

MARINE SAMUEL GILES WILLIAM ALEXANDER MC

JULIET COMPANY 42 COMMANDO ROYAL MARINES - COMBINED FORCE NAD-E ALI (NORTH)

Marine Sam Alexander MC was born on 16 June 1982 in Hammersmith, London, where he grew up with his mother, Serena, father Stuart and sister, Sophie. He was married to Claire in November 2009 and their son Leo was born in July 2010.

He joined the Royal Marines in July 2006 and passed fit for duty in October 2007. On completion of training, Marine Alexander MC was appointed to the Fire Support Group in Mike Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines. He later moved to Kilo Company and deployed on Operation HERRICK 9, during which he was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry. On his return from operations he trained as a Heavy Weapons (Anti-Tank) specialist and was appointed to Juliet Company, before returning to Afghanistan for Operation HERRICK 14.

On Friday 27 May 2011 Marine Alexander MC was part of a patrol, operating in the Loy Mandeh area of the Nad-e Ali district in Helmand province. His patrol was tasked to disrupt insurgent activity in their perceived rear area and provide depth to the Clear, Hold, Build Operation occurring to the North in Loy Mandeh Kalay further to expand the influence of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. During that patrol Marine Alexander MC was fatally injured in an Improvised Explosive Device blast that also claimed the life of Lieutenant Ollie Augustin, Royal Marines.

Claire, Marine Alexander's wife, said:

"Sam was so special. He was the gentlest of men but tough when he needed to be. He risked his safety for his friends but never batted an eyelid. It was his job and a job he did well. Sam was a loving husband and a wonderful father. He was our rock and my best friend. He has been taken from me all too soon. We both love him and will miss him very much. These are all special guys who, for whatever reason, join a very tough band of blokes who willingly die for each other without a second thought. I just hope his death was not in vain"

Stuart, Marine Alexander's father, said:

"Sam's professionalism was widely acknowledged, the award of a Military Cross is testament to his courage and care for those around him. But it is as a father and husband that he showed the same deep-rooted wish always to help and care for others. People say I must be very proud, but the respect in which I held him was more important than pride. He was a great guy with a great smile and a zest for life. I loved him very much."

Serena, Marine Alexander's mother, said:

"The legacy that Sam leaves is hope - hope for oppressed people all over the World. There are people like Sam who risk their lives for others. Wherever you are now Sam, keep on fighting. You will never be forgotten".

Lieutenant Colonel Ewen Murchison MBE, Commanding Officer 42 Commando Royal Marines, Coalition Force Nad-e Ali (North), said:

"Marine Sam Alexander MC was a truly remarkable young man. Decorated during his last tour of Afghanistan for gallantry, he embodied all the finest attributes of a Royal Marines Commando: he was courageous, selfless, resolute, loyal and cheerful in the face of adversity. The loss of such a professional and well respected Marine comes as shocking news; he was a larger than life character and leaves a gap that cannot be filled. One of the more senior Marines in Juliet Company, he inspired those around him to reach the highest possible standards and in doing so was an exemplary role model for those younger and less experienced than himself. He led by example and from the front and would have unquestionably had a promising future in the Royal Marines ahead of him. Sadly this will not be realised as his life has been tragically cut short. Instead, Marine Alexander now joins the legends, the bravest of the brave, who inspire us all forever with their courage, dedication and sacrifice; his memory will endure. On this the darkest of days, our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Claire, their son Leo and his parents Stuart and Serena; may they somehow find the strength and courage to face the days ahead."

Major Steven McCulley, Officer Commanding, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Marine Sam Alexander MC was one of Juliet Company's most experienced and professional Marines. Not only was he a Heavy Weapons specialist, but also a Sharpshooter; a qualification he took much pride in. Having been awarded the Military Cross for bravery on Operation HERRICK 9, the lads looked up to him and he could be relied upon to galvanise them when required. An unbearable loss of life, he will be deeply missed by all of us."

