



Press Release

The Friendly Fiesta flies again!

When, after a gap of three years, the Westcountry Balloon Fiesta returned to the Tavistock calendar last September, it was a huge success. Thousands of visitors flocked to the Crowndale site over the weekend to see the wonderful sight of hot air balloons once again in the skies over Tavistock, its return having been made possible by substantial sponsorship from Robert Wiseman Dairies and support from Tavistock Town Council. The Lions Club of Tavistock and Tavistock Round Table, the joint organisers of the event, are delighted to announce that with the continued support from Wisemans, the Fiesta will be staged again this year over the first weekend in September.

Duncan Carrick, Wiseman's Senior Sales Manager for the area says "we are delighted to be involved with the Westcountry Balloon Fiesta once again in Tavistock as our sponsorship of the event not only supports the West Country Wiseman brand and our customers, but it also allows us to support the community and help raise money for local charities. Our own 'black and white' balloon with the registration G-OMOO was at the Fiesta last year and we are pleased to say that it will be flying again this year. Our road show was a tremendous success and by the end of the weekend we had completely sold out of all our milk and orange drink products plus most of our promotional items including our famous black and white wellies!"

The event will take place on Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th September at Crowndale with the gates opening at 3pm on both days. Last year, during the afternoon, members of the public were allowed into with ballooning arena and had the opportunity of examining the balloon envelopes and baskets and even helped with the tethering of some inflated balloons. This proved to be extremely popular with both the balloon crews and the public and we're delighted it will once again be included in this year's programme. Balloon ascents will start around 5-5.30pm each day and at dusk on the Saturday only, there will be a Night Glow when a number of tethered balloons light their burners in time with music, which gives the impression of a number of huge light bulbs being switched on and off. This has always been one of the most popular parts of the Fiesta and usually attracts thousands of people, remembering of course that all ballooning activities are weather dependant.



Organised by the Lions Club of Tavistock & Tavistock Round Table

All profits to local charities & organisations



Responsibility for the safety and control of all ballooning activities during the Fiesta will be with the Exeter based public transport balloon flight operator Aerosaurus Balloons who will be operating public flights during the Fiesta and spaces can be booked in advance by contacting them on 01404 823102 or by visiting their web site at www.ballooning.co.uk.

Steve Grummitt, press officer for the Fiesta says: "Members of the Lions Club and Round Table are delighted that with the involvement of Robert Wiseman Dairies, the Fiesta is again in the Tavistock calendar as it proved to be so popular last year and with the charities that also attended, the event raised a considerable amount of money for local good causes."

For up-to-date information on the Westcountry Balloon Fiesta itself, visit the event web site at www.westcountryballoons.com or for more information on Robert Wiseman Dairies go to www.wiseman-dairies.co.uk.

ENDS

9th March 2011

PLEASE NOTE:

NOT FOR BROADCAST OR PUBLICATION UNTIL THURSDAY 17TH MARCH 2011

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Notes to Editors:

Robert Wiseman Dairies:

Robert Wiseman Dairies procures, processes and distributes more than one in four litres of fresh milk consumed in Britain, every day. Founded in East Kilbride in 1947 and listed on the London Stock Exchange in 1994, the company operates 7 dairies and 15 distribution depots in Britain, and employs more than 4,500 staff.

To access the very latest news, background information, and to down-load high resolution images, please visit their media centre at www.wiseman-dairies.presscentre.com

About the Westcountry Balloon Fiesta:

The Fiesta was first organised by the Lions Club of Tavistock in conjunction with the Western Region of the British Balloon and Airship Club (BBAC) in 1992 following a chance encounter between Lion David Inman and a balloon pilot on a train journey from London back to the West Country.

Over the years, the Westcountry Balloon Fiesta grew to be one of the top ballooning events in the country earning the reputation amongst the pilots and their crews of being the “friendly fiesta” due to the welcome that they received from the organisers and the people of West Devon.

In 1999, the Lions Club took the decision to move the event from the late May bank holiday weekend to the August bank holiday and at the same time teamed up with Tavistock Round Table to incorporate their “Day at the Races”, a popular pantomime horse racing event that they had been running in previous years.

This allowed the Fiesta to grow even further until 2007 when over the weekend, 166 balloon ascents were achieved watched by an estimated 15,000 people and as a consequence raising thousands of pounds for local charities.

However with increasing costs particularly for gas, the loss of the Tavistock College venue due to the installation of the athletics track and all weather training pitches and a lack of sponsor, the organisers decided not to stage the event until a new sponsor and venue could be found. This happened last year with Robert Wiseman Dairies coming on board and by using the two fields beyond the junior football pitches at Crowndale, courtesy of the land owner and John Dawe who farms the land.

The reduction in the size of the launch site did mean that the number of balloons at the event was limited to around 30 and the Fiesta now concentrates on ballooning activity only which will be supported by a limited number of food outlets and bar plus a small number of rides for the children.



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