

Babbling since a baby, Gyles just won't stop talking ★★★★★

Gyles Brandreth is that annoying geezer on in the background of my mother's telly when I go visit her.

And queuing for his Gyles Brandreth Can't Stop Talking! show (he really can't) at Assembly George Square it was ladies of a certain age, and a fair number of blokes, who made up the bulk of the audience.

Arch Royalist and famous jumper wearer, that he was sporting a bright red number which celebrated the "new King" shouldn't come as a surprise and while he kept the Royal chit-chat to a minimum, thankfully, he did throw in one amusing anecdote about "Queen" Camilla in her younger days.



He is a veteran – no other way to describe him – of television and radio, regularly popping up on Countdown, Celebrity Gogglebox, This Morning, QI and Pointless, and for 40 years he has been appearing on Radio 4's comedy panel show Just a

Minute.

Indeed, longevity is something Brandreth celebrates throughout his show, paying tribute to those who just keep going 'til the end and now aged 75 and apart from a slight cough, there is no sign that he himself plans to let up any time soon.

If you don't like namedropping you have come to the wrong show, admits Brandreth from the off, and in a 50 year plus career as a journalist, television presenter, writer and theatre producer, there is no shortage of material, dipping in and out of memorable encounters with proper A-list celebrities and a sprinkling of old-school yesteryear stars of stage and screen – Michael Jackson, Sir John Gielgud, Christopher Biggins, Fanny Craddock, Lionel Blair, Nicholas Parsons, you get the idea.

Margaret Thatcher – a name the Edinburgh audience might not have been familiar with he suggested – had no sense of humour whatsoever (surprise surprise), while the late Duke of Edinburgh passed on welcome advice on how to avoid loo breaks while setting a Guinness Book of World Records for continuous speaking, and as for the safe word Carol Vorderman allegedly uses during rough sex – well you'll have to go to the show to find that out.

Is Brandreth annoying? Not really, he is a talented, charismatic, hugely likeable raconteur who has done the hard yards in a varied career – let's skip over his short time as a Tory MP – and has his audience in the palm of his hand during a gentle, laughter-infused hour of British-style humour.

Gyles Brandreth Can't Stop Talking! Assembly George Square, Gordon Aikman Theatre. 4pm-5pm. Daily until 27 August.

Tickets priced £18 and £22, concessions £17 and £21.

To book tickets visit www.assemblyfestival.com