Captain Rob Garside, Company Intelligence Officer, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Marine Alexander MC was one of the most experienced Marines in the Company. Having completed a previous HERRICK Tour, it was clear that more junior ranks looked up to him. A Bootneck that everyone would want

to be by his side in a firefight, Sam Alexander was a true operational Bootneck who carried out his duties to the highest of standards. He will be sorely missed by all in Juliet Company and our thoughts are with his young family."

Warrant Officer Class 2 Andy Place, Company Sergeant Major, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Marine Sam Alexander MC was always the first man to volunteer for any detail. His professional attitude towards all military skills was infectious to the junior Marines within Juliet Company. Always proud to be a part of Fire Support Group, Juliet Company, 'Jesters'; his attitude was that of a 'big man trapped in a small body'. His tragic death will hit the Company hard, however he would not want to be the cause of any drop in excellence. My thoughts go to his wife, son and family. See you on the re-org Royal."

Corporal Phillip Willis, 1 Troop, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Sam was one of those Bootneck's who was able to have a smile on his face no matter what the situation. Most days he would have something funny to say; out here it was that my eyebrows looked awesome as they have gone bleached blonde. He would say I looked like a super hero which would always make us laugh. Sam was a good person, a Bootneck showing all the qualities that a good Bootneck should have; cheerfulness in the face of adversity, selflessness, courage and determination."

Lance Corporal Christopher Watson, 1 Troop, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Sam was one of those men who due to his experience everyone looked up to and respected regardless of rank. He always made the time to help the more junior Marines, and treated them with the same level of respect they afforded him. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him and will be fondly remembered as the perfect Marine, as a great laugh and as a Great Man."

Lance Corporal Adam Perkins, 2 Troop, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Marine Alexander MC was a member of my Troop throughout training and ever since we have always crossed paths; since deploying on Operation HERRICK 9, and more recently Operation HERRICK 14. Sam was a character who never dropped his smile or charms, either on camp, in the accommodation or in the field. He was a lad who would never say no and

would do anything for anyone. My thoughts are with his son Leo and wife Claire. Rest in Peace mate."

Leading Medical Assistant Chris Jones, Juliet Company Medic, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"I first met Marine Alexander MC during Operation HERRICK 9 when I was attached to his section. I remember he made me feel welcome and we laughed and joked about me being a Matelot out in the field. Sammy was awarded a Military Cross during Operation HERRICK 9 which is a testament to his bravery. Only a few days ago he jokingly said to me that we had a habit of being in sticky situations together. Apart from operations, I didn't know Sammy as well as others but I do know he was a humble guy, a very proud Royal Marine and a man I will always look up to. No two ways about it, Marine Sam Alexander MC was a hero, a legend who will never be forgotten. My thoughts and prayers are with his family. Rest in Peace Sam, you will be sadly missed."

Marine Jason Badham, 1 Troop, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Marine Alexander MC, a true hero, always full of morale, a real inspiration to us all and he will be greatly missed."

Marine Ross McIlduff & Marine Joshua Best, 1 Troop, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Marine Alexander MC epitomised a Royal Marine, always looking out for an oppo (opposite number), always first to give a hand and always lifted morale. He always carried out his job to the highest standards. A true Soldier. He always had some good 'dits' to spin to the lads and was a guaranteed 'Hoofing run ashore'; there was never a boring night with Sam. Sam will always be remembered for what he has done and will always be a 'Jester'. Our prayers and thoughts go out to his family."

Marine Michael Chapman, Fire Support Group, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"I have only known Sam for about 6 months since joining Juliet Company, I was expecting a hoofing, courageous, selfless Bootneck after hearing about his Military Cross; and that is exactly what he was. He would always be the first to the stand-to position in order to protect everyone else. Even with so much to lose, i.e. his wife Claire and his future Formula One driver son, Leo. He was perfect for all occasions, if it be for a one on one welfare discussion or generally being the centre of a conversation; although his Formula One dits were sometimes ideal

for sending you to sleep! Not forgetting his run ashore dits, the Pringle saying 'once you pop, you can't stop,' was a perfect way to describe his drinking style. Although, he wouldn't let the beer defeat him, he would always soldier on to sun-uppers, or was adamant of making his way home to annoy his wife Claire; If that was the case, he would come into work the next day with his tail between his legs like a naughty dog. He was a truly a great asset to the Corps and will clearly be missed by many. An absolute professional."

