

TMS

diary@thetimes.co.uk | @timesdiary

Ladylike kind of gender gap

Was Rachel Johnson aware of an egregious gender pay gap at *The Lady* before quitting as editor in 2012? Her husband, Ivo Dawney, notes in his column in the magazine that Mary Killen, a columnist with whom he shares a page, is paid 50 per cent more. Dawney said he got little sympathy from the editor, Sam Taylor, noting: "Every time (400 so far) I whinge a little, she circles like a Messerschmitt and strafes me as I wade out into the briny, a cackle of cruel laughter emanating from her cockpit."

RENEWABLE ENERGY

In the 1976 drought it was suggested you "bath with a friend" to conserve water. The playwright Sebastian Barry said his grandfather had an odder way of conserving resources during cold Irish winters when Barry was a younker and the pair shared a bed for warmth. His granddad was a "champion farter", Barry told the Edinburgh International Book Festival, adding: "He would insist I keep the covers closed so the heat wouldn't disappear."

Pamela Anderson has been writing poems for Julian Assange during his self-imposed incarceration in the Ecuadorean embassy. She told The New Yorker that one read: "How impossible it is to / Have feelings for / Someone completely unavailable / Not because of his heart / But his circumstances." Anderson may find she is not the only one frustrated by Assange playing hard to get.

DIDDY DAVID'S FANS

The BBC has been accused of broadcasting some odd things, but David Hamilton, right, received the oddest accusation. In *The Golden*

Days of Radio One, the veteran broadcaster recalls his stalkers, including a woman who turned up at Broadcasting House with a suitcase, intent on moving in with him. Another threw a brick through Hamilton's window, only to find it was the home of another David Hamilton. The same woman threw a can of paint over the DJ Paul Burnett, shouting: "Take that, Hamilton!" Asked why, she said: "He keeps sending me telepathic messages over the radio."

David Davis's former chief of staff, James Chapman, has been loudly slagging Brexit off as a "catastrophe" and planning to form an anti-Brexit party on social media. It's a good clue that he no longer works for the Brexit secretary, but this apparently escaped the Today programme. Listeners were surprised that Davis wasn't asked about Chapman's tirades on Today yesterday, to which Chapman replied: "I'm not — they called me asking if I could arrange for him to go on."

CITY OF CULTURE SPEAKS

No one expected the words "big hairy man hammock" to feature in Hull's year as *city of culture*. But they flashed up on a 98ft art installation powered by members of the public, who speak into a microphone and see their words appear on Hull's tidal barrier. Other offers included "I am drunk" and "Send nudes". The curator said at its launch that he trusted the public to use the project "as intended", which could only have sounded more naive if Boaty McBoatface had surfaced on the River Hull as he said it.

The best joke from the Edinburgh Fringe so far is Robert Garnham's "Insomnia is awful," he said. "But on the plus side, only three more sleeps till Christmas."

KAYA BURGESS

