

Picture: JACKSON LEE/Splash News



GET BACK: Paul's Nancy is wanted by colleagues in the US

It appears that **Sir Paul McCartney's** new love, American heiress **Nancy Shevell**, is in hot water for not working like a dog. Nancy, 47, is a board member of New York's Metro Transit Authority but I hear fellow members are furious that she has skipped two crucial meetings in order to spend time with the ex-Beatle.

One fellow board member, councilman John Liu, fumed that Nancy "does not deserve to be on the MTA board". Another chipped in: "She'd clearly rather be gallivanting around on some red carpet somewhere."

Calls for her resignation followed her latest skipped meeting when she chose to attend the London premiere of *The Boat That Rocked* with Sir Paul instead.

I hear the crunch could come during an executive committee meeting next week when she will be asked to account for her absences during key votes.

What a drag! Surely hanging out with an old Beatle has to be more fun.

# Adam Helliker

The man who knows you'd like to know...

## Lourdes seeks sisterhood

Picture: MICHELY RALL/Wireimage.com



AFRICA MISSION: Madonna and daughter Lourdes in Malawi last week

**A**S MADONNA battles with the Malawian authorities over the adoption of four-year-old orphan Mercy, there is one member of the singer's family with a special interest in the proceedings: her daughter Lourdes.

It appears 12-year-old Lourdes Maria Ciccone Leon (or Lola as she is called) has been the driving force behind her mother's plan to adopt Mercy and take her back to New York, where the singer has been based since her split from British film director Guy Ritchie.

Although on Friday a Malawian judge refused Madonna's request to adopt the child, telling her to do so might leave one of Africa's poorest nations vulnerable to child traffickers, it is thought the singer will lodge an appeal

this week. I'm told that ever since Madonna adopted another Malawian child, David Banda, in 2006, Lourdes has been desperate for a sister and it was her who put pressure on her mother to pursue another adoption.

David and the singer's other son, Rocco, have become great playmates and a close friend of Madonna from her Kabbalah Centre tells me that although Lourdes loves her adopted brother she can often feel left out and marginalised within the family set-up.

"Adopting Mercy would give Lourdes the company and emotional closeness of another girl in the family," said the friend.

Madonna and Lourdes have an extremely close relationship. Madonna is often photographed taking her daughter shopping, to hip-hop dance classes, and also to a few low-key celebrity events. Yet she understands why

Lourdes wants a little sister and for her sake is determined to make it happen. When Lourdes insisted on going with Madonna to Malawi this week the singer agreed that it would be appropriate to take her.

Lourdes has even accompanied her mother to Kabbalah meetings over the past few months and is known to have talked about what she imagines it would be like to have a new sister. The meetings have helped to prepare her emotionally for Mercy's arrival and Lourdes has been the one to decide on colours and decorations in her bedroom.

Before she left New York I hear Lourdes even learned around 10 phrases in Chichewa, the language widely spoken in Malawi and other areas of south-central Africa, in order to make her relationship with Mercy as easy as possible.

Picture: JONATHAN BUCKMASTER



OLD GOLD: Spandau frontman, Tony Hadley, centre, may need to brush up on lyrics

Will **TONY HADLEY**, the Kemp brothers and the other members of **Spandau Ballet** even remember the words to songs such as **True and Gold** when their comeback tour kicks off this autumn?

Perhaps it doesn't matter. Recalling a 1985 tour in New Zealand, when he wound up on a stage with **Queen**, Hadley tells me he managed a duet with **Freddie Mercury** only because they were both off their heads on vodka and port.

"We drank Stolichnaya in the hotel bar until we couldn't say it. Freddie called Brian May and said, 'Brian darling, Tony's coming on stage with us tonight and we're going to do Jailhouse Rock.' I told him I didn't know the words, to which he shrieked, 'Never mind, I don't f\*\*\*\*\* know them either! If in doubt, make it up!'"

It is no surprise that **Richard Curtis's** new movie *The Boat That Rocked* has rekindled interest in pirate radio station **Radio Caroline** or, more particularly, the amorous antics of its star DJs **Tony Blackburn** and **Emperor Rosko**.

As it was broadcast from a ship in the North Sea and there were no women on board, the sex-starved DJs often went on the rampage once back on dry land.

Rosko, now 66 and living the rural Californian life, is the inspiration for *The Count* in the film, played with gusto by the Oscar-winning actor **Philip Seymour Hoffman**. According to a retired rock chick who once escaped his clutches at a wild party in London's Dolphin Square, he was the most amorous devil of the lot.

"He wasn't going to take no for an answer," she tells me. "He steered me into a chintzy spare bedroom and pushed me down on the bed. I thought I was done for. Only when I grabbed him by his thick dark hair and the whole thing came away in my hands, complete with Kirby grips, was the situation defused by much mirth and I managed to get away."



Fat Duck chef **Heston Blumenthal's** TV makeover at Little Chef provided the roadside restaurant chain with millions of pounds of free publicity. However, 16-year things have not gone entirely according to plan since Channel 4's *Big Chef Takes On Little Chef* was broadcast in January.

The new foodie-friendly format concocted by the multi-Michelin-starred chef at Little Chef's Popham restaurant is proving to be a monumental headache to roll out in the chain's 173 other outlets. So much so that the idea may well have to be scrapped.

Little Chef chief executive **Ian Pegler** tells me **Blumenthal** insists on sourcing ingredients such as sausages and black pudding from producers as far afield as Dorset to Carlisle in Scotland.

"Heston is a very particular guy and the new menu involves 57 different suppliers whereas the old menu required just one supplier," said Pegler. "We're having to talk to all of them to see if they can supply in the volumes we need to the locations we need, and in some cases they can't."

After the forced closure of the Fat Duck last month due to a suspected norovirus outbreak, I do hope this year isn't going to turn into an annus horribilis for Heston.

**Gene Hackman**, now 79, is a happy man thanks to a former lover's revelations about his prowess between the sheets. Oscar-winning actress **Cloris Leachman** had an affair with Gene in the Seventies and it's still getting her hot under the collar today.

Cloris, 82, who won her Oscar for best supporting actress in the 1971 film *The Last Picture Show*, has released a *Hollywood tell-all* book.

In it she gushes: "A cosmic wind enveloped us. Some giant space magnet was pulling us together. We went upstairs, flew into bed and made love." If he gets round to reading it I do hope Gene's ticker holds out.

Picture: STEPHEN LOVEKIN/Getty



Everyone knows that **Sting** practises epic bouts of tantric sex with his wife **Trudie Styler** because they have often boasted of it but a new yoga book is about to expose the **Police** frontman as a priapic fraud.

According to lithe-limbed **Jonquil Cooper**, author of *What Yoga Is Not*, there is actually no such thing as tantric sex. Cooper, who has worked with celebrities including **Lenny Kravitz** and **Donna Air**, as well as sometime actress **Trudie Styler**, reckons it's high time the couple were exposed.

"The highly-charged erotic lifestyle they claim to have enjoyed all these years is nothing but pure fantasy," she tells me.

"Ecstatic eight-hour sessions in the bedroom and the yogic multiple orgasm? They wish! What Sting and Trudie have long been kidding us about is precisely what yoga is not. They wouldn't be blabbing about it otherwise."

The 38-year-old yoga expert worked with Trudie back in 2002, when her company **Xingu Films** agreed to finance a documentary on yoga she wanted to make.

Jonquil and Trudie were supposed to be partners but as the production got under way, Jonquil says that Trudie started using her as a servant, belittling her in front of other staff and sending her out to get coffee.

"Trudie told me not to talk to her about roles. 'I'm the ideas person; you just tag along,' she told me. So I walked away, went to India and made a film without her," said Jonquil.

Currently working on a TV series called **Sacred Sex**, Jonquil is determined to correct the huge misconceptions built up by Sting and Trudie about tantric sex.

"To practise it, you must be in an accomplished spiritual place and from what I know of Sting and Trudie, they haven't even started on the journey."

Edited by James Hipwell

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The BBC is facing accusations of foul play over the lucrative contracts awarded to the training company run by Ian Blandford, husband of the BBC controller Jay Hunt.

The row prompted one employee to remind me that Ian's presenting career blossomed during his wife's time in positions of influence.

Jay, who earns £280,000 and is also company secretary of her husband's business Brightspark TV, has enjoyed a stellar career at the BBC, being appointed as executive producer of daytime TV in 2003, where she was in charge of programmes such as the property show Trading Up.

Two years later she became controller of daytime output.

A BBC insider said: "As soon as Jay arrived at the BBC her husband was ringing asking for work as

a presenter." By happy coincidence Mr Blandford landed a plum job as a presenter of Trading Up in 2005.

In 2007 he was also plucked to present an episode of another BBC property series, Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is.

The programme featured young, sexy property experts such as Melissa Porter, Martin Roberts and Kristian Digby who each fronted an episode. Yet when the series was broadcast last year, by which time Miss Hunt had temporarily decamped to Channel Five, the one featuring balding Mr Blandford did not make it to the screen, even though he had been paid.

Mr Blandford was back on our screens a few months later on rival show The Property List, broadcast by Channel Five, where his wife had moved. Fancy that!



SERENDIPITOUS: Jay Hunt

# Adam Helliker

The man who knows the people you'd like to know...

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Rochdale-born star ANNA FRIEL is already under pressure from her friends to marry her boyfriend, actor David Thevils. Now the clamour is growing as the couple's daughter Grace, four, has been asking her mother to name the day.

"It's the question we're both asked the most," coos Anna, 33, who next month will start her role in a West End adaptation of Breakfast at Tiffany's.

"And now Grace keeps saying, 'Mummy, when are you getting married?' 'I'm like, 'Not you as well' I suppose that puts on a bit more pressure, when your daughter's asking, but if things work, why change them?'"

The perky brunette has shared a duvet for the past eight years with Thevils (alias Professor Lupin in the Harry Potter movies) after they first met on a flight to Nice.

