



Susannah Tarbush reviews  
**Memories: The charms  
 and follies of a  
 lifetime's publishing  
 by Naim Attallah**

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## “Hallowed be thy Naim”

The Palestine-born publisher and businessman Naim Attallah, long-time chairman of Quartet Books, has had an extraordinary career since arriving in Britain in 1948 from Haifa, where he was born in 1931. In his early years in the UK he worked as a fitter in an electrical components factory, a steeplejack, a hospital porter and a nightclub bouncer.

He then entered the world of banking and business and prospered. In 1976 he bought Quartet Books from its founders. Later, he added feminist publisher The Women's Press to his Namara Group. He also expanded into magazine publishing, owning *Literary Review*, *The Oldie* and the jazz and contemporary music magazine *The Wire*.

His talents as a cultural entrepreneur took him into film, theatre and TV production. In addition, he was for some years the chief executive of Asprey, the luxury goods business based around the iconic Bond Street store.

Attallah became known as one of the most colourful characters on the British publishing and literary scene, known for his lavish publishing parties, and the succession of beautiful young women, widely known as 'Naim's harem', who worked at Quartet and in other parts of his empire headquartered at 27/29 Goodge Street, in the Fitzrovia area of central London.

Attallah's publishing parties were star-studded extravagant affairs.

