

Funeral of James Martin BEM – Still Game’s Auld Eric – held in Edinburgh

Stars of Still Game were among the mourners who turned out on Friday for the funeral of the popular Scottish actor Jimmy Martin.

The actor and Royal Navy veteran, who played “Auld” Eric Jones in the BBC Scotland sitcom, died on 18 February at the age of 93.

Mr Martin’s widow Christine, daughter Jennifer, grandchildren and other loved ones were joined at Mortonhall Crematorium in Edinburgh by his Still Game co-stars including Greg Hemphill, Jane McCarry, Sanjeev Kohli and Gavin Mitchell.

Those celebrating his life gathered in the chapel to the sound of Frank Sinatra’s Fly Me To the Moon and My Way, then took their seats to the crooner’s classic New York, New York.

The coffin was draped in a Royal Navy white ensign flag topped with his distinctive brown trilby hat, which his family said he “never went anywhere without”.

Canon Andrew Clark read a eulogy on behalf of Jimmy’s family, including amusing stories of his fascinating life and loves. He said he first met him when he was Chaplain to HM Prison Service and the actor was entertaining inmates at Glenochil Prison with tales from his life.

He said: “There wasn’t a man present in that room whose life

wasn't so much better for having met him. I think we can all relate to that."

Gavin Mitchell, who played barman Booby in *Still Game*, told those present how he'd met the actor more than 30 years ago when they filmed a whisky advert together in Edinburgh.

He said: "He took me under his wing and I took him into my heart – we all did in our (*Still Game*) cast."

Sanjeev Kohli, who played Navid in the sitcom, read Robert Burns' poem "On a Friend", adding: "We're not really here to celebrate a life – we're here to celebrate about 20 lives Jimmy packed into his life. He always did it with panache, always with a smile on his face... and we're all better for having known him."

A reel of photographs of Jimmy, accompanied by one of his favourite songs, *Perhaps Love*, included an image of the lifelong Celtic fan with rocker Rod Stewart.

The *Still Game* star was born in Glasgow on 12 March 1931, but was evacuated during the war to Mauchline in Ayrshire, where he discovered a love for Burns and poetry.

He joined the Royal Navy at the age of 17 and later spent 16 years in the fire service in Glasgow before becoming an actor in the 1980s.

He appeared on TV in shows including *Taggart*, *Rab C Nesbitt* and *Monarch of the Glen*, but to millions he was best known as Auld Eric from *Still Game*.

He appeared in 47 episodes between 2002 and 2018, and held a rare distinction in that he was actually a pensioner when the show began.

Fr Andrew added, on behalf of Martin's family: "*Still Game* was Jimmy's last acting part, as an elderly gentleman sitting in a pub.

“Not only did he not have to go into makeup, he was also living the problems Still Game was highlighting, such as the dodderly old man waiting half an hour for his taxi, while his taxi waited half an hour for James Martin, the chef.”

James Martin was awarded the British Empire Medal in the 2024 King’s birthday honours for his services to military charities.

He lived for many years in Musselburgh, East Lothian, where he worked with several drama groups and helped local young people write and produce their Christmas pantomimes – and looked forward to playing Santa each year.

Following his death at the Edinburgh Erskine Home – some of whose staff attended his funeral, along with representatives of The Royal Navy Association – Still Game co-creator Hemphill said he was “an amazing fella and a joy to be around”.



7/3/2025 Funeral for James(Jimmy) Martin who played Auld Eric in Still Game attended by Still game cast Greg Hemphill,Jane

McCarry, Sanjeev Kohli and Gavin Mitchell at Mortonhall Crematorium

PHOTO Alan Simpson



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Photo shows Jimmy's granddaughter Elaine and partner Anne, granddaughter Laura and husband Craig and daughter Jennifer with husband Steven ...