He, however, has made it clear that he is in no rush to put a ring on Miss Friel's dainty finger, having described his first marriage (to director Sara Sugarman) as a nightmare.

Maybe Grace will persuade him to do the decent thing, especially if it looks as if she could be welcoming another brother or sister into the family.

"I'm wondering when would be the best time to have a second child," Anna muses.

"I think it's something you can't plan. You have to throw caution to the wind and let it happen."

"Besides, I would never tell people that I was trying for a baby. It's like saying, 'Yes, we're having lots of sex.'"

# Billie battles domestic blip

NOT ALL is well in the household of Billie Piper and Laurence Fox, who have been married for just 18 months. I hear that the former Dr Who actress is exhausted and feeling so emotional that she's decided to take the rest of the year off because she does not want to spend any more time away from her baby boy, Winston, born last October.

After finishing the filming of the new series of The Secret Diaries Of A Call Girl, in which she stars as a hooker, Swindon-born Billie, 26, returned to her home in West Sussex and told her husband that she did not have the energy to take on any more work.

"Billie feels very up and down emotionally. She says she's hormonal and pretty low," reports a close friend of the couple. "She just wants to take time off to be at home and recuperate with her baby."

"She missed Winston terribly while filming Secret Diary and she's found this year very hard with her and Laurence both doing their own projects. Frankly she feels they've had very little time together and life has not been much fun."



TAKING TIME OFF: Billie with baby Winston and husband Laurence

THE TROUBLE is that Laurence, 30, a member of the Fox acting dynasty, is in Oxford filming the crime series until the end of the year and feels just as exhausted as his dear wife.

"When he gets home he's tired and short-tempered and they end up biting each other's heads off. She adores her baby but feels she and Laurence seem to have little time as a couple to enjoy each other any more."

"They haven't been communicating much, just talking about Winston and mundane stuff like the household chores. Laurence is a laid-back guy but the new series has put a strain on him and they push each other to the edge at times."

What their friends agree on is that the two still love each other hugely and this is just a "blip" in their union but Billie has been heard to muse over the energy and excitement she had in her short marriage to the hyperactive broad-chested Chris Evans, during which

they spent much of their time drinking and making impromptu trips abroad.

What has also worried Miss Piper is her weight; she has been trying to regain her figure and has sometimes eaten very little, which also means her temper has been more frayed.

Adds their chum: "Besides all these worries she's concerned that there is no time for them to have a holiday until Laurence finishes filming."

"She would have loved to have sloped off somewhere and concentrate on re-establishing the romantic side of her relationship with Laurence."



After acquiring a new Italian girlfriend to frolic with this summer, George Clooney has cemented his love of La Dolce Vita by buying a second home in Italy to add to the sumptuous villa he already owns on Lake Como.

His latest squeeze, TV presenter Elisabetta Canalis, 31, is a true Italian freecracker, with olive skin, soft curves and flowing dark hair (a description just to annoy all those women who still go all squeaky over Gorgeous George).

Elisabetta, known to her friends as Eli, has already unpacked her knick-knacks into the master bedroom at the actor's Como home and has also been to see his new pad in Porto Recanati on the Adriatic coast.

So just who is the girl who has managed to ensnare George (albeit probably temporarily, given his short attention span and his commitment phobia)? Well, the Sardinian-born Miss Canalis boasts various accomplishments, which include portraying a topless nun in the film Virginia Territory and competing a dog show on local television. Still, she must have impressed Clooney; he's started to learn Italian.

In her time the Duchess of Cornwall has been unfairly compared to a number of spooky creatures. Now she has been presented with a necklace inspired by the vampire Count Dracula.

Artist Vanessa Scully gave the necklace, made up of vintage buttons, to Prince Charles when she represented The Prince's Trust at a Buckingham Palace garden party to launch a new youth scheme.

"I told the prince about my new jewellery label and the Dracula-inspired piece I had made for Camilla," says Vanessa, who works in a studio in London's East End. "He called out to Camilla, 'Darling, come and see what I've got for you.' It was a very special moment for me."



GIFT: Duchess of Cornwall



CALLED OUT: Prince Charles

The Prince of Wales has not always enjoyed the best of relationships with the BBC but both sides are trying hard to improve matters. So how many of Charles to appoint a former BBC journalist as his new Private Secretary.

Mark Leshman first met the Prince 10 years ago in Scotland, where he had risen from being a local newspaper reporter in Fife to being a TV presenter and, eventually, the PR chief for BBC Scotland.

So keen is Charles on Leshman's media skills that there is already talk at Clarence House of him being groomed to take the job of top aide Sir Michael Peat when he retires.

It helps that Mark is the grandson of Lord Reith, founder of the BBC. And his wife Fiona can easily engage Charles in talks about organic food; she used to run TV chef Gordon Ramsay's Amareilly restaurant in Glasgow.

Prince Philip, as we all know by now, is something of an impatient chap. Even as far back as the first royal tour he undertook with the Queen in 1953, he made it clear he did not suffer fools gladly. A forthcoming documentary for Channel 4 reveals that in New Zealand Philip became so annoyed at how slowly the chauffeur was driving he ordered him to get in the back seat while he took the wheel. "The result was that Philip drove so fast he arrived at his next engagement half an hour early."



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**HIS** first episode as the new Doctor Who has not even been screened but the gossip on set goes that there is a "special chemistry" between Tardis master **Matt Smith** and actress **Katie McGrath**. It is said that Matt is eager to invite her to give him a helping hand in his magic box.

Of course any idea of a romance between the 26-year-old actor and Dublin-born Katie, 27, who is best known for her role as Morgana in that other BBC teatime series Merlin, presupposes that handsome Matt (who is said to ooze charisma) is free and single, which he is not.

His girlfriend is Brazilian model Mayana Moura, whom he met while holidaying in South America last January.

But then Mayana, 26, whose career began when she was spotted by international fashion photographer Mario Testino, still lives in Rio de Janeiro and Matt's responsibilities as he films the adventures of the 11th Doctor Who will keep him rooted in the UK for some time.

DOCTOR: Matt



CHEMISTRY: Katie

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# Adam Helliker



The man who knows the people you'd like to know...

# BBC film blow to frail Thorpe



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IT'S NOT the best Christmas present for the former Liberal leader Jeremy Thorpe, who has been living quietly since his political career ended 30 years ago when he was accused of attempted murder and pilloried for having an alleged gay love affair.

The dignified Thorpe, who is now in a wheelchair and rarely leaves the London flat he shares with his wife Marion, has been dismayed to learn that the BBC is making a "salacious" film about the events which led to his downfall, delving into the intimate details of his alleged affair with a male model.

The gay actor Rupert Everett confirms that he will play Thorpe and is fascinated by his role. "I think the situation was so English, so farcical. It's a better story than Profumo because he was one of the first glamour politicians. Like Blair, he was too clever for his own good. And then the homosexual world was so different from now."

Old Etonian Thorpe was leader of the Liberal party for nine years until Norman Scott, then working as a stable lad in Devon, accused him of having a homosexual relationship with him (at the time it was still



DIGNIFIED: Jeremy Thorpe and wife Marion

against the law). He said their affair had ended badly and accused Thorpe of being so worried that the matter would become public that he had hired a hit man to kill him.

It was alleged that Scott had been ambushed on Exmouth by a former airline pilot, Andrew Newton, who had undertaken the job of killing him but had failed to fulfil his task and instead

shot Scott's dog, a Great Dane called Rinka. The subsequent trial at the Old Bailey, following Thorpe's charge of conspiracy to murder, electrified the public with its sordid details of how the politician had pursued Scott while purporting to be happily married to his wife Marion, a concert pianist.

Even though he was cleared of all charges, Thorpe lost his North Devon seat in the 1979 election and fell into the political wilderness.

Now, at the age of 80 and suffering from Parkinson's disease, he is faced with the details of his sexuality and the traumatic trial being aired for television entertainment, a prospect that does not please his only son, photographer Rupert Thorpe, 41.

From his home in Los Angeles, Rupert tells me: "My father is not well and I'm not sure if he is strong enough to fight this. I didn't think they would go ahead with such a film but they obviously are, sadly."

Lady Steel, wife of Sir David Steel, who took over from Thorpe as Liberal leader, adds: "I don't know why they have to do this now during Jeremy's lifetime; it seems very unkind. On the other hand, I do think Rupert Everett is very well cast."

Time for some early nights for MYLENE KLASS, whose New Year resolution will be to find time in her overcrowded schedule so she can get down to serious baby-making with the man who has shared her bed for the past five years, Gray Quinn.

Miss Klass, 31, who is one of the brighter members of the celebrity circuit, will have to squeeze in her rumpy-pumpy between studying for an Open University degree in Astronomy and designing a new babywear range for Mothercare.

It's been tricky for the former Hear Say singer to concentrate on night-time manoeuvres with her tattoo-covered Irish boyfriend, what with all the travelling she has had to undertake for the multifarious assignments that have

taken her annual income to £2 million.

"She and Gray would love a brother or sister for Ava," confides a chum.

Mylene accepted Gray's proposal of marriage some time ago but any thoughts of nuptials seem to have been placed on the back burner.

"I'm over the idea of getting married," she declared the other day. "I've seen lots of ups and downs of marriage and it makes me take it more seriously... Gray and I are just really happy as we are."

She has also admitted that Ava still shares their bed and one feels the couple's procreative practices might have more success if they gently moved her out of their cosy divan once in a while.

"Then they could really concentrate on the business in hand.



Dozens of actresses have yearned to "do an Anna Ford" and chuck a glass of wine in the face of an opponent, as the broadcaster did when she saw her then boss Jonathan Aitken at a party.

Now actress **Kelly Reilly** has achieved that ambition by throwing no fewer than six glasses of a quaffable claret at her co-star in the new Sherlock Holmes film, Robert Downey Jr (and not just because of the American actor's annoying accent).

