

Hall of Fame

JAMES BLUNT



James Hillier Blount better known by his stage name James Blunt was born 22 February 1974 in Tidworth, Wiltshire in an army hospital. He was the first child born to Jane A.F. (nee Amos) and Charles Blount. He spent his early childhood living in England, Cyprus and Germany where his father a Colonel in the British Army Air Corps and military helicopter pilot was stationed at various times.

The Blount family has a long history of military service, supposedly dating from the 10th century. He earned his pilot's license when he was 16, he also has a keen interest in motorcycles learning to ride when he was 15.

James was educated at Elstree School in Woolhampton, Berkshire, then going on to Harrow School in Harrow on the Hill in north-west London (Elmfield House) on an army bursary. He gained an army-sponsored place at the University of Bristol where he studied aerospace manufacturing engineering then moved on to study sociology. He graduated with a BSc in sociology in 1996.

As the British Army sponsored his University education he was obliged to serve a minimum of four years in the armed forces. He trained at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, he was commissioned to second Lieutenant in the Life Guards a unit of the Household Cavalry, where he rose to the rank of Captain.

He stood guard at the coffin of the Queen Mother during her days of lying in State and was part of the funeral procession in 2002. He left the Army on 1 October 2002 having served six years.

James took piano and violin lessons as a child with his first significant exposure to music being at Harrow School. He was introduced to the guitar by a fellow student and started playing and writing songs at age 14.

James left the army so he could pursue his musical career. It was at this stage he started using his stage name "Blunt". He was signed to EMI music publishers and to Twenty-First Artists management. A record contract remained elusive due to his posh speaking voice according to recording label executives being a barrier in class-divided Britain until Linda Perry who launched her own label in 2003 heard his promotional tape and heard him

perform live at the South by Southwest Musical Festival. An offer to him was made that same night by Linda and within a few days James signed a recording contract with her and one month later he was working in Los Angeles.

As of February 2011 James' record sales was over 1 million copies worldwide.

James has raised funds for the medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières through benefit concerts. He also supports environmental causes. He is a patron of Help for Heroes a charity raising money to provide better facilities for wounded British servicemen. He also contributed with his vocals for a charity single in aid of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake Appeal.