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Lord Montagu welcomes the Wombles back to Beaulieu

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Lord Montagu and Mary Montagu-Scott with Orinoco and Great Uncle Bulgaria.

Lord Montagu welcomes The Wombles back to Beaulieu for the 50th anniversary of the Monorail there...

Beaulieu tells us:



(Image and all words from Beaulieu).

Lord Montagu marked the 50th anniversary of the Monorail in style with a feast of celebrations and special guests to mark 50 years of the oldest monorail in England.

Opened in July 1974, the Monorail has been a family favourite amongst visitors to the Beaulieu attraction, and to mark this special milestone, guests were invited to join in the fun filled anniversary event which included the return of some very special guests The Wombles, who attended the original opening 50 years ago.

Inspiration for the monorail came from Lord Montagu's father, Edward on a visit to the Montreal Expo in 1967, where he saw visitors transported around the fair via a mini rail system. Yesterday's celebrations were opened by Lord Montagu who thanked a number of guests who had played a part in the creation of Beaulieu's very own Monorail in the early 1970s. He added "It's very strange that something which to me as teenager seemed so modern and cutting edge has now gone full circle and become heritage and retro."

The Wombles were amongst those to return 50 years later after they opened the Monorail in 1974. Reliving their childhood memories of the opening, Lord Montagu and Mary Montagu-Scott invited Great Uncle Bulgaria and Orinoco onto stage for the grand cutting of a special anniversary cake, produced by Amanda Black of Milford On Sea.

Mary Montagu-Scott said "I was a huge Wombles fan and was so excited to meet them in 1974. I got to sit next to Wellington. I was very shy but we became great friends. It was a huge moment in my childhood and it was wonderful to recreate those memories today"

The Wombles were adapted into a popular stop-motion animated TV series that first aired in the UK from 1973 to 1975. The series was revived with new episodes in the 1990s, gaining a new generation of fans, many of whom couldn't wait to get their picture with the beloved characters known for their charm, humour and positive environmental message.

As well as the Wombles, the day was filled with live entertainment, including free face



painting for all the family. Visitors young and old put on their dancing shoes and got into the party mood with Laurence Marshall's One-Man Band. The fun, jazzy, interactive entertainer delighted visitors as they waited to board the famous 'Skytrain'. Laurence even hopped on board for a lap of the Monorail himself, keeping guests entertained with vintage and childhood classic songs as it passed through the National Motor Museum.

Visitors on the day were amongst the first to be able to get an opportunity to purchase a new range of Monorail anniversary merchandise in the Beaulieu Gift Shop including a limited-edition pin badge, snap bands, a soft plush toy, key rings and much more to take home to remember the day by.

Beaulieu is looking forward to welcoming lots of families across the summer holidays, where they can enjoy unlimited trips on the Monorail, whilst enjoying a range of extra activities as part of Beaulieu's summer holiday programme, including living history parades, phantasmagorical rides, and captivating new exhibitions throughout the attraction.

Visit www.beaulieu.co.uk for more information.