No, it was all in the cause of art for Kelly, 32, who plays Dr Watson's lover in the movie, which is directed by Guy Ritchie.

Says Miss Reilly: "The scene is the first time Sherlock Holmes has met me. Typically he looks me over and comes out with a series of deductions about my character, one of them being very offensive, so he gets the wine straight in the face. "Only that, on the first take, I was so terrified of hurting Robert, I threw it and missed him completely. He just said, 'Kelly, please go for it. Don't hold back'. So we did it time after time after time. He had to have a change of costume after each take. He was pretty damp when director Guy Ritchie decided he had what he wanted."

"Still, it's a lovely feeling when you're actually throwing the glass..."

There's no rest for the dear old **Duchess of Cornwall**, last week she presided over the staff party at Clarence House, and tomorrow she will be the hostess of a carol concert at Highgrove for the children of Ty Hafan, the Welsh hospice of which Prince Charles is patron.

"Camilla takes a particular interest in the food being served; she beams when guests appreciate the canapés," reports my man learning by the created Aga. But then Her Royal Deliciumness has always been proud of her cooking, as her son Tom, a fanatical foodie, attests. He says one of his earliest memories of being in the kitchen with his mother was "watching her expertly stuffing a lemon up the rear of a turkey". What an endearing festive image.



There will be a notable absentee among the loyal friends who will sit down with Baroness Thatcher for her Christmas Day lunch: her daughter **Carol**.

The journalist, who has always been a free spirit, is enjoying a break in Cuba and says she has no plans to hurry back for the festivities being held for her octogenarian mother at the Dorchester.

Perhaps it's just as well, for some of Margaret's former Cabinet colleagues will be pulling a cracker with her, as will her son Sir Mark Thatcher. When Carol wrote her memoir she raked many by discussing her mother's mental decline, revealing she had to be reminded repeatedly of her husband Denis's death.

Loyalists accused her of betrayal and adding nothing but prurience to her mother's political legacy. Among those angered was Lord Tebbit, who said: "I would never have done it to a parent of mine and I certainly hope none of my children does such a thing to me."



A seasonal musing from **Terry Wate**, who had to endure five Christmases in solitary confinement when he was held captive in Beirut.

"Some families will be worrying because their offspring may be overseas facing the dangers of active warfare. When so many people seem to be enjoying being together as a family, it can be hard for those who cannot, for one reason or another, be with their family or friends. Yet for those who do share a family Christmas, it can also be quite difficult. My old friend Robert Bruncie had to attend hundreds of functions when he was Archbishop of Canterbury and he often said that there was nothing more exhausting than 'enforced jollity'."



In the wake of fears about global warming, how heartening to hear that **Della Smith** is making her own small contribution to reduce her carbon footprint by wearing long Johns.

"I'm taking climate change really seriously and trying to really cut down on what I use," says the Goddess of Grub. "When I used to be cold I'd turn the heat up and walk round the house in a T-shirt. Now I have no heating on, and I wear woolly tights, long Johns and an extra jumper. That's how I've been trying to improve things and it's worked, as I've got a rebate on my heating bill."

Incidentally one must not forget that Della, who is married to journalist Mike Wynn-Jones, should always be congratulated for resisting the oily blandishments of Tony Blair. The nation's favourite cookery writer, who began her working life as a waitress in a Paddington café, sensibly turned down the PM's offer of a "working" peerage, although she did later accept a CBE.



QUEEN OF MEAN: Kirsty is proudly frugal

No wonder property presenter **Kirsty Allsopp** has been busy on the airwaves defending second homes, given that she owns no fewer than three herself. However, she's keen to redeem herself by emphasising her credentials as "Queen of the skips" when it comes to searching for free materials to refurbish her houses.

The daughter of former Christie's chairman Lord Hindip says proudly: "I'm completely brazen about ferreting in builders' skips. I don't have a second thought about shifting the new 'treasures' into the back of my car but isn't that the definition of a good auction or an antiques shop? Moving stuff from people that don't want it to others who find it irresistible?"

Kirsty's scavenging skills came in handy for a forthcoming TV series in which she turns a dilapidated cottage in North Devon into a cosy roost using secondhand furniture and traditional skills.

"The reason behind this series is that we all seem to be throwing stuff out or buying in new instead of making do and mending or creating. I've learned so many new skills that I've amazed myself. I think the only thing I've failed at is knitting. Tell me that something in a shop is 25 per cent off and I can work that out instantly. Tell me to count back from 28 stitches and I'm totally lost."

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# Helliker

The man who knows the people you'd like to know...

Picture: ASHLEY PICKERING/Rex



In the same way that Elizabeth Hurley decided the lure of a bucolic life in the country was rather more attractive than continued appearances on the red carpet, so **CLAUDIA SCHIFFER** has developed a growing passion for animal husbandry at the roost in Suffolk that she shares with hubby **Matthew Vaughn**.

The Teutonic beauty, pictured above, now decamps as often as she can from her townhouse in Notting Hill to 17th-century Coldham Hall, near Bury St Edmunds, where she has delighted her kiddywinkles **Caspar** and **Clementine** by fostering a Marie-Antoinette-esque menagerie of creatures on her organic, self-sustaining estate.

"I always dreamed that one day I would like a farm with lots of animals, so I thought I'd get little amounts of each and find out how it works," says **Miss Schiffer**, once the highest-paid cover girl in the world.

So far she has (wait for it) three dogs, two sheep, four chickens, a heavily pregnant pig, two black swans, four ducks, three tortoisoes and a parrot. This Dr Doolittle of the fashion world, who has enhanced her green credentials by installing an Austrian wood-fired eco-boiler to heat her stately pile, adds: "It's like living in a zoo."

# Will Roddy spill the royal beans?

HERE IS renewed speculation that after years of refusing to breathe a word about the controversial affair he enjoyed with Princess Margaret, **Roddy Llewellyn** is now writing the memoirs of his eight-year relationship with the Queen's sister.

In the past the handsome landscape gardener has steadfastly said he would take the intimate secrets of his royal romp with her "to the grave" but at last Friday's memorial service in Knightsbridge for his brother **Sir Dai Llewellyn** (whose death from cancer aged 62 means Roddy has inherited the baronetcy) there was chatter that now his three daughters have grown up, he has decided to write his autobiography.

He is also said to have been swayed by the decision of the Princess's former husband, **Lord Snowdon**, to give his tacit approval to his own biography published last year, in which the sensitive **Llewellyn** was not portrayed in the most flattering light. So far Roddy's only public comment about his love for Margaret has been that "I was just a young man following my heart".

Sir Roddy's memoirs could certainly make a riveting read. He was 17 years Margaret's junior when he was introduced to her at a house party in Scotland and began a highly physical affair, joining the princess as her lover on frequent trips to her favourite holiday island, **Musique**.

The couple were heavily criticised after they were snapped at her villa, with one headline blaring: "Give up Roddy or quit!" The Queen, privately, was said to be despairing of her sister's "guttersnipe life" but Margaret refused to end the relationship, although any pretence that her marriage was intact was abandoned.

Llewellyn, whom the Princess once referred to as "my last great love", remained on friendly terms with her long after their passion had cooled. In 1981 he married **Tania Soskin**, an old friend, and Margaret became a regular visitor to the couple's house in **Oxfordshire**.



SO CLOSE: Margaret and Roddy remained friendly even after their affair ended

Sadly it seems speculation that the public is about to be fed juicy details of this royal affair may be somewhat premature. Last night a close friend of Roddy's said: "He's always said he would never write a book about his time with PM and nothing has changed. Many others have had their say about that time but of course he, and the late Princess, are the only two who know what really went on. He is utterly loyal to her and his memories will die with him."

Prince Charles has decided it's time for a spell of rest and relaxation, for his wife **Camilla**, who is feeling at a low ebb since suffering a nasty bout of bronchitis following the couple's return from **South America**.

"While Charles has the constitution of an ox, **Camilla** finds all that travel pretty debilitating and it makes her susceptible to infections," reports my man administering the coveted hot-water bottle. "She is particularly vulnerable to chest complaints because of all those years of smoking, not that she touches a cigarette now of course." Later this week **Charles** plans to cheer up the old girl by taking her for a two-week break at **Birkhall**, their favourite bolt hole, where she can have a blast of healthy Highlands air while they celebrate their fourth wedding anniversary on April 9 (that's a "time" anniversary, for anyone who might feel like sending a suitable gift).



That copper-haired cad **James Hewitt** is relishing his new life in Spain, where he is planning his hopes for financial success on his restaurant and club in **Marbella**, to be launched with a big party this Thursday.

The Princess of Wales's former lover, pictured left, has spent three years securing backing to create the £2 million **Polo House**, which he wants to have the "civilised feel of a colonial club". If it works he has ambitious plans to expand into **Argentina**, **Dubai** and **Malaysia**. "Moving to **Marbella** was a great and timely decision," draws ex-cavalry officer **Hewitt**, 51. And, winking roguishly about his success with a new generation of **Eurobabes** who, incredibly, fall for his old chat-up lines, the louche **lithario** smiles: "The lifestyle here is fantastic."

While **Ultravox** kingpin **Midge Ure** now basks in marital bliss in a farmhouse near **Bath**, his first wife **Annabel Giles** is very much single and would like to hear from potential suitors. The model-turned-TV presenter-turned novelist has just broken up with her boyfriend and, as she is about to turn 50, says: "I've got to get on with finding a Significant Other as I don't intend to spend my big birthday **Significantly Alone**." The problem for pilot's daughter **Annabel**, who lives in **Brighton** with her

10-year-old son **Ted**, is how to meet men. "Most people seem to meet their partners at work but I work at home on my own in front of my computer and I don't get many handsome men wandering into my study asking to borrow my hole punch."

**Miss Giles**, who lives a considerably less lavish life than the days when she earned £16,000 a day as a **Max Factor** model, pleads: "Does anyone know a lovely single man between 40 and 55 who is not an axe murderer, drug addict or, worse than that, boring?"



