

LANCE CORPORAL MARTIN JOSEPH GILL

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

Lance Corporal Martin Gill was born on 14 August 1988 and grew up in Nottingham, where he lived with his brother, John and his sister, Rebecca.

Lance Corporal Martin Gill joined the Royal Marines in April 2008 and passed fit for duty in May 2009. On completion of training, he was appointed to the Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines. Within a year he was promoted to Lance Corporal and took responsibility of a four man team guarding the UK's nuclear deterrent. He subsequently moved to Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines in September 2010, where he assumed the role of Section Second in Command. During his tenure, he regularly stepped up to take on the role of Section Commander and his professionalism and enthusiasm were visible for all to see.

He was a keen individual who had a real passion for life. He was extremely physically fit and swam for his County before joining the Royal Marines. His passion for swimming continued within the Corps, swimming for the 42 Commando Unit Team at every opportunity.

On Sunday 5 June 2011 Lance Corporal Martin Gill deployed with his Multiple as part of a patrol in the area of Adensee in the Nahr-e-Saraj (South) district in Helmand Province. The aim of the patrol was to assess the atmospherics, meet and talk to local nationals and disrupt insurgent activity in the area, in preparation for future operations. The Multiple were an hour into their patrol when they were engaged by small arms fire from a nearby compound. Lance Corporal Gill was hit and fatally wounded and despite being administered immediate first aid, tragically died of his wounds.

He leaves behind his brother John, sister Rebecca, and girlfriend Lauren, who said:

"Martin Joseph Gill was proud to be a Royal Marine. He was always up for a challenge and unfortunately died doing what he had always wanted to do. He was the life and soul of every party, beloved and cherished by everyone. Martin will be deeply loved and missed forever. Rebecca, John-Daniel and Lauren xxxxxx"

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

"Lance Corporal Martin Gill or 'Fish' as he was known by his mates, was a Marine of rare quality. Despite his mum dying only weeks before the start of the tour, he was exceptionally keen to deploy; this was the mark of the man: passionate and dedicated to his profession and utterly loyal to his friends and fellow Marines. Joining the Unit last September, he immediately stood out, impressing with his first class professional standards, innate leadership skills and unrivalled spirit and determination. As a result he was promoted to Lance Corporal only 3

months later, a clear indication of his considerable ability and potential; he undoubtedly had a bright future ahead of him.

"His friends described him as morale in a box. Only last week he made an Afghanistan Monopoly board to keep his colleagues entertained; he was quick-witted and a constant source of banter. A real team player, he was the first to volunteer for the most challenging tasks and was an immensely popular and characterful member of Kilo Company. The eulogies written by his friends more than bear this out - they looked up to him and loved him like a brother. A true hero, he died taking the fight to the enemy in the finest traditions of the Royal Marines: selfless, resolute and courageous to the end, he now joins the distinguished list of Corps legends and will be sorely missed, but his sacrifice will be remembered for all time.

"The death of Lance Corporal Gill is an appalling tragedy and today is a truly sad day for 42 Commando. We have lost a brave young Marine and it has hit the Unit hard. However, our grief is nothing compared to that of his loved ones; at this most testing time our thoughts and prayers are with his brother John, sister Rebecca and girlfriend Lauren; may they find the strength and courage to face the difficult days ahead."

Lieutenant Colonel James de Labillière DSO MBE, Commanding Officer 1st Battalion, The Rifles, Coalition Force Nahr-e-Saraj (South) said:

"Lance Corporal Gill had been operating as a member of Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines within the 1RIFLES Battle Group in Nahr-e-Saraj for just under 2 months. At the time of his death he and his Multiple had already conducted some spectacular work, both partnering the Afghan Police and clearing out pockets of insurgents who were destroying the local community. His contribution as a commander was vital in these early successes, and his commitment, bravery and selflessness in making other people's lives better was second to none. His sacrifice will not go wasted and this evening I witnessed the resolve of his close knit team to step back out and continue the great strides of progress they had made together already. Lance Corporal Gill was quite evidently a remarkable commander, Royal Marine and friend to many. In this impossibly difficult time, our thoughts and prayers go to his loved ones and family who once again, in too short a period of time for any family to have to bear, have to deal with such enormous tragedy.

