



Press Release

Balloons set to fly again with the help of a Wiseman!

Before last Christmas, if a member of Tavistock Lions Club or Round Table had been asked the question "if and when will the hot air balloon fiesta would be returning?" the answer would have been "sorry, but I don't know". Ask that same question now and the answer will be totally different as, thanks to a considerable sponsorship commitment by Robert Wiseman Dairies and a grant from Tavistock Town Council, the magnificent sight of hot air balloons flying over Tavistock is set to return in September this year.

Wiseman procures, processes and distributes more than one in four litres of fresh milk consumed in Britain every day and has sites in Pensilva and Okehampton employing almost 200 local people. Duncan Carrick, Wiseman Senior Sales Manager for the area says "we are delighted to be supporting the Westcountry Balloon Fiesta in Tavistock and help it "get back off the ground. Our sponsorship of the event not only supports the West Country Wiseman brand and our customers, it also allows us to support the community where we have many employees and to help raise money for local charities. Our own 'black and white' balloon with the registration G-OMOO was at the last Fiesta and we are pleased to be making a return this year. Our road show will also be at the Fiesta so visitors will have the chance to sample our products, talk to our staff and even buy a pair of our infamous Wiseman wellies!"

The event which will take place on Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th September at Crowndale, is organised by Tavistock Lions Club and Tavistock Round Table. Gates will open at 3pm on both days with ballooning activity such as tethering starting at 4pm and balloon ascents starting from around 5-5.30pm. 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 giving the impression of a number of huge light bulbs going on and off. This has always been one of the most popular parts of the Fiesta and usually attracts many hundreds of people remembering, of course, that all ballooning activities are weather dependant.



Organised by the Lions Club of Tavistock & Tavistock Round Table
Supported by Robert Wiseman Dairies & Tavistock Town Council
All profits to local charities & organisations



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 returning to the Tavistock calendar as it has been sorely missed by many people. We are also pleased that Tavistock Town Council are supporting the event with a grant of £1500 which will be used to improve the infrastructure at the Crowndale fields such as allowing easier access for vehicles and also for establishing a permanent balloon gas storage facility at a location within Tavistock for use this year and in the future.

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 which will be operating public flights during the Fiesta but due to their popularity, it is advisable to book in advance by contacting them on 01404 823102 or by visiting their web site at www.ballooning.co.uk.

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

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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 our media centre at www.wiseman-dairies.presscentre.com

About the Westcountry Balloon Fiesta:

The Fiesta was first organised by the Tavistock Lions Club 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 the last one in 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 that the 2007 now happened with the substantial financial partnership with Robert Wiseman Dairies and with the use of the two fields beyond the junior football pitches at Crowndale courtesy of land owner Miranda Toop and John Dawe who farms the land.

The reduction in the size of the launch site does mean that the number of balloons will be event would be the last one for the foreseeable future or at least until these issues had been resolved. This has limited to around 30 and the Fiesta will now concentrate 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.