SEARCHING: Annabel

Although she is still in mourning for her late husband **Harold Pinter**, **Lady Antonia Fraser** was in a more playful mood when she encountered saucy Australian novelist **Kathy Lette** at a party in **Notting Hill**. **Lette** tells me: "Antonia joked about **Harold's** obsession for cricket and made reference to his remark that cricket was better than sex. She said: 'Thank goodness **Harold** never played cricket at night!'"



Picture: REX

While soul star **Joss Stone** enjoys international acclaim, selling more than 11 million albums so far, her mother **Wendy** has not been having much success with her own music venture in **Somerset**.

**Wendy Joseph**, pictured above with **Joss**, has closed **Mama Stone's Music Academy** in **Wellington**, just a few weeks after it was the venue for a gig by her daughter. She decided to shut up shop after complaints about noise levels from neighbours.

"We have been running two businesses: **Live Room** at the weekends downstairs and **Artist Development and Production upstairs**, which produces the main part of our income," she says, "but two neighbours had objected to the noise while others in the road supported us. 'We bring people to **Wellington** from all over the country and other businesses in the town will suffer now that we're closed," adds **Wendy**, who plans to relocate her academy to **Exeter**.

Going to film premieres is not always fun, as actress **Jenny Hanley** recalls about her attendance at the first night of the **Seventies** film **The Railway Children** (in which the mother was played by her own mum **Dinah Sheridan**).

Jenny went to the glittering occasion with her brother **Jeremy Hanley**, who was later to become **Conservative Party Chairman** when **John Major** was PM, and she remembers: "I was sitting beside **Jeremy** and there was a kid behind me who kept kicking my seat and it was getting really, really annoying. I looked behind at a nanny and glowered at her as if to say: 'Would you kindly stop this child?' Eventually I leaned over to **Jeremy** and said: 'That boy is going to get his knee slapped in a minute...' **Jeremy** replied: 'And you're going to spend the night in the Tower...' that's **Prince Edward!** 'So I thought I'd better keep quiet.'"



Superstar **Johnny Depp** has played some oddball roles in his time, including *Willie Wonka*, *Edward Scissorhands* and *Sweeney Todd*, but there's one role he would love to recreate: the manic student played by Richard E Grant in the cult masterpiece *Withnail And I* (above). "It's my favourite film," Depp told me at the London premiere of his new film *Public Enemies*. "I know the script by heart and I still fall off the couch when I see it. I'm always quoting from it. If ever I need a tonic that's what I put on the DVD - works every time!"

Even the patient Victoria Beckham must be getting just a teensy bit fed up with the mutual appreciation going on between her hubby David and the American actress MEGAN FOX (right).

A friend of the Beckhams (who yesterday celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary) reports that the footballer has become something of an ardent fan of Megan, 23, the Tennessee-born former model often compared to Angelina Jolie but whose films, apart from the two Transformers movies, have failed to hit the big time.

"David thinks she's really hot and likes dropping her name into conversations because he knows it annoys Victoria," I'm told. "It hasn't helped that when she was in London Megan was asked by a TV interviewer who she fancied and replied 'David Beckham'."

Just like David, Miss Fox loves tattoos: she has eight, including one of Marilyn Monroe on her right forearm, and on her shoulder another reads: "We all laugh at glided butterflies," a line adapted from King Lear.

At least Victoria should empathise with Megan's self-confessed "self-esteem issues". She has said she was bullied at school and often had to eat in the lavatories to avoid being pelted with ketchup sachets. "I always got along better with boys," she reflects. "I guess I rubbed some people the wrong way."

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**ALLURE:** Megan Fox and David Beckham are said to have a mutual appreciation, much to the chagrin of Victoria. The Beckhams celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary yesterday

Picture: AMANDA SCHWAB/ Rex Features

# Adam Helliker

The man who knows the people you'd like to know...

## Tessa's back on sofa with David

**A**MID THE murkiness engulfing the House of Commons following the revelations about MPs and their expenses, a ray of hope has alighted on Minister for the Olympics, Tessa Jowell and her husband, lawyer David Mills.

Readers may recall that former culture minister Miss Jowell, 61, who has been lambasted for overspending on the 2012 London Games, fell at an early hurdle in the sleaze relay row when she announced that she and her husband of 27 years were separating.

Tessa's statement came a week after it was revealed that she and Mills had remortgaged one of their homes for £350,000 and repaid it with a gift of £350,000 from the Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, a client of Mr Mills.

Mills was then embroiled in a complex legal action in Italy where he was accused of tax evasion and financial fraud, while Ms Jowell spluttered her way through the obstacle course of excuses to explain why she had signed the mortgage papers.

Following their break-up, the couple sold



REUNITED: Tessa Jowell and David Mills

the marital home in London and Tessa moved into a one-bedroom flat in Highgate - all a cunning ploy, cynics suggested, to save her Cabinet job and political career.

But now the pair have been telling friends that they are very much back together and enjoying weekend cuddles on the sofa at a house Mr Mills has bought in Warwickshire.

Indeed whatever troubles her Government is in, there's now a spring in the step of Tessa, the doctor's daughter who was educated at a private girls' school in Aberdeen and who became the MP for Dulwich 17 years ago.

"She seems a lot more relaxed since the spotlight has been taken off her and she and David are taking things slowly," confides a friend. "They have taken the view that they have both invested too much time and emotion in their marriage to throw it all away."

Former social worker Tessa divorced her first husband, a Camden councillor, in 1976 but has "definitely" decided against divorcing the second. "They are no longer separated and are enjoy spending what time they can together," assures a political source.

An investigation is being mounted to find out why an official website listing English bars has described one Brighton establishment called the **Ginger Pig** as "named after the **Duchess of York**". "I don't know who is behind that description," says owner Ben McKellar. "I have nothing against the Duchess and would hate her to think I called my place after her."

The guide, which is linked to the *Enjoy England* website, presents as fact that the pub's name was inspired by Sarah Ferguson, Mr McKellar, who heads up a chain of watering holes with "Ginger" in the name, says they are named after his ginger hair and big appetite - and have no connection with Fergie, even in her worst days of excess when she was cruelly nicknamed the *Duchess of Pork*.



As the model who managed to quicken George Clooney's pulse, **Lisa Snowdon**, left, was the envy of every girl in the land. But life has been a bit of an anti-climax for the dear girl, who has had no luck in finding a man who matches up to Gorgeous George since their five-year on-off romance ended.

Miss Snowdon, 38, who tomorrow hosts the final of the TV show Britain's Next Top Model, often has to make do with supper for one when she returns to her flat in north London.

In fact Lisa has not had much luck with other chaps. Before George, who she met while shooting a Martini advertisement, she was badly treated by one boyfriend who she described as obsessive and dangerous. "I escaped but it was hard," she recalls. She then had a fling with CSI actor Gary Dourdan.

Since Clooney there has been little action in her private life. "Hm, it's 'Time's running out! The clock's ticking!' I'm like, yeah, I know how old I am. I don't need reminding but I take it with a pinch of salt," she laughs.

One suspects she still holds a candle for ER's Doctor Ross. Her mobile phone did beep at the end of the *Strictly Come Dancing* final, which she lost to Holly City actor Tom Chambers. It was a text from George.

"I don't know how much he saw of the show but he sent me a 'congratulations' text," she says proudly.

Former EastEnders favourite **Anita Dobson** was happy showing naked emotion as Angie in Albert Square. The 1986 Christmas Day shocker that saw her receiving divorce papers from hubby Dirty Den is still the most watched soap episode ever, with 30.15million viewers.

But the flame-haired actress had serious misgivings about stripping off on the West End stage. She wanted an assurance that there would be no Peeping Toms on the sidelines before she agreed to join Jerry Hall and



June Brown among the new cast of Calendar Girls next month.

"When I was first offered the part I didn't think I would be able to do it. I just didn't feel comfortable," says Anita, who is married to Queen guitarist Brian May.

"But the producer is a lovely man who assured me that all the crew will be female and, although I would definitely have to take my bra off, I'll be upside rather than facing the audience and there won't be anyone standing in the wings."



DUCHESS: Tennis fan

Even though she continues to have an open invitation to sit in the Royal Box, the **Duchess of Kent** still prefers to maintain a low profile at her favourite sporting venue, the Wimbledon tennis championships.

It was 10 years ago that the Duchess decided that she would no longer take her place in the box next to her husband - who is president of the All England Club - as part of her wish to distance herself from the Royal Family. She dropped her HRH title, announced that she would prefer to be known as Katharine and since then has rarely been seen with the Duke. "The Duchess still loves Wimbledon but she prefers to go in a private capacity now and sit in the stands rather than the Royal Box," says her spokesperson.

Katharine, 76, who now spends most of her time giving music lessons to children, has said privately that she used to be "embarrassed" by players having to bow or curtsy at the start and end of tennis matches - a tradition that was quietly ended five years ago.

Naughty chinwaggers have been commenting on how **Jennifer Ellison** seems to have added a little weight recently. Well now we know why. A close friend tells me that the former Brookside babe, right, is expecting her first baby but would prefer not to have the fact broadcast until a little later on in her pregnancy.

Liverpudlian Jennifer, 26, has been going out with semi-pro boxer Rob Tickle for just over a year and has said the couple hope to marry. She will shortly be starring as a lesbian vampire in an English movie called Carmella.

Let's hope Miss Ellison finds her pregnancy more comfortable than when she played an expectant mum in Lynda La Plante's TV drama *The Commander*, when on each morning of filming she would have to spend a couple of hours having her "bump" fitted.

Asked whether it made her feel broody, she told an interviewer: "Are you joking? Sweating, backache, waddling everywhere, bumping into things... I think it's probably put me off for at least a couple of years."



**Midsomer Murders star John Nettles**, who is about to hand in his chief inspector's badge after 12 years, is bemused by his ageing sex-symbol tag.