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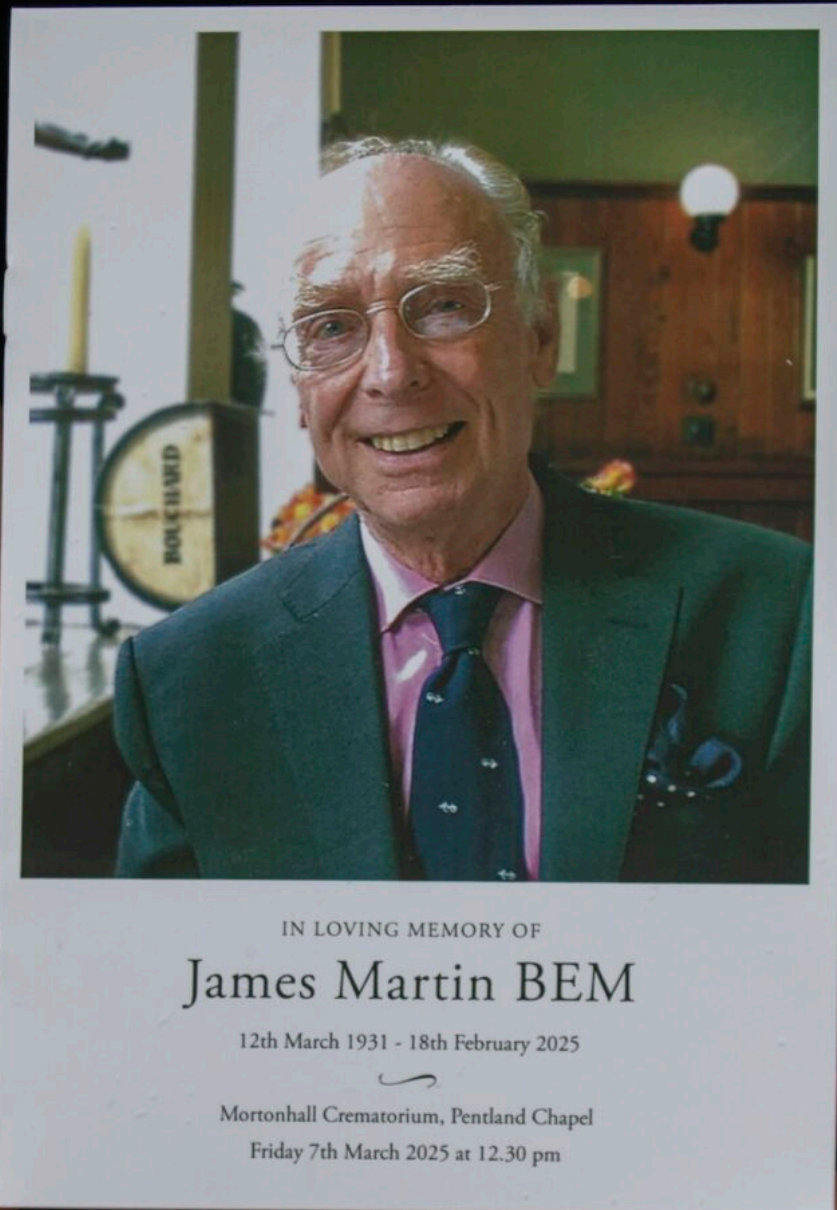
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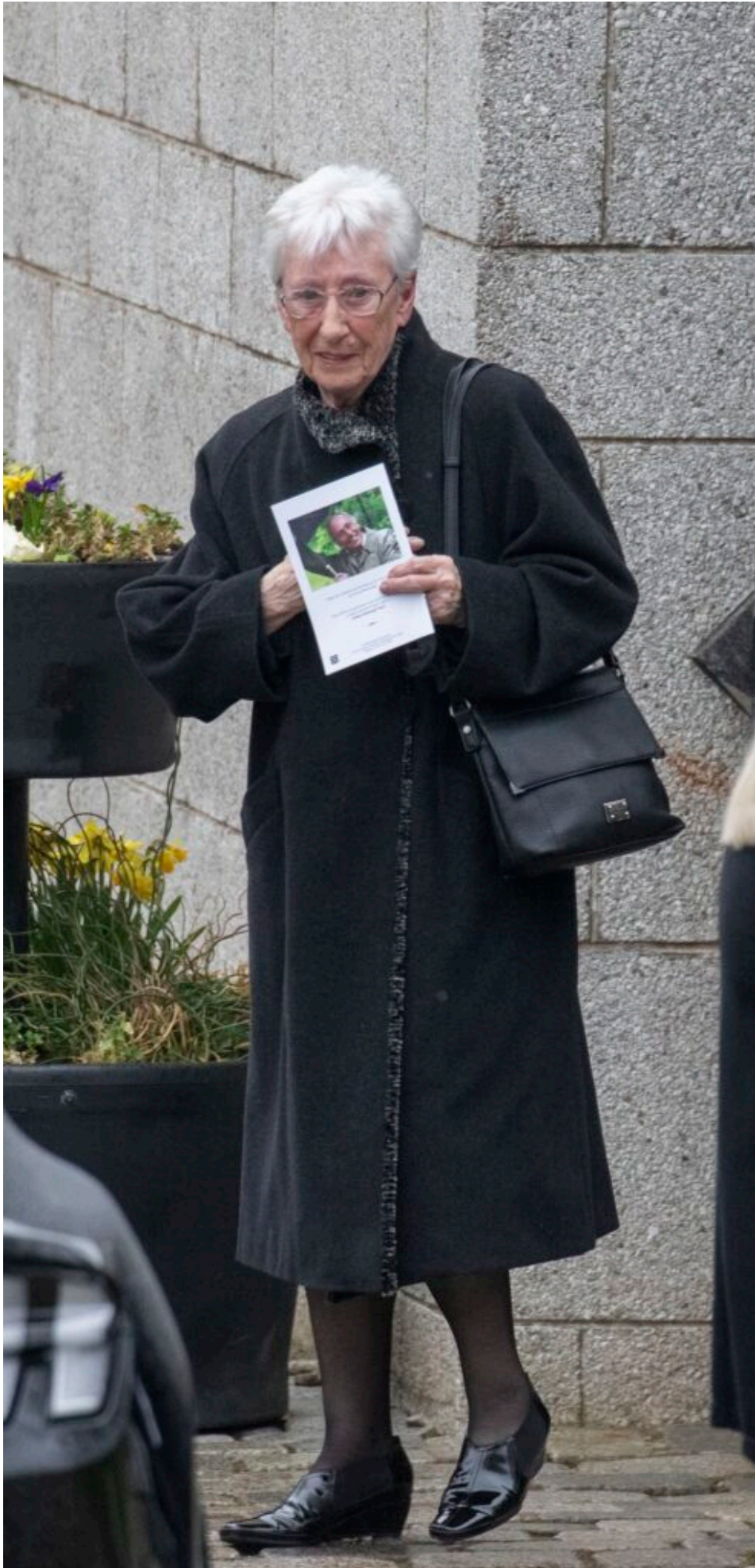
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Photo shows Jimmy's wife Christine.



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Photo shows Canon Andrew Clark who conducted the service