



Arnie Wilson started hunting down “big names” after being hired by a news agency to telephone titled people and charm them into divulging stories he would sell to Fleet Street gossip columns. But the “celebrity” landscape was changing. Instead of targeting lords, baronets, knights and their ladies, he was determined instead to find “real” celebrities, persuading them with a combination of cheek, charm and chutzpah to divulge funny and intimate anecdotes for publication.

#### About the author

Although Arnie Wilson comes from an artistic background (his father, Bernard, was a composer who met his wife Joan, a concert pianist, at London’s Wigmore Hall where they were both featured in a concert) he has inherited few of their talents. ‘I failed to learn the French horn, my favourite instrument, but did manage to play the flute in the Canterbury Youth Orchestra for a while,’ he says. It was as a journalist rather than as a flautist that Wilson made his mark. He spent 15 years in television – on screen for 10 of them – and several years in Fleet Street, before becoming the *Financial Times* ski correspondent and skiing every day of the year in 1994 (thus entering the *Guinness Book of Records*). He also wrote regularly for the FT, occasionally interviewing celebrities for the paper’s ‘Lunch With The FT’ feature. In 2001 he became editor of *Ski+board*, the Ski Club of Great Britain’s magazine. Wilson, who has four skiing daughters from his first marriage, is the author of several books, but this is the first that is not about skiing. He and his Swedish wife, Vivianne – who were married on the mountain at Jackson Hole, Wyoming in 2000 – live in West Sussex, England.

#### Review - John Swinfield

Big Name Hunting by Fleet Street stalwart Arnie Wilson is just knockout! Vastly entertaining it offers an enticing glimpse into the often madcap world of the Fourth Estate. Packed full of hilarious encounters with genuine big names – rather than some of today’s two-bit celebs – it’s a non-stop scream from first page to last. It’s also, in its very readable way, extraordinarily informative. From rock stars to royalty, poseurs to Presidents, Arnie Wilson’s been there – done it – got the tee-shirt and lived to tell the tale. It’s a riotous, rumbustious, rollicking good read. And it’s hugely recommended.

**Category:** Non-Fiction

**ISBN:** 978-1-911070-73-3  
978-1-911070-74-0 (ebook)

#### Format:

eBook – 19 Oct 2017  
Paperback – 26 Sep 2017  
(202 pages)

**Available at** [tslbooks.uk](http://tslbooks.uk) & through online retailers

**Price:** dependent on retailer –  
TSL £10.96  
Retail price: £15.31  
Ebook: £2.99

**Book title:** Big Name Hunting  
**By:** Arnie Wilson  
Foreword: Heston Blumenthal

# Big Name Hunting

by Arnie Wilson

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