"How on earth the sad dad that is Barnaby can be regarded as sexy I haven't the faintest notion," says Nettles, 65. "Not long ago I was in a post office and an elderly lady about three feet from me said: 'Oh, he's nothing like he is on telly. He's much smaller and older!' I told her we don't have make-up ladies and costume departments in real life."

The former Bergerac actor is still immensely proud that one of the biggest fans of *Midsomer Murders* is the Queen, who never misses an episode. When they met HM told Nettles: "I wouldn't like to live in Midsomer. A lot of people die there."

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# Adam Helliker

The man who knows the people you'd like to know...

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After all that fuss about **Prince Harry** enjoying the charms of the curvaceous TV presenter **Caroline Flack** as a replacement girlfriend following his break-up with **Chelsy Davy**, I am intrigued to learn that the two did not have a meaningful relationship after all.

The chatter among the prince's circle is that although the pair went on a handful of dates, in reality the ambitious Miss Flack (who, as they so charmingly put it in their mockney vernacular "was well up for it") did no more than share a relatively chaste kiss with the third in line to the throne.

"But it this way, he could have gone the full Monty if he'd wanted to, but despite all the talk, when it comes down to it Harry is pretty careful about flashing it around," says a member of the royal fan pack.

"And besides, he still has this thing for Chelsy."

Indeed, as this column has always maintained, Harry has high hopes of rekindling his five-year romance with the perky Miss Davy. He has told friends that Chelsy was "the best thing that has ever happened to me".

Which leaves Caroline Flack looking a little deflated and with few details to share with her chums about her so-called "royal conquest."

Incidentally, it's a little-known fact that Caroline used to work in an abattoir before getting her break on TV. "I loved it," she has recalled wistfully. "But I had to give it up as nobody wanted to come near me because I reeked of pork."

All this disillusionment with our representatives at Westminster is doing wonders for the prospects of **Martin Bell**, the former BBC broadcaster who I hear is being wooed by Liberal Democrat leader **Nick Clegg** to stand in the Labour seat of North Norfolk. Despite vowing he would never stand for election again after a spell as an independent MP for Totton, Bell is giving the idea serious consideration and could very well provide the star quality the LibDems so badly need.

Let's just hope he will also be persuaded to buy a replacement for his trademark white suit. "I met him last week and couldn't help notice that his suit looked very grabby, with rather unattractive perspiration marks," notes my girl with her hand on the parliamentary swingometer.



FRANCIS BEX

# Rare breeds to be Anne's cash bonus

THE economic downturn has forced **Princess Anne** to become increasingly inventive in coming up with money-making ideas to pay for the upkeep of her home Gatcombe Park.

Last night the Gloucestershire estate hosted a lucrative concert starring Katherine Jenkins, and now Anne has decided to follow in the chemical-free footsteps of her brother Charles and sell prime cuts of pork and beef from her organic herd at Gatcombe's farm.

At the princess's specific request, the Gatcombe-labelled meat is being sold through a butcher in her local town, Minchinhampton, to boost the rural economy, in much the same way as Prince Charles's neighbouring town, Tetbury, has seen visitor numbers soar since he opened his Highgrove shop.

"It brings people into Minchinhampton who then go to restaurants or other shops," says butcher Mark Robinson. "We've had lots of inquiries and it's going well. People particularly like that they are rare breeds and from only half an hour down the road."

Both Anne and her husband, Tim Laurence, have insisted they do not want their royal rumps, loin chops and trotters to be sold through a large supermarket.

"Being able to sell our high-quality products to



GATCOMBE PARK: Katherine Jenkins's concert will help pay for its upkeep



local shops such as the excellent butchery is the final link in the chain for us," says Admiral Laurence. "We're delighted with this new arrangement and it encourages more people to shop in Minchinhampton, that's a real bonus."

The Queen's no-nonsense daughter has admitted that she has been hit by the recession and needs to stage more events such as music concerts and the annual Gatcombe horse trials to offset the running costs of her Georgian home and its 730-acre estate. "We are by no means immune from the crunch," she has told friends. "Frankly we need the money."



NEW SQUEEZE: Jensen Button with Jessica Michibata

No wonder **Jensen Button** is in pole position to win the Formula 1 world championship given his stamina both on and off the circuit. An old friend of the Somerset-born racing driver recalls the time when Button, 29, took a new girlfriend to stay with his father John (the man who named his son after his favourite car, the Jensen Interceptor).

"Jensen disappeared to his bedroom with the girl for two whole days," he says. "On the morning of the third day he came down to the kitchen looking pretty washed out, opened the fridge to get some milk and said to his dad: 'I'm exhausted, I can't carry on at this pace.' His father wagged his finger and said: 'No son of mine gives up that easily. Now get back up those stairs!'"

There is only one **Queen** but for the purposes of a forthcoming TV series there will be five. Channel 4 has commissioned a new drama-documentary series which, it promises rather grandly, will "explore the social history of Britain over the last 50 years through the prism of key events in the reign of Queen Elizabeth II".

Adds an excited spokeswoman for the series: "It will mix drama from behind palace doors with testimony from royal insiders, all set against a backdrop of the monumental social changes that have taken place over the past half century."

All highly laudable, but I'm sure what will really flatter HM is that the actress who will play her as a young monarch will be the alluring Samantha Bond, who played Miss Moneybags in a handful of James Bond films.

How exciting that **Sandra Bullock** will be visiting London to launch her latest film, *The Proposal*, next month.

Miss Bullock, right, star of *Speed* and *While You Were Sleeping*, plays an overbearing boss in the movie. She pressurises her young male assistant into marrying her so that she can hold on to her Canadian work visa.

But even before she arrives here Sandra, who will also celebrate her 45th birthday while in London, has startled journalists with some requests via her publicists at Disney pictures.

If she agrees to being interviewed to plug her product in their magazines, her PRs have been telling backs that there must be a picture of Miss Bullock on the cover to accompany their scribbles. And they've added that if there isn't an illustration of the lady on the cover, she wants to know who will be featured instead of her.

If it's an image of someone of whom she does not approve, then the relevant journalist will not get their allotted time in her gracious presence. No picture agreement, no encounter with Miss B.

"It's a very odd demand," sighs one bemused writer. "Some stars request a specific type of flower in their rooms, others have to have the right champagne, but asking us all to whip out a crystal ball and to predict who we might have on the cover in over a month's time in a very volatile and changeable market, well, that's just silly."



Some might say that **Kelly Osborne** is, like her bat-eating father Ozzy, off the wall. Perhaps that's why her dear mother Sharon has decided that she should be very much on the wall, in the form of this tasteful photographic portrait.

Mrs O has paid £1,300 for the likeness of Kelly (also known as the Princess of Darkness) which was created by Dame Vivienne Westwood's fetish-obsessed son Ben.

Mr Westwood held an exhibition of his work last week at London's Bodhi gallery where he had affixed the heads of famous people's children to the bodies of models dressed in exotic clothing. "It was carefully thought out," he tells me. "The models were tied up and I put the 'heads' on separately after they had been photographed."

Naturally he was delighted when Sharon Osborne asked if she could buy the portrait of her little ven. Now he's hoping that the parents of other "celebrity spawn" in the exhibition, including Elizabeth Jagger, Lily Allen, and Kimberley Stewart, will want to buy the portraits of their daughters too.

A spokesman for Mrs Osborne confirms: "Sharon loved the photograph. She's bought it as a present for Kelly."



The veteran explorer **Colonel John Blashford-Snell** has suffered a setback in his quest to lead his latest expedition to the Amazon in a week's time: a shipwreck caused by a supermouse.

Reports a purple-faced Blashford: "I am about to leave for an expedition into a little-known part of Bolivia to discover what happened to the ancient Mozas civilisation, but during preparation I found that one of the two inflatable boats stored at expedition HQ in Dorset had all but been destroyed."

"When I was unpacking it, I saw a huge mouse, which to my horror, had eaten 20 holes in the virtually indestructible fabric. These remarkable craft have survived rapids, Nile crocodiles, and razor-sharp rocks, but fell prey to this creature."

"Repairs are under way and so is the hunt for the attacker. My theory is that global warming is leading to oversized rodents that eat rubber."

His home town of Reading has become, **Ricky Gervais** reckons, "a dangerous place" since he grew up there. So he's decided not to shoot his latest movie in the town but to shift to locations "somewhere nearby". Cemetery Junction, set in the Sixties, is about the adventures of two Prudential Insurance workers. Just as his hit series, *The Office*, was set in Slough, Reading would have made an equally bland backdrop but Gervais says: "Reading is a bit, well, 'lively' now. That's



probably the best word. But I'm doing it in a Reading accent, though, because I think I've nailed that one. It's about the only accent I can do. "I got out when I was 18 but I think I had a pretty good time as a kid. I only go back there now to see the family and to attend funerals." Reading's other famous show business star, **Kate Winslet**, recently said she thought that her upbringing in the Berkshire town was pretty working-class. "Yes, well... Kate was brought up on the other side of the tracks, no doubt about that," says Gervais.

**Hearing Pope Benedict** speak with his German-tinged accent on his *Middle East tour* has tickled one reader, a former priest who studied under the then Cardinal Ratzinger at the Vatican. He recalls: "There were several of us novices from Britain and on one occasion he got so frustrated with us not paying attention that he gathered us together and gave us a telling off, which came out the wrong way. "I know you think I know bugger nothing", he boomed in his strong German accent, but the truth is I know bugger all. We all had to bite our lips very hard to stop ourselves laughing."



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Picture: TOBY CANHAM

# Adam Helliker

The man who knows the people you'd like to know...



As she criss-crosses London by bus and Tube, that one-time "thinking man's crumpet" **Joan Bakewell** has become jolly annoyed about the way so few passengers are giving up their seats for the elderly. Dame Joan, 76, feels older people "become invisible" on public transport, with others jolly pushing past them. "I'm still amazed that parents will allow small children to occupy a full seat," she observes. "I've not had the courage to say they're young and growing stronger, and I'm willing and happy to teacher. It would be nice if mothers carried a child on their knee and let someone else sit down."