"Swift and Bold – we honour you and will never forget you."

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

"Lance Corporal Gill, also known as 'Fish', joined the 'Black Knights' of Kilo Company in

September 2010 and made an immediate impression. His professionalism and personality made him stand out from his peers and within months of arriving he had been selected for promotion to Lance Corporal. He was a man of many contrasts; after a full day of training, 'Fish' would spend his evenings relaxing in the accommodation at Bickleigh with scented candles whilst listening to whale music and wearing his pink fluffy slippers. As a Section Second In Command, and a Multiple Third In Command 'Fish' led from the front: when he wasn't on point he was providing cover to the VALLON man and it was in these circumstances that he was gunned down. 'Fish' was devoted to two families: Kilo Company, and his own. Tragically his mother died only a month before he deployed and he and his girlfriend Lauren became the bedrock for his two younger siblings; the thoughts of all the 'Black Knights' are with John and Rebecca for the loss of the brother that we shared with them."

Lieutenant Matt Davidson Royal Marines, Officer Commanding Check Point SAQRA, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Lance Corporal Gill, or 'Fish' as we all knew him, was a highly professional and well liked member of the Multiple. He was always the source of morale around the table, never failing to disappoint with his 'dit spinning' sessions. 'Fish' was an easily likeable character and I got to know him well during his time here at Check Point SAQRA. He and I shared similar motives in life and his loss is great to both myself and the lads. He leaves a void in our Multiple which will never be filled. My thoughts are with all those loved ones he leaves behind. Take care 'Fish'."

Warrant Officer Class 2 Jay Reed Royal Marines, Company Sergeant Major, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Lance Corporal 'Fish' Gill joined Kilo Company shortly after myself, and instantly I had an affinity with him as we were both the new boys in town. He quickly established himself as a Black Knight and displayed all of the exacting standards expected. In doing so, he was rapidly promoted to Lance Corporal. I enjoyed his dry humour, which never failed to raise a smile. My thoughts go out to his family during this difficult time."

"Once a Black Knight, always a Black Knight".

Colour Sergeant Scott Ferguson, Company Quartermaster, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Lance Corporal Gill, 'Fish', embodied the finest attributes of a Royal Marine Commando. He displayed selflessness, courage and loyalty throughout his time within Kilo Company. 'Fish' was a true family man who had endured so much over the last few months. He was always willing others to smile with his cheeky grin. The butt of many a joke and maker of more, he maintained a type of morale that hopefully we can sustain throughout the remainder of our tour. Our thoughts are with his friends and family at this sad time. See you at the other side Royal."

Sergeant Baz Weston, Check Point SAQRA Troop Sergeant, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"'Fish' was an outstanding Royal Marines Commando. He was the Troop Sharpshooter, not just because he was a good shot, but because of his thorough professionalism, diligence and focus on every task set. He was always the first to move to an over watch position to keep the Troop protected, and always second in the patrol to keep the VALLON man protected. Selfless in his courage, a true 'Oppo' to everyone in the Troop and he will be sorely missed."

Sergeant Steve McCrum, Multiple Commander, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Lance Corporal Martin 'Fish' Gill was a true inspiration to work with. Throughout Pre-Deployment Training and on HERRICK 14 he gave 110%, and was the epitome of a Royal Marine Junior Non Commissioned Officer. As a multiple Third In Command 'Fish' always led from the front and was always first to volunteer for any task that was required. It was a pleasure to have spent down time with 'Fish' as he had a wicked sense of humour and could always be found watching the series 'Friends' with a cup of green tea in hand. It has been an honour to have known and worked alongside 'Fish' and my thoughts and love go out to his family and friends, and anyone who had the privilege to have known him. It is a very sad and sombre day for the Black Knights of Kilo Company, 42 Commando. Rest in Peace my friend."

