

21 Engineer Regiment

Lance Corporal Barry Buxton, aged 27, from Meir, Stoke-on-Trent, enlisted into the Royal Engineers on 2 January 2002 as a Design Draughtsman, later re-training as an Armoured Engineer.

He joined 21 Engineer Regiment in Ripon on 16 November 2009.

Lance Corporal Buxton had previously served with 25 Engineer Regiment in Ireland and 22 Engineer Regiment in Tidworth.

He deployed to Iraq on Operation TELIC in 2006 and to Canada on Exercise MEDICINE MAN in autumn 2009.

Immediately prior to deploying on Operation HERRICK 12, he completed the Armoured Engineer Class 1 course.

Lance Corporal Buxton deployed on Operation HERRICK 12 in March 2010 as the second-in-command of a field section in 1st Armoured Engineer Squadron. As well as completing combat engineer tasks, his section formed the Squadron's mobility group and were used to escort personnel, equipment and vital engineering materiel within the Nad-e Ali area.

On 3 May 2010 he was commanding a vehicle during a move between Patrol Base SHAWQAT and Patrol Base SHAHEED in order to conduct a technical reconnaissance for a future bridge building project which would increase freedom of movement to hundreds of local nationals.

Whilst driving alongside the Nahr-e Bughra canal, the road collapsed causing his vehicle to roll into the canal. The heroic efforts of his fellow Sappers managed to free him from the submerged vehicle, but he was pronounced dead soon after arriving at the UK hospital in Camp Bastion.

Lance Corporal Buxton leaves behind his wife Emma who lives in Meir, Stoke-on-Trent.

Lieutenant Colonel Bobby Walton-Knight, Commanding Officer 21 Engineer Regiment said:

"Lance Corporal Buxton was a great soldier and a fine man.

"Friendly and outgoing with a keen sense of humour, he had only been in the Regiment a short time but had quickly made his mark. He was an inspirational Junior Non-Commissioned Officer, respected by his men and trusted by his commanders.

"He had a bright future ahead of him: confident and capable, he would have gone a long way.

"Among his many talents, he was known for his fitness and determination. He would rise to every challenge and particularly relished tough physical activity: running, biking, skiing, kayaking, he could do them all and he could do them to an exceptional standard.

"In 2008 he represented the Royal Engineers in the gruelling Devizes to Westminster canoe race picking up the trophies for the fastest Army and the fastest Services' time.

"A true professional and a friend to all who knew him, he will be sorely missed by the Regiment. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Emma, his family and his many friends."

Major David Ellison, Officer Commanding 1st Armoured Engineer Squadron said:

"Lance Corporal Barry Buxton endeared himself to all within the Squadron. He was a good humoured and fun loving character and it was clear we were lucky that he had been posted to our unit.

"Both intelligent and articulate, his was a young life with huge promise.

"He had drive and determination in abundance. Utterly selfless, he would be the first to offer assistance to those around him, never shying from the tough jobs or expecting more of others than he would give himself.

"He was a talented sportsman and whilst he had an infectious enthusiasm for all things active, he was also modest to a fault.

"With such a broad array of qualities he was destined for an extremely successful military career. His loss has left a big gap in the Squadron and one that will be hard to fill.

"All our thoughts now are with Barry's family, and in particular with his wife Emma."

Lieutenant Gareth Lloyd-Davies, Troop Commander, 1 Troop, 1st Armoured Engineer Squadron said:

"Being able to spend time with soldiers like Lance Corporal Barry Buxton is one of the main reasons I joined the Army.

"He was a true professional and a popular member of the troop. Fiercely intelligent, he was a constant source of bright ideas, and whilst some were more a source of humour than practical reality, his drive and initiative were an inspiration to all.

"A personal man, when back in the UK he was always keen to spend time with his family, particularly Emma, rushing home at every available opportunity.

"None the less, he always found room for others and gave generously of his time to those who

required his support.

"Always at the heart of fun and banter within the troop, his was among the thinnest of moustaches that have taken root since the start of the tour.

"I will always have fond memories of Barry, his passing leaves a void in all our lives and our thoughts and prayers are now with his friends and family."

Staff Sergeant Tolcher, Troop Staff Sergeant, 1 Troop, 1st Armoured Engineer Squadron said:

"LCpl Barry Buxton was a professional and conscientious soldier. Extremely proud of being an Armoured Engineer, he would say: "There's only one Engineer, and that's an Armoured Engineer".

"Resolute and steadfast, Barry was a no fuss soldier who just got on with the job. I am truly grateful to have worked with him and he will be sorely missed by everyone in the Troop.

"Our thoughts are with his wife and family that he leaves behind."

Corporal Walters, Section Commander, 1 Troop, 1st Armoured Engineer Squadron said:

"LCpl Barry Buxton, Baz to his mates, was a strong and dependable soldier.

"Although recently posted in to the Squadron, and new in my section, Baz soon found his feet and settled in.

"He had an uncanny knack of being able to make those around him laugh regardless of what he was talking about.

"Baz was never shy in coming forward.

"He used his knowledge and experience to get the job done. Baz would never give up and he always saw a job through to the end.

"He has left a lasting impression on all those he worked with.

"His tragic and untimely passing has shocked everyone who knew him; particularly his friends in the section.

"He has left a huge gap that will be very hard to fill.

"Our thoughts are with his wife, Emma, and his family and friends."