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# Mick has reward for gentle Jerry

**A**FTER learning of Jerry Hall's refusal to spill the beans on their tempestuous marriage and his many love affairs, the usually parsimonious Sir Mick Jagger has made a generous offer to his former wife to help compensate her for the loss of her £500,000 book advance. As first revealed here last month, Jerry's £million book deal with HarperCollins fell apart when her manuscript was described as "too tame and bland" and lacking any of the explosive detail the publishers were expecting about her nine-year relationship with the Rolling Stone. But instead of Jerry sharpening her pencil and having a stab at a rewrite, she refused entreaties to "spice up" her manuscript, saving the sensitive Jagger the humiliation of details of their marriage and his bed-hopping (with, among many others, Carla Bruni) being spread all over a book and, of course, a newspaper serialisation. Her decision not to pursue the project has cost the willowy Texan dearly but I react that she has been surprised by a call from her libidinous ex-hubby offering to compensate her for some of the money she has had to hand back. "Mick has made a very nice offer to Jerry, which has come as a very warm and welcome surprise," discloses one of her girlfriends. "One could say it's in his best interests, although Jerry has made it clear that she wouldn't be pushed by publishers into divulging lurid details about Mick. She never wanted to do that right from the start."



DISCREET: Jerry Hall won't be telling all

"She just doesn't think it's right to subject him or their four children to really intimate revelations, although she knows that's what people want to read. Mick really appreciates her decency and, obviously by making this financial offer, is very grateful for her discretion." Jagger's generosity towards his ex-wife may also go a little way to assuaging her disappointment at not seeing her book come to print, given that she had enjoyed writing it. She had first been persuaded to "fill the lid" on her colourful life by a former admirer, journalist Simon Kelner. The editor-in-chief of *The Independent* was at one stage contracted to collaborate with her on the book before the "creative tension" between the pair became too much and she decided to go it alone. Despite rumours in publishing circles that the book may be revived, Jerry's agent Ed Victor tells me all bets are off. "It's definitely not going ahead," he says sadly. "The deal is off and we're trying to sort out the details as amicably as possible." So for now we will just have to be content with the only revelation Jerry has made publicly about how she managed to keep her tricky old rocker happy for so long. As she so memorably recounted: "My mother said it was simple to keep a man: you must be a maid in the living room, a cook in the kitchen and a whore in the bedroom. I said I'd hire the other two and take care of the bedroom bit."

**Autocutie Sophie Raworth** was brought up to believe women could have it all but the reality of combining her BBC career with being a mother of three is, she admits, jolly tough. "I have feelings of having to please both work and family and of compromise and guilt. I often wonder if my kids are upset when I'm working long hours," says Yorkshire-born Sophie, 40, who is married to a Fulham estate agent. "At my school I was taught 'learn to think not to cook'. I was brought up with the mantra that women can have it all. I've had three children in five years and mixing a career and children has been an awful lot more complicated than I thought it would be." Miss Raworth will air her views on working women in a documentary she has made with Newsnight's Justin Rowlatt, a father of three. Of her findings for the programme she says: "It started as a laugh but I felt utterly drained by some men's attitudes that women should basically stay at home."



In the midst of Westminster's angst about dodgy expenses claims last week, **David Cameron** allowed himself a night off to slip into his local cinema in Notting Hill to watch *The Loop*, the satirical film about Government spin doctors. "He was convulsed with laughter," reports my girl with the tub of toffee popcorn, who was sitting directly behind the Tory leader and his two male friends. The part Cameron enjoyed best was Steve Coogan playing the irate son of a woman whose garden wall is about to collapse because of neglect by a Government minister. Such a prescient parallel with Peter Mandelson's real-life expenses submission for £1,500 for lopping trees at his home in Hartlepool. The claim was essential, Lord Mandelson insisted, because "after complaints from my neighbours, action was required to stop my trees undermining the dividing wall between our homes."



As if you haven't heard enough from **Heather Mills**, the garrulous harpie has joined the social networking site Twitter after complaining that people were impersonating her. The ex-wife of Sir Paul McCartney graciously informs us that she will be using Twitter to share her vegan recipes and "feelings on any number of things". "I'll be tweeting on issues close to my heart," promises the former nude model. "It seems there have been quite a few people pretending to be me, twittering in my name. How very dare they!" More to the point, who would want to?

**GORDON RAMSAY** faces more embarrassment this week when his alleged mistress of seven years, the fragrant **SARAH SYMONDS**, left, will be interviewed about her high unusual appearance as an extra on the *Hell's Kitchen* set in Los Angeles. Ramsay, who has always denied an affair with Sarah, faces questions from his wife Tana about how the sultry author managed to get a VIP table on the US show in December 2007. Shots of 28-year-old Sarah in a leopardskin top enjoying Ramsay's fine dining have just been broadcast in the US and from her LA lair the Welsh-born writer tells me: "We'd actually had a row a few days before I went on the show so it was a make-up treat. Gordon said I could bring some friends and I must say it was a great day out. I expect Gordon will have some explaining to do to Tana but that is up to him. "I have moved on. Barbara Walters and Whoopi Goldberg are interviewing me on Wednesday about my work with mistresses. Since I revealed my relationship with Gordon 38,000 women have emailed me their tales of being a mistress." I can further reveal that Miss Symonds is in talks with US TV about a series on risqué relationships. While the Ramsay mess with Sarah returns to her Welsh bolt hole she is creating a successful career as an infidelity aunt, while poor old Gordon's empire looks a little burnt around the edges these days.



WONDERFUL TIME: For Prue Leith and Sir Ernest Hall

It's been a slow-cooking romance but things are heating up between casserole queen **Prue Leith** and her septuagenarian squire, property tycoon **Sir Ernest Hall**. Since the break-up of his second marriage Sir Ernest, who is also a celebrated concert pianist, has been romancing Miss Leith at his estate in Lanzarote and making regular trips to see her at her homes in Notting Hill and the Cotswolds. Now he tells me the one end of his 34-year marriage is finalised, he plans to propose to Prue, 69, a judge on the TV series *Great British Menu*, whose historian husband Rayne Kruger died seven years ago. He twinkles: "I hope she does become the next Lady Hall but I have to get divorced first. I want to spend more time with her because she has transformed my life. It's been the most marvellous experience." The Lancashire-born businessman has known Prue some 20 years but love blossomed only recently. "When my wife Sarah decided she didn't want to live with me any more, Prue came to visit and we fell in love. We just had a wonderful time together. I love playing the piano for her. She has lots of my recordings on CD and she loves cooking for me. I'm good at tidying up." And although he's 79, Sir Ernest feels he and Prue will have a long and rosy future. "My mother died only last year aged 106, so I'm sure we will have plenty of years left to enjoy together."



GRILLING: Sarah Symonds appeared on Gordon Ramsay's *Hell's Kitchen* show





OFFER: Duchess of York, Sir Richard Branson and Beatrice

No wonder Sir Richard Branson is the man whose mobile number the Royals like to have on speed dial when they need help with a flight or a free holiday.

The twinkling-eyed tycoon has, of course, helped ease the passages of Prince William and Kate Middleton by allowing the pair to relax on his private island, Necker, and the Duchess of York can always rely on an upgrade when she uses Virgin Atlantic.

So when Branson heard that the Duke of York and his two daughters had had to cancel their booking of a ski chalet in Klosters next season because of a rental company's liquidation, he promptly offered Andrew use of his nine-bedroom lodge in Verbier.

Should the Yorks choose to accept (and, on previous form, why wouldn't they?) Beatrice and Eugenie can look forward to frolicking in either the indoor swimming pool or outdoor hot tub at Branson's alpine roost, which would cost mere mortals £95,700 for seven nights in mid-February.

# Adam Helliker

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Picture: ALAN DAVIDSON

# Helliker

The man who knows the people you'd like to know...



Relations between JUDE LAW and his ex-wife SADIE FROST have mostly been highly cordial, so much so that their chums have often mused about a reconciliation between the pair, who were divorced in 2003 and who have three children together.

However, when it was revealed two months ago that the weak-willed Jude had impregnated aspiring American actress Samantha Burke (who is due to give birth on October 6, the night of his premiere as Hamlet in New York), things became distinctly chilly between them.

"Sadie was appalled at what the effect would be on their own children. She really let Jude have both barrels about being so irresponsible," reports a friend. "Remember she's had to suffer all this before when it was revealed he was sleeping with the kids' nanny when he was going out with Stenna Miller."

Happily there has now been a thawing, with Jude making up with Sadie at a party in London last weekend for their son Rudy's seventh birthday.

I'm told: "Jude made a family promise to Sadie and the children: no more surprises, they come first. He said that he will not be having any sort of relationship with Samantha and this new baby, apart from through lawyers. In fact he's invited Sadie and the kids to come to Broadway and present a united front for the first night of Hamlet."

# Snowdon thaws out

AFTER a bruising week in which he was accused of having a fling with loose-tongued society interior designer Nicky Haslam, there is, at least, one consolation for Lord Snowdon.

While Snowdon deals with the fallout from Haslam's forthcoming memoirs (in which he is described as having "a brief romance" with the openly gay Haslam shortly before he married Princess Margaret), the photographer has been reunited with an old flame, Marjorie Wallace.

Happily, Tony Snowdon (who has always remained silent when faced with chatter about his alleged bisexuality) has now kissed and made up with Miss Wallace, whom he has known for three decades, involving a spot earlier this year.

Marjorie, founder of the mental

health charity Sane, upset Snowdon when she talked a little too freely for his taste about their affair. There was also a suggestion that she had alerted a photographer to snap them together at his favourite restaurant, the Caprice, in London's St James.

The capricious Snowdon was said to be furious and banished the flame-haired Miss Wallace for some months but now they are back cooing happily.