Marine Louis Nethercott, Fire Support Group, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"To sum up Sam: A truly courageous and professional soldier."

Marine Liam Kelly, Fire Support Group, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Sam was one of the best and most professional Marines I have ever worked with. Having been in Fire Support Group with him since I arrived in the Unit 2 years ago after passing out, he was always on hand to give me advice on anything. I can say I have learnt a lot from him, especially from the time I spent with him on Operation HERRICK 14. Sam was very courageous and always first to volunteer for anything. Aside from being a real hand grenade ashore, and his horrendous Formula One dits; it was an honour to work alongside him. He will be sadly missed and our hearts go out to his wife Claire and son Leo."

Marine Brett Newman, Fire Support Group, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Marine Sam Alexander MC was a credit to the Corps, he was always having a laugh and a joke with the lads and his daily complaints never failed to amuse. He thought the world of his wife and son, Leo, who Sam thought would be the next Lewis Hamilton; despite the fact he was still in nappies. He was a very good mentor to the new lads. One of my last memories of Sam was just before we started this Operation, we were all sat in our room packing our kit and we were all laughing at the fact that Sam couldn't pick up his Bergen. He was morale and he will be greatly missed amongst the lads."

Marine Matthew Smith, Headquarters, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Sam Alexander; what a bloke. As the Company Clerk, or spy as the lads like to call me, I get to know most of the lads pretty well. Sam was one of those who would always be a friendly face and always lots of morale."

He would always come up with a witty one liner or 'dit' that would instantly make you smile or burst out with laughter. The most recent memory I have of him is being in a resupply to his Check Point; with the stores being offloaded and Sam at the front, I can remember him breaking into song about nothing in particular, other than the fact that they were unloading stores. Quality. He was an amazing lad and a top Bootneck, with the medals to prove it, and I will never forget him. Corps legend through and through, my thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends. Rest in Peace mate. 'Prove Jokers'."

Marine Owen Blake & Marine Dale Monk, Recce Troop, Command Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Both Dale and I had the pleasure of serving with Sam in Kilo Company for the duration of Operation HERRICK 9. We were both present on the day in Majah where Sam won his Military Cross for valiant action that heavily contributed to saving the life of his Section Commander. The Officer Commanding afterwards said that all the men that day were worthy of the award but those that were present all knew that the courage required to do what Sam did was way above what can be expected of an ordinary man. To run into open ground in direct enemy fire, effectively suppressing the enemy, while his fallen Section Commander was extracted just proved what all his colleagues already knew, that Sam was an exceptional soldier with the heart of a lion. During Post Operational Tour Leave and over a few 'wets' Sam casually played down his award stating he was only doing his job; in the years since he has never showed off or acted on his award. This sums Sam up to a 'T', a modest man and exceptional soldier and a Bootneck that many aspire to emulate. He will be truly missed."

Marine Sam Magowan, Fire Support Group, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"Sam, the most inspirational Marine I have met. You will be missed by all. Rest in Peace."

The entire Fire Support Group, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"A selfless decorated Marine who all aspired to emulate. A true Bootneck in every sense of the word, and a proud father. Fiercely loyal to all lucky enough to be called his friend. You can never be replaced and will never be forgotten."

The entire 2 Troop, Juliet Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, said:

"We can remember when he came back to work after the birth of his boy and telling everyone how proud it made him; and then there was the Friday night DJ sessions in the accommodation that everyone loved (Gen!). Or just his general enthusiasm for his job and the effort he put into the lads; the Military Cross awarded to him on Operation HERRICK 9 proves this tenfold. Our thoughts go out to his family at this time. Rest in Peace Royal."