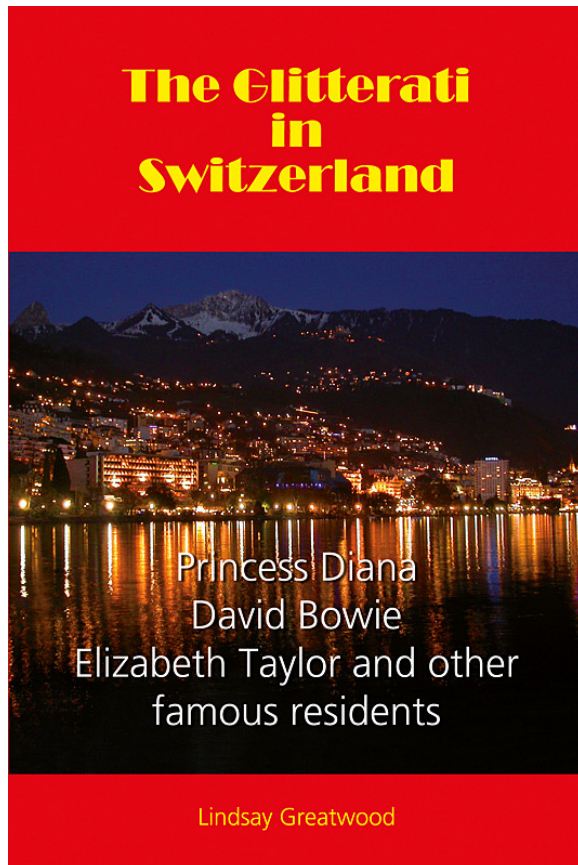


The Glitterati in Switzerland

Angie Bowie sat at a café table in Lausanne and stared straight ahead. She'd taken something to help her through the morning, but the pain was still there. The marriage had lasted over a decade but, finally, the party was over and she and her husband, David, had agreed to meet near the lawyers' offices before signing the divorce papers. Not that they'd ever had a conventional marriage. They had decided, from the beginning, to embrace everything and everyone that came their way. The Seventies had been a roller-coaster ride of taboo-breaking, creativity, fame and, now, fortune; but Angie would no longer be there to share David's glittering world. From Ziggy Stardust and Aladdin Sane to the Thin White Duke and beyond, Angie and David had ingested a variety of cultural and chemical stimulants in a bid to keep the party going. But parties run out of steam and they have to be paid for; open marriages hurt after a while and chemicals become addictive, no longer stimulating the mind.



Slowly, David was reorganising his life, reinventing himself once more, in much the same way as actor-singer Noël Coward did when the occasion demanded it. Like David, Coward had moved to Switzerland to recoup the financial losses he'd suffered during years of bad management. Like David, he had escaped his working-class background using his considerable talent coupled with hard work. Both men had turned themselves into astute businessmen, as well as creative artists. They were not the only entertainers to make a home on the shores of Lake Geneva; the list is long and star-studded: Freddie Mercury, Keith Richards, Christopher Lee, Van Johnson, David Niven, Peter Sellers, Elizabeth Taylor, Roger Moore, Richard Burton, Alistair MacLean, Peter Ustinov, Audrey Hepburn, Yul Brynner, William Holden, Capucine, Coco Chanel, Georges Simenon, Charlie Chaplin, Graham Greene, George Sanders, James Mason, Vladimir Nabokov and many others; all international artists whose work continues to dazzle. They were rightly called the Glitterati: their lives were glamorous, dramatic and headline-grabbing. If David Bowie believed he would lead a quiet and orderly existence in Switzerland that would restore him to good health, he would soon have to think again. While Angie partied at their home in Blonay, David sampled the decadent delights of Berlin. Their lives had irretrievably gone in separate directions and would eventually fall apart and need reconstructing, but not before the couple had met in Lausanne on that day in 1980 to sign off their glam-rock era.

Bowie became a businessman and an Internet entrepreneur and married again in Switzerland. Like other rock stars, such as Rolling Stone, Keith Richards, Bowie used his years in Switzerland to turn his life around. Richards entered a clinic in Vevey in the early 1970's to come off heroin and spent four years living in Villars with Anita Pallenberg and their children, where they learned to ski. Like many famous Swiss residents, their careers continued to shine brightly. The media had a name for them; they called them the Glitterati.



Paperback • 15 x 23 cm • 244 pages • ISBN 978-2-940509-02-7 • Download PDF • © 2012 John James Publications