protection to allow our Afghan National Army partners to conduct a number of compound searches

that he was gunned down. Marine Fairbrother has made the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of justice and freedom for the Afghan people, he will never be forgotten and his resilience and tenacity will forever be an example to the 'Black Knights' who continue to take the fight to the enemy in the complex terrain of the 'Green Zone' in which we face them. Our thoughts and

prayers are with the loved ones he leaves behind at this unbearably difficult time.

"Once a 'Black Knight' always a 'Black Knight'."

Captain Chris Armstrong Royal Marines, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Selfless and utterly devoted to his job and friends, Marine Fairbrother represented the very best of the Kilo Company 'Black Knights'. Following the tragic loss of Marine 'Fish' Gill and Sergeant 'Baz' Weston, he was the cement that held his checkpoint together, ensuring his fellow Marines held strong and continued to stand toe-to-toe against a complex insurgent enemy which operated on the doorstep of Check Point SAQRA. His professional attitude was infectious and embodied the epitome of the Commando Spirit. Marine Fairbrother was everything you could have wanted as a Royal Marine and I had the honour to see him in action during a difficult casualty evacuation following an explosion. Despite the high risk of a further explosion and lethal threat to himself, he was the first to volunteer to move forward to the casualty; setting a courageous example which inspired us all that day. The loss of Marine Fairbrother is a severe blow to the Company and our thoughts are with his loved ones at this most dark and difficult hour."

Lieutenant Matt Davidson Royal Marines, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Marine Dave Fairbrother had been with our Multiple from the outset. He was definitely a character within the check point, giving us all a good laugh over the radio during radio watch. His eyes never seemed to miss a thing and he was always quick to make it known to all what he had seen; even if it was a local cat. His laid back attitude towards a job he clearly loved will never be forgotten. Never far away from a laugh and often the maker of many, he will leave behind a group of lads who will miss him greatly. It was a pleasure to have him with us and my thoughts go to all his loved ones in the UK."

Warrant Officer Second Class Jay Reed, Kilo Company Sergeant Major, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"I have known Dave Fairbrother since he joined the 'Black Knights'. He was a fellow Northerner who I enjoyed speaking to, when the opportunity presented itself. I don't think that he liked being around the Company Headquarters as he was smart and probably thought that he was going to get a job landed on his lap. Having said that, we shared a bunk bed upon our arrival in Afghanistan; he insisted that he got the top bunk even though he was the junior rank! Once a 'Black Knight' always a 'Black Knight'."

Sergeant Gavin Bage, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Marine Fairbrother epitomised what a Commando is all about; strong, cheerful and most of all highly professional. He was not only an invaluable member of Check Point SAQRA, but a very important asset to the Company search team. Dave always kept the Operations Room busy with his constant updates and later became known as the 'Multiple Base ISTAR' (intelligence system). Marine Fairbrother deployed on HERRICK 14 straight from recruit training but soon

adapted to the environment and was a key member of the team. He was liked by everyone who met him and will be missed by everyone who knew him. He will never be forgotten by the men of Kilo

Company and the Royal Marines. Our thoughts are with his family and friends that he leaves behind."

Sergeant Tim 'Knobby' Hall, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Dave was a Royal Marine dedicated to his job and to the friends he worked alongside within his Multiple; always professional and a real character to have around. I had the pleasure of working alongside Dave at Check Point SAQRA for a number of weeks at the start of the tour and he was great morale with his dry sense of humour. He was always keen and ready for any task. It is another sad loss to the Corps and he will be missed by all his friends at Kilo Company. My thoughts are with his family at this sad time."

Corporal Chris Hastings, Royal Military Police attached to Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Even though I had only worked with Dave for the duration of the tour I believe I got to know him well. There were many key points that reflect Dave and many things that were important to him. You could guarantee he would be chain smoking (in-between the occasional attempt at giving up) and recalling stories about his girlfriend and how she had hoped to join him on the mainland from Ireland. When he wasn't doing that he was concocting some delight in the oven or taking part in one of our numerous games we used to play. Dave was strong in battle and could always be relied upon. He will be sorely missed."

Corporal Mark Brassington, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"One of my lasting memories of Dave was when he reported over the radio a single man patrol of Taliban walking down a road which turned out to be the concrete pillars of a building. He always brought morale and a good laugh to the lads in Check Point SAQRA. Always a very professional soldier on the ground, he was everything you could have asked for in a Marine. As a Light Machine Gunner he was dependable; he had a good sense of humour and could have a good drip (complain) with the best of them! He will leave a big hole in the Multiple and Kilo Company; he will be sorely missed but never forgotten. We will remember him for the rest of the tour by watching his twin in Big Brother and playing 'where's Dave?' with the local lookalikes."

