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# New Year Honours 2024: James Martin and Pamela Ballantine on NI list

🕒 29 December 2023

## New Year Honours



LIAM MCBURNEY

Belfast actor James Martin, pictured with his parents Suzanne and Ivan, is appointed MBE for services to drama in Northern Ireland

**Actor James Martin, the star of Oscar-winning film *An Irish Goodbye*, has said he feels "emotionally happy" to feature on the New Year Honours list.**

The 31-year-old becomes a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his services to drama.

He played a lead role in the Northern Ireland production which won an Academy Award for best live action short film.

Martin is among more than 80 people in Northern Ireland who are being honoured as part of the new year list.

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Broadcaster Pamela Ballantine is also appointed MBE for her charitable fundraising.



PA MEDIA

Broadcaster Pamela Ballantine, who becomes an MBE, with a photo of her family at Buckingham Palace when her dad was appointed CBE in 1976

Ballantine told BBC News NI she was "thrilled and delighted" at the honours news.

"It really did come as a surprise, even if I always joked to my mates that 'Baroness Ballantine' always had a ring to it," she said.

The TV presenter, who **earlier this week said she was doing "really well"**, having been receiving treatment for breast cancer, joked that "to pick up the mail and see a letter from the Cabinet Office, initially you're thinking, do they need another prime minister?"

"But no, it was really, really special," she added.

The timing of the announcement is also special for Ballantine, who received the news of her breast cancer diagnosis on 29 December 2022.



GETTY IMAGES

Martin (second right) is a star in the Oscar winning short film An Irish Goodbye

Martin said he received the news about his royal honour when he returned from playing football one evening.

"My mum got something through the post and there was this particular letter. My mum said: 'Can you read this letter to me?' he recalled.

After reading the contents out loud to his proud parents, the actor, who has Down's syndrome, said: "I couldn't believe it - I was really happy, emotionally happy."

His MBE follows a year of triumphs - An Irish Goodbye won an Oscar just weeks after it was named **best British short film at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards** (Baftas).

The black comedy is set on a family farm in rural Northern Ireland and showcases Martin's comedic timing.

## I'm the 'Big Daddy'

Speaking to BBC News NI, the actor reflected on his whirlwind 12 months.

"When we made this movie, an Irish Goodbye, you've muck up to your knees. Next minute you go to the Baftas; the Oscars; the Iftas [Irish Film and Television Academy and Awards]. And the next minute I got my honorary doctorate [from Ulster University]."

- **'I thought my MBE letter was a speeding ticket'**
- **TV star looks to 2024 - and retiring Helen the wig**
- **How does the honours system work?**

Martin has become an inspiration to many people and said he is often recognised and approached by people with disabilities.

"They all come up to me like I'm the 'Big Daddy'," he joked.

He said he is looking forward to travelling to London to accept his insignia and meeting everyone on the honours list.

"It means a lot to me because this is part of my life now - a title like that is really lovely."



DR SALEEM TAREEN

| Psychiatrist Saleem Tareen is involved with the Counselling All Nations Services (CANS) charity

Saleem Tareen becomes an MBE for services to Mental Ill Health and Community Development.

A psychiatrist who has worked in Northern Ireland for many years, Dr Tareen is involved with the Counselling All Nations Services (CANS) charity.

The organisation, which works across Northern Ireland, provides counselling for people whose first language is not English, including refugees and asylum seekers.

# 'The work can be very difficult'

He told BBC News NI he hoped the honour might bring attention to the work he and others are doing.

"The work can be very difficult; it can be slow work which needs to be done cautiously and carefully," he said.

"The trauma work is always very difficult."

Dr Tareen said he felt "very excited and humbled" to be receiving the honour.

"I feel it's recognition of the hard work of CANS and I am receiving on behalf of everyone," he added.



| Roderic and Joan West both receive BEMs for services to the community

Church of Ireland minister Roderic West and his wife Joan West said they were "humbled" to be mentioned in the honours list.

Mr and Mrs West, from Moira, have been married for 44 years and are both awarded British Empire Medals (BEMs) for services to the community.

They were involved in helping to support families during the Covid-19 pandemic, including providing meals for those who were struggling and setting up a free baby clothing and school uniform shop.

Mrs West, a retired nurse, said she "couldn't quite believe it" when she received the news.

"It was just so amazing that somebody would think we were worthy of it," she said.

"I'm very humbled but I'm accepting it with pleasure on behalf of all those who have volunteered alongside us in all the various initiatives in the community."

Mr West said the pair had "worked very much as a team over the years" and joined his wife's tribute to those who have supported them.

"While it's an honour for us, we do really appreciate all the people who've worked with us over time and acknowledge their contribution and effort," he added.