Corporal Dez Withall, Multiple Second In Command, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"I only really got to know 'Fish' at our Check Point. We had worked together throughout Pre-Deployment Training, and that's when I discovered how useful he was to the Multiple. He was always the first ready for a patrol and the first at the front gate scanning the ground. When on patrol he would always be up with the point man protecting him and offering friendly advice when needed. In addition to his constant eagerness on the ground, he did, without doubt have the best 'tash' in the Check Point, if not the whole Company. He would often talk about his family and his girlfriend (Lauren) and how much he missed them and what he was going to do when he returned home. 'Fish', you are going to be missed mate, not only at the Check Point but in the Company. This is such a tragic loss to such a good bloke. Our thoughts are with Lauren and his family at this hard time."

Lance Corporal Sammy Fretton, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Lance Corporal Gill 'Fish' was a true gent and the best oppo anyone could ask for. He was so hooving I was able to see past the fact he was northern. His resilience and ability to crack on regardless put him a cut above most and was genuinely inspiring. As a Bootneck everything he did, he did to an impeccable standard, but with his dry wit a good bit of banter was never far away. On completion of the tour, 'Fish' was planning to come down and we were going to watch Watford v Notts Forest. That game would have been challenging enough to sit through with him there. Lance Corporal Gill leaves an unfillable hole in my heart, the hearts of those who knew him and within the Corps itself. 'Fish' you will never be forgotten."

Marine Michael Bulman, Multiple 4, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"'Fish' was a proper 'lads' marine. He was always spinning hoofing dits and brought bags of morale to the Check Point. I hadn't known 'Fish' for that long but soon had a big admiration for the way he worked as a Lance Corporal. He would always get around the lads to see if there was anything they needed or any issues they wanted him to bring up or sort out. I am extremely proud to have worked with him and to have known him as a friend and as a fellow Marine. He will be sorely missed. Rest in Peace Royal."

Marine Matthew Simmonds, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"I first met 'Fish' when he joined Kilo Company from Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines. The main thing I remember about him was going into his grot (cabin) back in Bickleigh drinking jasmine tea and him lighting scented candles. I got to know 'Fish' well on Pre-Deployment Training where we were put into the same multiple and we had some hoofing banter about his little friend Jumbie. 'Fish' was an all round hoofing bloke. He will be sorely missed within the Company and the Corps. My thoughts are with his family and his girlfriend Lauren."

Marine Stephen Harrington, Multiple 4, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"'Fish' was a hoofing Royal Marine. As point man, he would watch out for me as I looked for ground sign. His enthusiasm and professionalism made me feel reassured. He was easy to get on with and always lifted morale with his dits of water sports with his girlfriend, or his love of rain and whale music. 'Fish' was truly inspirational and was looked up to by the younger lads. He will be sorely missed, not only by those at Check Point SAQRA, but the Company. My thoughts go out to his family back home."

Marine Andrew Ross, Multiple 4, Kilo Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Martin Gill was by far the best example of a loving caring dedicated Royal Marine, who loved his job, his family and his friends. He was always happy and always put on a positive out look on the situation no matter how great the odds were against him. He was the silver lining with the cheeky grin no matter how big the storm. Originally from Nottingham, 'Fish' was a very family oriented person, speaking about his younger brother, sister and also his girlfriend all the time. He was a 'live for the moment' kind of guy, telling me a story once about how he was meant to go and buy a house and ended up with a new car, as you do. Martin was a good friend and will be greatly missed by everybody who knew him. All our thoughts go to his family. Martin Gill, you will not be forgotten."

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

"Lance Corporal Martin 'Fish' Gill was one of the best Marines I have known and worked with. Always leading by example and never shy to help out the lads. 'Fish' was a true Bootneck, who for anyone to have known him would be proud to wear a green lid. One of the biggest 'Friends' fans I have met, it seems that's the only TV series he watched (again and again). Not only was his taste in TV a subject of ridicule, so was his going ashore rig. He looked more like a pimp queen with necklaces, earrings and accessories. Not only a hoofing Marine, but also one of the best blokes I have met. He will be sorely missed. All our thoughts are with his family and his

girlfriend Lauren."