"He phones me every day. You can't fall out with Tony for long because he is so loveable," she tells me. "Our friendship is as strong as it ever was."

Although he now has to walk with a stick and will be 80 next March, the charismatic Snowdon still retains a healthy appetite for the opposite sex. Indeed many an impressionable female has been invited to join him to "examine the

photographic collection" at his Victorian villa in Kensington.

But throughout all prapric peregrinations (and even through his second marriage to Lucy Lindsay-Hogg, from whom he is still not divorced) Marjorie Wallace has remained his most steadfast companion.

The two first met in the Seventies when Marjorie was writing investigative reports for the Sunday Times Magazine and Snowdon joined her on assignments as a photographer. She has said she was at first "totally intimidated" by him but they soon became lovers.

Today Miss Wallace, now 64, diplomatically sidesteps any inquiry about whether she and Tony continue to enjoy a physical relationship. She smiles: "All I can say is that he has been the most marvelous presence in my life and I hope he always will be."



OLD FRIENDS: Marjorie Wallace and Lord Snowdon



When the sensitive Roddy Llewellyn, above, squirmed Princess Margaret, he always used to complain that one of the duties that left him drained and sapped his energy (not that; stop sniggering at the back) was accompanying the Queen's sister around the dance floor.

So I'm amused to hear that gardening expert Sir Roddy (who inherited his baronet's title on the death of his much-missed brother Dai) was enticed away from his vegetable patch in Warwickshire by the producers of Strictly Come Dancing.

"They talked him into it, despite his reservations, but he pulled out pretty early on because he said he found it all just too much hard work," says a chum.

Shame, really. He always loved being theatrical. After all, as he boasted, he did have a small part in Charley's Aunt.

Since leaving prison, where he was sent for fraud, Lord Brocket has made his name appearing on some pretty tacky TV programmes. Now the urbane peer is working on a more serious subject, though, producing a documentary about Blechley Park, the base at which code-breakers achieved the work credited with taking two years off the war and saving thousands of lives.

Unfortunately the BBC, for which he was making the programme, has pulled the plug, lamely saying there was "no longer room in the schedules", leaving Charles Brocket to seek funding abroad.

"The Americans are very interested in making it, which is sad because I really think it's something the BBC should be doing," says Charles, whose second wife Harriet has just given birth to a daughter.

"Blechley is running out of money and is now staffed by people in their late 80s who used to work there but when they're gone so is the story. The work done at Blechley saved so many lives. It's more important in world history than the battles of Waterloo and Trafalgar."



Cheering news, or maybe not, for fans of Men Behaving Badly, Martin Clunes, above left, says he has been in "discussions" about the original team (Neil Morrissey, above right, Caroline Quentin and Leslie Ash) doing a one-off special.

"I suppose it would be called Old Men Behaving Badly. Not that I believe that I personally look at all old, although time has not been kind to Neil, who I think has aged rather badly," quips Clunes, 47. "It could happen but it's kind of fun to get the fans wondering, then to say we will and then not do it anyway."

"Besides, I wonder if it's wise to revisit something that did so well when it was at its peak. It used to get 14 million viewers in its day but I don't think that's possible now."

So will Alan Clark's family be selling or donating his salacious handwritten diaries to a university? Now that biographer Ian Trewin has exhausted the literary possibilities of the volumes there is no further commercial use for them.

Not according to his son Andrew (who bears a strong resemblance to his hawk-faced father). "No, we will keep them for the grandchildren. What's the point of giving them away? Look at poor old Ted Heath, who left all his papers at his old house in Salisbury and now nobody can afford the upkeep of the place."

Former Guards officer Brocket says that besides raising public awareness about Blechley his aim is "to shame this useless government into providing finance to keep the place going".

The comic actor Alan Davies has outed himself as a child kleptomaniac, with an impressive line in pilfered-to-order goods when he was at school in east London. Explains the Jonathan Creek star: "There was a wonderful character in The Fast Show, a Paul Whitehouse videotape, who'd say, 'I'll nick anything, me! I was exactly like that. People would ask me to get them a magazine. I'd say [taps nose]. Leave it with me.' I used to nick O-level pass cards from the bookshop, little handheld things with notes on biology or chemistry. I'd sell them for 10p and everyone in my year bought one."

Aldis Davies, who last week announced he and his wife (writer Katie Muskell) are expecting their first child. "It was all about the feeling of getting something and nobody being able to take it away. I think that's the essence of kleptomaniac."



The strictly organised world of Lady Bamford, left, icily elegant wife of CB billionaire Sir Anthony Bamford, has been rudely interrupted by the intrusion of a fire at her pride and joy, the Daylesford farm shop in Gloucestershire.

Customers browsing through the displays of pricey pomegranates and coiffured courgettes were evacuated after a gas-fuelled barbecue set light to an awning and fire quickly spread through the shop on the Bamfords' 1,500-acre manicured Cotswolds estate. "Carole Bamford is used to being in control of all aspects of the shop so she was very shocked by the fire. In fact she was so angry she started smoking," whispers a quivering member of staff, presumably referring to Lady B's occasional need for a cigarette, rather than an act of self-configuration.

It was certainly "doors to manual" for former air stewardess Carole as her lunchtime shoppers were ushered away and had to watch their organic sausage being burnt to a cinder. Fortunately the shop and café, where regulars include Liz Hurley, Kate Winslet and Peter Mandelson, was partially reopened yesterday.

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KILLER IDEA: Sophie (with fiancé Jamie) wants to write a murder story

Supermodel turned cook and author **Sophie Dahl** has revealed her latest literary ambition: to write about murder. Roald Dahl's granddaughter is already a published novelist as well as the author of a cookbook but she told a Cheltenham Literature Festival audience: "I really want to write a noir. I love murder mysteries. That's my secret passion." Sophie, accompanied by her fiancé, jazz singer **Jamie Cullum**, is currently filming a TV cookery series based on her book *Miss Dahl's Voluptuous Delights*.

# Adam Helliker

The man who knows the people you'd like to know...

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Picture: GARETH CATTERMOLE/Getty



Fans of **ELLE MACPHERSON**, 46, should reach for their hankies now, as I reveal that she is thinking of heading home to Australia after a series of setbacks. The supermodel made the tough decision after her television career in America came to an abrupt halt last month when the sitcom *The Beautiful Life*, in which she had a starring role, was cancelled after just two episodes. And if that wasn't enough, the mother of two sons, Flynn, 11, and Aurelius Cy, six, from her union with hedge fund financier Arpad Busson, had to cut the £9.5million price tag on her Notting Hill mansion by £2million. She bought it after the businessman ended their relationship in 2005. He is now engaged to actress **Uma Thurman**. Even though Elle's fortunes may have suffered a setback, those of her five-year-old labradoodle have done rather better. The pooch has snapped up a five-figure modelling contract. **Bella**, or *The Dogbody* as she is now known, will be the face, and presumably tail, of doggy design company **Dogside.com**, which is nothing to sniff at.

# Life not a ball for sad Gavin



STRAIN: Gavin Henson and Charlotte Church

DESPITE a plethora of pictures published of Charlotte Church and her partner Gavin Henson messing about on their £800,000 yacht in Swansea Marina, life for the couple is far from plain sailing. Friends are concerned for the injury-plagued rugby star Henson, 27, who has been trying to come to terms with the idea that he may never play again. Currently on voluntary unpaid leave from his team, the Ospreys, the Welsh national hero hasn't picked up a ball since last April and has been walking the hills above the £800,000 farmhouse he shares with Charlotte in the Vale of Glamorgan contemplating a future without the game that has been his life. "He is feeling frustrated and marginalised," discloses a worried friend. "He is tired of being on indefinite leave and wants to feel good about himself again, not just as a father and boyfriend but as a career man. He is deeply troubled at the moment and Charlotte is trying to rescue him." The 23-year-old child singing prodigy, who has two children with Henson, Ruby, two, and 10-month-old Dexter, has turned to compulsive cleaning to cope with the stress. "It hasn't been easy for Charlotte because Gavin is quite an introverted chap and doesn't wear his heart on his sleeve like she does." So what's next? When not wielding a dustpan and brush, the "voice of an angel", who met the hunky fly-half five years ago, is anxious to move her own life on. "Charlotte is keen to pick up her music career and Gavin has been supportive. So it could be that he will become a house-husband while Charlotte concentrates on her career." Fortunately Henson, who played in all of Wales's Six Nations Games in 2006 but has never been in a World Cup, loves being a hands-on dad. "The children are a huge comfort to him," adds the friend, "and at least he can play ball with them in the garden."



It wasn't the comments from the *Strictly Come Dancing* judges that browned off **Oxo mum Lynnda Bevingham** but the fake bake. While it made contestants look sun-kissed on screen, it had a less flattering effect on the duffel cover that the *Loose Women* presenter shares with her third husband, property developer **Michael Pattemore**, 54. "I have an obsession with clean sheets," trills the feisty scenegamian, who *frontloaded* off the dance marquee last weekend. "The problem was that we were all sprayed with fake tan to make us look good under the lights but it turned my lovely sheets brown and cost me a fortune in laundry."

Picture: RICHARD YOUNG/Rex Features



BACK TO MUM'S: Ben and his wife Kate

It is just as well **Lady Annabel Goldsmith** hasn't been tempted to downsize the eight-bedroom, Grade II-listed Georgian home that she owns on the edge of Richmond Park, since more members of her family seem to be moving in than moving out. The mother of six and grandmother of nine has not only "done up" a property in the grounds for her son **Zac**, the aspiring Tory MP, 33, who went back to Mumsey after separating from his wife **Sheherazade** last year, as I was the first to disclose, but she has also just fluffed-up the pillows in the spare bedrooms for her youngest son, **Ben**, 27, his wife, banking heiress **Kate Rothschild**, and the couple's three children. Venture capitalist **Ben** sold his six-bedroom home in west London last year for \$6.95million and moved the family to a new pad in Kensington, which is currently being renovated. "It is like a kibbutz at Annabel's," declares a close friend. "There are children and animals everywhere (Annabel has five dogs) and when **Jemima** descends for Sunday lunch with her boys it is like a campsite. There are even tents in the garden." Fortunately Annabel's Ormeley Lodge is set in six acres of grounds so there is plenty of space for overspill, which is much needed when her ex son-in-law, the former Pakistani cricketer **Imran Khan**, comes to stay. He turns the back garden into a mini Lord's so he and his two sons from his marriage to Annabel's daughter **Jemima** can practise their googlies.