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## The honours system

Commonly awarded ranks:

- Companion of Honour - Limited to 65 people; recipients wear the initials CH after their name
- Knight or Dame



- CBE - Commander of the Order of the British Empire
- OBE - Officer of the Order of the British Empire
- MBE - Member of the Order of the British Empire
- BEM - British Empire Medal

Read more: [Your guide to the Honours](#)

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## Full list of Northern Ireland recipients of New Year Honours

### Commanders of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)

Mr David George Crozier, lately head, Strategic Partnerships and Engagement, Queen's University Belfast - for services to the economy.

Mr Ciaran Michael Murphy KC, Senior Counsel - for services to criminal justice.

### Officers of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Michael Andrew Boyd, lately director of football development at the Irish Football Association - for services to association football, to sport, to charity and to reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

Frank Edward Bryan, lately chair of Belfast Metropolitan College - for services to further education and the economy in Northern Ireland.

James Maurice Bullick, finance and compliance director and honorary treasurer at Belfast Harbour Commissioners and British Ports Association - for services to the maritime industry.

Terence Anthony Donnelly, executive chair of Donnelly Motor Group and director, Taxi and Bus Conversions Ltd. - for services to the motor industry in Northern Ireland.

Neil Francis Guckian, chief executive of the Western Health and Social Care Trust - for services to health and social care and to the community in Northern Ireland.

Kathleen Margaret O'Hare, board member at Belfast Metropolitan College and member of Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum - for services to education in Northern Ireland.

Nicola Heather Anne Patterson, lately director of nursing at South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust - for services to health and social care in Northern Ireland.

Diane Rosalie Aldworth Ruddock - for services to the environment, to heritage and to the community in Northern Ireland.

### Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Michael Allen, principal of Lisnael College - for services to education.

Samuel James Anderson, founder and chief executive of IceMOS Technology - for services to economic development in Northern Ireland.

Sarah Pamela Ballantine - for charitable fundraising in Northern Ireland.

Dr Manav Bhavsar, lately clinical lead of critical care - for services to healthcare, particularly during Covid-19.

Professor Anthony Joh Bjourson, lately director of Northern Ireland Centre for Stratified Medicine at Ulster University - for services to higher education and to research.

Professor Kathryn Janice Carruthers, professor of French Linguistics at Queen's University Belfast - for services to modern languages.

Francis Joseph Donnelly - for services to disability sport and to the community in Northern Ireland.

Captain Thomas David Eccles, fisheries officer at the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs - for services to fisheries,

environment and to maritime safety.

David Edward Clarke Finlay - for services to Olympic wrestling in Northern Ireland.

Raymond Ashley Fulton - for services to music in Northern Ireland.

The Reverend Canon Terence Kevin Declan Graham (DL), rector at St Bartholomew's Church, Belfast - for services to the reserve forces and to the community in Belfast.

Leslie John Raymond Irvine, international referee assessor at Irish Football Association - for services to association football.

The Reverend Derek James Johnston, lead chaplain at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust - for services to chaplaincy and wellbeing during Covid-19.

Maurice Joseph Kennedy, volunteer at Transport Training Board - for services to the transport and logistics industries of Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

Helen Morag Keys, entrepreneur at Queen's University's Students' Union - for services to entrepreneurship and innovation in farming.

James Kilpatrick, chair RVH Liver Support Group - for services to people with liver disease and their carers in Northern Ireland.

Henry James Kissock, information and communication technology service delivery manager, Police Service of Northern Ireland, for services to the community in Northern Ireland.

Robert James Martin - for services to drama in Northern Ireland.

Sarah Mason, chief executive officer at Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland - for services to women and girls.

Elizabeth McCrory, Regional Lead at UK Export Finance - for services to exporting businesses in Northern Ireland.

Robert William McVeigh - for services to the Commonwealth Games in Northern Ireland.

Alison Jane Moffitt Robinson - for services to sports management and development in Northern Ireland.

Leona O'Neil, Founder of The Boom Foundation - for services to charitable fundraising for people with sarcoma.

Harry Clive O'Neill - for charitable services to the community in County Down.

Brian Thomas James Purcell, lately northern district manager at St John Ambulance - for voluntary service in Northern Ireland.

Anthony Martin Quinn, lately business development director at Co-operation Ireland - for services to community relations in Northern Ireland.

Kimberley Louise Scott, lately assistant director of education at Education Authority - for services to education.

Dr Muhammad Saleem Khan Tareen, psychiatrist at Northern Health and Social Care Trust - for services to mental ill health and to community development in Northern Ireland.

### **Medallists of the Order of the British Empire (BEM)**

The Reverend Canon William Matthew Adair, rector at St Columba's Parish, Portadown - for services to the Church of Ireland and to the community in Portadown, County Armagh.

