

Lance Corporal Stephen Daniel Monkhouse was born in Greenock, Scotland, and lived with his mother, Linda Watt, in his town of birth. He was 28 years old, was a father to Brandon and an older brother to Allan, Ashleigh and Stacey. He began his Army training in December 2003 and subsequently joined the 1st Battalion Scots Guards in Germany in 2004.

He immediately deployed as a Warrior Driver in Right Flank to Iraq on Operation TELIC 5. It was during his time with Right Flank that he developed a reputation as an immensely fit and robust infantry soldier. After a brief spell with B (Support Weapons) Company as a Mortarman, he decided to join the Pipes and Drums despite having, by his own admission, no musical knowledge. He passed his Class 3 Drummers Course in 2007 and his Class 2 Drummers Course in 2008, both at the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming, and with flying colours.

Having passed a Junior Non Commissioned Officers' Cadre he was promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal in March 2009. He remained in the Pipes and Drums and regularly represented the Regiment and Battalion at musical events. These events included Pipe Band tours of Moscow in 2007, USA in 2009 and the Edinburgh Military Tattoo in 2006 and 2009. He was also a key member of the Battalion's football team. His unflinching and passionate support for Celtic Football Club could never be dampened.

He was later selected to be a member of the Commanding Officer's Tactical Group for Operation HERRICK 12 and deployed to Afghanistan at the beginning of July as part of Combined Force Lashkar Gar.

Lance Corporal Monkhouse's family paid the following tribute to him:

"'Although Stephen died in very tragic circumstances, it is comforting to know that he died doing a job he loved – being a soldier. He loved the Army and the Scots Guards. He died trying to help save another life, that sums Stephen up. He loved life and lived it to the full and his memory will live on with us and his friends forever. God bless you son."
Lieutenant Colonel Lincoln Jopp MC, Commanding Officer 1st Battalion Scots Guards said:

"I have known Lance Corporal Monkhouse, or "Monkey" as he was known by everyone, ever since he walked through the door of my company office in Germany back just before we left for operations in Iraq in 2004. He made an immediate impression. Tall, gangling and with a nose nearly as big as his ever-present smile.

"He did well as a Guardsman, but it was only when he moved up into the Pipes and Drums and became Drummer Monkhouse that he really shone. In fact, he excelled. He passed every course we sent him on and was made a Lance Corporal in 2009. He loved his drumming and only a week before he was killed, he proudly played here in Lashkar Gah for our Colonel, His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent.

"Out here in Afghanistan, Monkey was part of my Tactical Group which meant driving around all over the area meeting Afghans and seeing the troops. He was the heavy machine gunner of our lead vehicle and had not only mastered that role, but was also our expert on detecting Improvised Explosive Devices. Consummate soldier by day and, on his practice pad back in the tent, paradiddler by night. But always a proud father, son and brother, and a true friend to all.

"Ten minutes before he was killed, Lance Corporal Monkhouse was eagerly telling me about his plans for R & R. To see his son, to see his family and to see his friends back in Greenock. The whole of the Battalion and the wider Regimental family join me in sending our sincerest condolences to his young son Brandon, his parents Billy and Linda, his wider family and all his many friends. Greenock lost one of its finest last night.

"Monkey died coming to the aid of a Guardsman who had been shot. He did what every soldier hopes he will have the courage to do if the need arises: he laid down his life for his friend. We salute him and we honour our fallen."

Pipe Major Brian Heriot, 1st Battalion Scots Guards said:

"Lance Corporal Monkhouse or "Monkey" as he was known to his friends was a shining example of how with determination and ambition you can achieve your goals. He joined the

Pipes & Drums in 2007 with no prior experience or knowledge of drumming. He quickly learned what it takes to be a drummer. He passed his drummers' courses with ease and as well as being proficient on the side drum he also turned his hand to other disciplines in the Drum Corps and would often "Sling up the Bass" when needed with little difficulty.

"The Pipes & Drums are a close knit team and I know I speak for all of the boys when I say we have lost one of our most charismatic and enjoyable characters, always at the forefront of anything that was going on and usually the instigator of any practical jokes.

"Monkey's ambition to be Drum Major one day is one that he would have undoubtedly realised given his never faltering sense of determination and drive. The Pipes & Drums have not only lost a fine non-commissioned officer and an accomplished drummer, but a true brother and friend."

Lance Corporal Terry Brown, 1st Battalion Scots Guards said:

"Lance Corporal Monkhouse, Monkey to those of us fortunate enough to call him our friend, will be remembered for his infectious sense of humour, always laughing and joking or quoting Lee Evans and Borat. However, he will also be remembered for his love of his son, Brandon, who he absolutely adored. All he spoke of during this deployment was getting back to see the wee man. He had a great passion for cars and football. He loved Celtic Football Club and we will always remember Monkey stood in a sea of Rangers fans at a pre-season friendly match between Rangers and Munster; Monkey with his Celtic shirt on singing away and smiling as the boys gave him a ribbing. A much loved member of the Pipes and Drums, you will be sorely missed my friend."