Lance Corporal Ben Faulkner, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Dave was a Light Machine Gunner you could always count on and a metal detector operator to keep us all safe on the ground with a fantastic imagination to keep us entertained when we were on the sangars. It was always a laugh for the lads on the ground when the local nationals would mistake him for the interpreter due to his tan and the Mexican style moustache he was sporting for the tour. You would always find a smile on Dave's face when he was on the phone

to his girlfriend. Dave is going to be missed by all within Kilo Company. All our thoughts at this time are with his family, friends and his much loved girlfriend."

Lance Corporal Robert Hill, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"David was an essential part of the callsign. He was never afraid of hard work and was a vital member of the patrol due to his alertness and ability to always remain suspicious of everything and everyone. David was chilled out to the point of horizontal and had a distinct laugh that remained monotone and infectious. He was a walking human surveillance asset with hawk-eyes who would even report something as small as a rat that was 'acting suspicious'. He was professional and methodical in everything he did and his searching as an All Arms Search Team member was impeccable. He loved his girlfriend very much and spoke very highly of her; he couldn't wait to see her again. A great individual who always entertained the lads, our thoughts go out to his girlfriend and family, he will be sorely missed."

Lance Corporal David Goodman, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Dave...What a legend, you made me laugh daily. You were without doubt one of the most interesting blokes I've ever had the pleasure of meeting. You would be talking about the patrol we had just done, then the next minute you would be telling me a peanut is not part of the nut family, but a part of the pea family and that is what I loved about you. I also loved the fact that nothing seemed to faze you, no matter how difficult times got. I could see how much you loved your girlfriend and family, because you would talk about them regularly; my thoughts and prayers are with them. You will be greatly missed here at Check Point SAQRA. I'll never forget you, rest easy mate."

Marine Robert Holbrook, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Dave was a high spirited character throughout any situation, showing composure and a relaxed nature with any given task. His witty sense of humour and a Northern chuckle rubbed off on all those around him as well as his chilled-out presence that made up such a large part of his character. The professional and skilled attitude that he possessed saw him become a key member of the All Arms Search Team. He had a keen eye and an ability to learn quickly, making him a very dependable individual. Dave will be sorely missed within the Multiple and his infectious laughter and lovable character will leave a large hole. Dave leaves behind a family and girlfriend; our thoughts are with them at this difficult time."

Marine Steven Harrington, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"I knew Dave from training, we passed out together. He always had a cheeky grin on his face and would often talk about his family and girlfriend. Always chilled-out but he would be professional when it counted. He will be missed; my thoughts go out to his family and girlfriend."

Marine Michael Bulman, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Dave Fairbrother; probably the most laid back bloke in NATO except when it came to his work, when he was the exact opposite. A big character, a big smile and a top bloke. My thoughts go out to his family and friends. Dave will be hugely missed by all who knew him. Rest in peace mate."

Lance Bombardier David Heydenrych, 148 Battery, 29 Commando Royal Artillery said:

"Marine Fairbrother will always be remembered by his wide, happy grin which could be seen throughout any patrol. Dave was reliable on the ground and knew his job well. It is with great regret that we had to say goodbye to him today, he will always be with us. Our thoughts are with his family. Dave will be missed dearly."

Marine Guy Lewis, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Dave was always full of energy and seen with a smile on his face; even when the times were bad. There was never a dull moment when Dave was around, he was always happy to have a laugh, even if it was at himself. Our thoughts are with his family and friends."

Marine Richard Cashmore, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Dave was one of the most chilled-out and laid back people I have ever met, but at the same time the best Marine I have ever met. He was always fun to listen to with the things he had to say. He would never complain; he would just get on with it with a big grin on his face. When morale was down he would just laugh and we would start laughing. He was a massive part of the Multiple and will not be forgotten. My thoughts are with his family and friends."

Marine Joshua Rodriguez, Kilo Company 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"I first met Dave when he moved into my flat back at Bickleigh last summer. His memorable Northern accent and laugh were always apparent around the grot (room) and seemed to grow stronger as the tour progressed. Always keen and never one to drip (complain) about carrying kit, his enthusiasm as a Bootneck was second to none. His enthusiasm sometimes backfired though and we will all have dits (stories) to remember him by which will make us all smile. Always topping up his tan around the Check Point, he was often mistaken for the interpreter by the local kids, much to his annoyance, and our amusement. Our thoughts are with his family and girlfriend, Rest In Peace Royal."

Marine Brendon Agnew, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"In my short time at the Check Point I had gotten to know Dave pretty well as we were always on the same wavelength. He always seemed to be happy and smiling, telling me about his Irish girlfriend and his friend who lived in India who he intended to visit on post operational leave. My thoughts go out to his girlfriend, family and friends. Rest In Peace Royal."

Marine Matt Simmons, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"I first met Dave back at Bickleigh Barracks when he joined our Multiple and we went through pre-deployment training together. Dave 'ISTAR' Fairbrother on sangars was amazing and would ping everything from Taliban patrols to dodgy goat herders. We will miss you Dave, mate. My thoughts are with your family and girlfriend."