Valerie Beattie - for services to the community in County Antrim.

William Archibald Bingham, chair at Newcastle and Mourne Cancer Research Committee - for services to cancer research fundraising in County Down.

Winifred Patricia Bownes, volunteer coordinator at Cookstown Monday Club - for services to the community in Cookstown, County Tyrone.

Dr John Morrison Brown - for services to the community in County Tyrone.

Robert James Buchanan, chair of Londonderry Branch at Royal Naval Association - for voluntary services to veterans.

Joy Henrietta Mary Coalter, lately building and cleaning supervisor at Brookeborough Primary School, County Fermanagh - for services to education.

David Cupples - for services to the community in County Tyrone.

Michael Davidson, volunteer and trustee at Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation - for voluntary service.

Trevor Samuel John Douglas, general manager at Belfast Cathedral - for services to peacebuilding and to the community in Northern Ireland.

Mrs Margaret Elizabeth Flanagan, member of Inner Wheel Club of Ballymena - for voluntary services to the community in Ballymena, County Antrim.

Claire Forsythe, Duke of Edinburgh's Award Officer and Probation Board for Northern Ireland - for services to the rehabilitation of offenders.

Joseph William Garvey - for services to the community in County Armagh.

KennethMatthewGillespie - for service to young people through Scouting.

GeoffreyFrederick Bewick Goldsbrough, founder, Perennials Charity Rugby Club - for services to charity in Northern Ireland.

BronaghMary Hegarty, Covid-19 principal pharmacist for patient services and procurement at Western Health and Social Care Trust - for services to healthcare and pharmacy.

Donald Alexander Hill - for services to the community in County Londonderry.

Lena Moira Hutchinson - for voluntary services to the community in Larne, County Antrim.

Vivien Jess, learning centre manager at Education Training Service - for services to defence and to the community in Northern Ireland.

Monica Ann Johnston, admission/discharge co-ordinator of neurosciences at Belfast Health and Social Care - for services to nursing and to the community in Northern Ireland.

Anne Marie Kelly, lately regional office manager at Northern Ireland Organ Donor Service - for services to organ donation and transplantation in Northern Ireland.

William James David King - for services to association football in Northern Ireland.

Joan Lynas - for services to the Girls' Brigade and to the community in Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland.

Jeremy Paul McCluskey, front of house and security guard at G4S Security - for public service, particularly during Covid-19.

Robert John McCormick, security team leader at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens - for public service.

Patrick Eugene McGeehan, coach at Santos Football Club - for voluntary service to association football in Northern Ireland.

Myrtle Edna McIlveen, volunteer manager at Killyleagh Community Charity Shop - for voluntary services to the community in County Down.

Deon Frederick McNeilly, chair at Newcastle Athletics Club, County Down - for services to athletics in Northern Ireland.

Robin John Mercer, managing director at Hillmount Garden Centre - for services to business and to the economy in Northern Ireland.

Adrian David Morrow, estate manager at Glenarm Castle and chief executive and Irish Grouse Conservation Trust, for voluntary services to habitat conservation and to the community in County Antrim.

Bryan Phillip, volunteer at Irish Guards Association - for services to armed forces charities in Northern Ireland.

Lesley Porter, principal's personal assistant at Oakgrove Integrated College, Derry-Londonderry - for services to reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

Derek Mark Preston - for services to the Northern Ireland Prison Service and to charity in Northern Ireland.

John Alexander Alister Smyth - for voluntary and charitable services to the community in Limavady, County Londonderry.

Margaret Pearl Sterling, teaching associate at School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences, Queen's University Belfast - for services to higher education in Northern Ireland.

Eileen Linda Stewart, manager, Armagh Business Centre - for services to entrepreneurship, to economic regeneration and to the community in Armagh, Northern Ireland.

Janet Alexandra Thompson - for services to the Scouting movement in Northern Ireland.

FlorenceDiane Walker, founder and leader, The Country Playgroup - for services to early years Education in County Antrim.

Adam Samuel Watson, dairy farmer in Coleraine - for services to mental health in the farming community in Northern Ireland.

Sylvia Joan West - for services to the community in County Down.

The Venerable Thomas Roderic West, minister, Church of Ireland - for services to the community in County Down.

David Wheeler, Cchair at Lisnaskea Rovers Football Club - for services to association football in County Fermanagh.

Martin John White - for services to music in Northern Ireland.

#### **King's Police Medal (KPM)**

Samuel Paul Henderson, lately detective constable, Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Nicola Marie Marshall, detective superintendent, Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Kieran Quinn, inspector, Police Service of Northern Ireland.

#### **King's Fire Service Medal (KFSM)**

Thomas Stanley Torbitt, watch commander, Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

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