The Queen is looking for two beatkeepers to look after the deer, pheasant and grouse on her estate in Scotland. Both positions, which involve being in charge of a particularly beat or patch of land, offer "an attractive remuneration package, including accommodation and other benefits". Only fit outdoorsy types need apply, though, as there is a lot of ground to cover. The estate comprises 18,659 hectares, which includes **Balmoral**, **Birkhall** and **Glen Doll**. Oh, and there are also seven munsros (mountains over 3,000ft).

Edited by Jane Slade

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The last time an attractive nanny was hired by **Jude Law**, it ended in tears; she found herself discussing a lot more than potty training with him and her subsequent tabloid tale of the actor's night-time manoeuvres put paid to his engagement to Sienna Miller.

Jude had spent a month sharing a duvet with the nanny, Daisy Wright, until he was rumbled when one of his children walked in on them. A grovelling public apology to Sienna (in which he said he was "deeply ashamed" of his affair) failed to convince Miss Miller he was capable of monogamy.

Sienna was, of course, proved right. Roving-eyed Jude went on to have a "meaningless" fling with American model Samantha Burke, who gave birth to his love child two months ago.

Now Mr Law has seen the light: with the help of ex-wife Sadie Frost he has employed a "manny" to look after his three children who remain in London while he plays Hamlet on Broadway.

Reports a chum: "Jude felt his son Rudy needed a young man to take his place playing football and talking about sport. He and Sadie have employed a 19-year-old guy who is essentially a male au pair. A manny doesn't get PMT and doesn't go on diets."

While friends quip that this is one nanny Jude won't be tempted by, what about Sadie? After all, she's 44 and has a penchant for younger men, having broken the tender hearts of several toyboys.

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The man who knows the people you'd like to know...



The makers of Channel 4's drama-documentary about the Queen are hoping that it will be a howling success despite one key scene featuring the monarch and Margaret Thatcher being interrupted by noisy voles.

Actress **Susan Jameson**, left, who plays the Queen in the Eighties, says: "We were filming at Longleat and were just coming to the end of one scene that we were all rather pleased with, when all of the voles in the safari park started howling because it was time for their lunch. "It didn't really seem right that the Queen and her prime minister would have had wolves interrupting their discussions, so we had to reshoot it."



Picture: SUZAN/Empics/PA

# Spencer's selling his stately style

**A**S THE number of visitors to the final resting place of the Princess of Wales on the Althorp estate has inevitably declined, her brother Earl Spencer is busy with other ways to drum up interest to help pay for the upkeep of his stately home in Northamptonshire.

While the 16th-century house sits shrouded in scaffolding amid renovation work, Charles Spencer is drumming up funds on a 19-city tour of America during which he is selling facsimiles of favourite pieces of furniture from Althorp.

Although he is happy to talk about the provenance of his goods to the potential buyers who have gathered to see him at upmarket furniture emporiums, he has made it clear that he is not keen on answering any questions about his late sister.

"Mention Princess Diana and that's it, it shuts down immediately," visitors in Florida were told by the organiser of one event.

However, royal fans in America (where Diana continues to attract a strong following) are delighted



DAZZLING: Charles Spencer exhibits Diana's wedding dress

that the Earl has agreed to speak about the Princess at a gathering in Georgia. Since the memorable eulogy that he gave at Diana's funeral in Westminster Abbey 12 years ago, Spencer has been notably unwilling to discuss his sister in public.

His talk on an invited audience in Atlanta will be combined with the final appearance of the American leg of the exhibition of Diana artefacts, including her wedding dress and school reports, which has been touring overseas during the winter months when Althorp has been closed to the public.

As far as the sale of the separate

Althorp Collection of furniture he has been touting in America, the twice-married Earl is said to be quietly pleased with the way the items are selling. The 350-piece collection ranges from the large (a rosewood desk for £16,400) to the dainty (a copy of the cup and saucer in which Marie Antoinette was served her morning hot chocolate).

His favourite piece is the Washington chest, an oak item that belonged to George Washington's ancestors and now houses Spencer's tennis gear. The reproduction (which, like the rest of the collection, is made in Vietnam rather than England) comes complete with "historic" red wine stains and a price tag of £2,500.

For those who can't afford to buy from the Althorp furniture range, there's always the website for the Diana exhibition, where one can purchase such items as a rather jolly bright pink watch emblazoned with a coronet. Made in China, it's a snip at £80 and, like other items in the gift collection, 10 per cent goes to the Diana Memorial Fund.



SECRETS: Jane Andrews and the Duchess

The Duchess of York may feel somewhat safer now that her former dresser Jane Andrews is back behind bars, given her former employer's anger over the lack of support she received at her trial for the murder of Thomas Cressman.

But the extra time the vexatious Miss Andrews may now have to serve for her escape will give her more opportunity to complete the memoirs she began writing two years ago, in which she intends to recount the secrets about the Royal Family she was told by the Duchess.

And to dish the dirt on the lovers she says she shared with Fergie.

"Sarah has always been worried about the damage which could be done by Jane, who she once treated as a confidante and friend," says a royal aide.

"Her worry now is that all the coverage about her escape means there will be more interest in such a kiss-and-tell book, but she knows there are rules about criminals not being seen to benefit financially while in prison."

Not necessarily, says publisher John Blake, who has produced many a "true crime" success. "I've published books written by prisoners like Charles Bronson: there are always ways to pay someone else. Besides, the prison service takes the pragmatic view that it's better for someone to have money when they leave prison rather than return to crime. As far as taking on Jane Andrews as an author, I would have to give it a lot of thought."

Incidentally, anyone looking for this book of royal revelations, should it ever see the light of day, should not confuse it with the work of another Jane Andrews, whose books such as *Zoe: The Tooth Fairy*, are aimed for the rather more exacting children's market.

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The pile of screwed-up paper in the corner of **SOPHIE DAHL'S** kitchen is growing as she rewrites the guest lists for when she marries mop-haired musician **JAMIE CULLUM** next year.

The couple (whose engagement you first read about here) are getting hitched in July at a hotel in Hertfordshire, where 170 of their closest chums will have dinner in a marquee and, given the bridegroom's inability to see a grand piano without tinkling it, they will also enjoy a few jazzy numbers from Cullum's latest album.

Sophie, 31, had wanted a winter ceremony this coming January but the Bambi-eyed blonde had to defer to the increasing success of her diminutive band as he will be away on a concert tour. Not that the Swindon-born crooner is letting fame go to his head, as he points out: "If I'm ever tempted to believe any of the hype I just recall the day when I was eating in a restaurant with my manager who'd brought along his baby, who I was holding."

"A rather large Irish woman came up to the table and ordered me to put the baby down. She told me that I shouldn't be allowed to carry a baby. I said, 'Why on earth not?' and she looked at me accusingly and said, 'Because you're that Pete Doherty, aren't you?'"

Meanwhile ex-model Sophie is still "horrified" with what she views as people's obsession with Jamie's height. She says the fact that he is shorter than her is no big deal. **Pete's Miss Dahl:** "We have been treated like we're a carnival show. There's only eight inches in it."

That's what they all say.

One would have to have a heart of stone not to feel sympathy for **Jan Leeming**, who has had her car vandalised three times in four months.

The former newsreader and I'm A Celebrity... contestant regularly leaves her Ford Focus near her home in Dover while she travels by train to London, where she is appearing in the West End production of *Calendar Girls*. She says she has to park in a quiet street because the station car park is "woefully inadequate".

The last time her side window was smashed, Miss Leeming, 66, admits she got home and "wept with the sheer frustration at the kind of world in which we now live".

"My generation had a sense of pride and a desire to better ourselves. We had respect for other people and their hard-earned property. Now it's a world without shame or respect."

There is, however, a glimmer of hope in this tale. Miss Leeming would like to thank the Good Samaritan who covered her passenger window with plastic when it was vandalised last week but did not leave a name.

Prince Harry is the happy owner of a cheeky CD, produced in aid of the Afghan Heroes Charity, which was set up by eight mothers whose sons all died on the battlefield last summer.

Although the title of the compilation (*He Drinks Tequila And She Talks Dirty In Spanish*) could allude to his own romances with the talented linguist Chelsy Davy, Harry has written a nice thank-you letter to the album's producers.

The ever optimistic **Carole Middleton**, mother of Prince William's longtime squeeze **Kate**, is busy sending out catalogues of her *Party Pieces* company in time for Christmas gatherings.

The front cover bears an image of a young girl wearing a diamond tiara and inside there are four pages tantalisingly devoted to "princess parties". Just keep on dropping those hints, Mrs Middleton.

BBC sports presenter **John Inverdale** is happy to take on most broadcasting jobs but he drew the line at whirling around the ballroom for *Strictly Come Dancing*.

"I was asked to do it but I said no. I'd just be useless, really hopeless," said Inverdale at the Sporting Inspirations dinner in aid of the disability charity Scope. "People like Matt Dawson and Austin Healey have all said how much fun it was but it strikes me as unbelievably hard work."

"I can appreciate that it's good to learn a new skill but what I'd rather do, if there was such a thing, is *Strictly Come Piano*. One of my great ambitions is to learn to play the piano."

"Or how about *Strictly Guitar* Playing? I promise then that I would stay up until 3am practising my scales, and at the end I'd be so pleased to come out being able to do something I couldn't do before."

