
**International Press Release
2 November, 2003**

**LAST CELEBRATION OF ANNIVERSARY OF EVEREST ASCENT TO TAKE
PLACE IN BERMUDA**

Bermuda is to play host to an extraordinary multicultural event later this month, over the weekend of 22-23 November. The Island, just weeks after the recent direct hit of Hurricane Fabian, will be hosting a programme of events dedicated to honouring the ascent of Everest 50 years ago, and global partnerships worldwide. Over the course of the weekend, funds will be raised for charitable projects that work to improve the lives of communities in the developing world, and in particular the children of Nepal.

Billed as the “*White Ice and Fire weekend*”, the event will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Tenzing Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary’s first ascent of Everest. The keynote speaker for the weekend will be Peter Hillary, the son of Sir Edmund Hillary. Peter himself climbed Everest last year, in honour of Tenzing and Hillary’s achievement 50 years ago.

The weekend will be supported by world-famous Australian Aboriginal group Yothu Yindi. Yothu Yindi also work with children at risk in their home of Arnhem Land, Australia, working with aboriginal children in their recording studio, through their school touring programme, and through educational programmes at their annual Garma festival. The theme, “White Ice and Fire”, is a reference to the snow-covered Himalayas and the heat of Australia’s Northern Territory.

A number of international celebrities have been invited, along with members of the original expedition and some of the world’s most prominent current climbers. Pete Athans, who has summited Everest seven times, and Brent Bishop, the first American legacy to summit Everest and the founder of an environmental foundation established to clean up the mountain, are expected to attend.

Events will include an educational workshop for Bermudian schoolchildren on Himalayan adventures and life’s challenges by Peter Hillary, public seminars on the Everest ascent and performances by Yothu Yindi to the Bermuda public. “The idea of the weekend is to celebrate global partnerships. We want to give as many people in Bermuda as possible the chance to meet and hear Peter Hillary and to see Yothu Yindi perform” said Sharon Beesley, one of the founders of The ISIS Foundation. “Bermuda is truly a global village, and is the perfect place to honour the achievements of Hillary and Tenzing.”

The weekend will culminate in a gala ball at Bermuda’s NATO hanger, with 800 people attending. Peter Hillary will be the guest speaker and attendees will rock the night away to the sounds of Yothu Yindi. The Island’s significant international business community is expected to be well represented, along with international visitors keen to meet such a diverse group of high achievers.

Peter Hillary confirmed: "I am delighted to represent my family at what promises to be an extraordinary series of events in Bermuda, to finish this year of celebration in great style. This small Island, with such a significant global reach, is the perfect place to honour partnerships across the world." Bermuda is one of the largest reinsurance markets in the world and is home to many of the worlds largest reinsurance companies.

Renee Webb, JP, MP, Minister for Tourism, Telecommunication and E-Commerce, said that the Government was delighted to be a part of this tremendous event. "It's a wonderful thing that our beautiful island has been chosen to be the venue for the last celebration of the anniversary of the Everest ascent. We will make sure that all our visitors receive a warm Bermuda welcome" she commented. "We particularly welcome the various community initiatives that are an integral part of the weekend, offering Bermudians the chance to meet and interact with such accomplished international friends."

The event has been organised by The ISIS Foundation, a Bermuda-based charity. "We are overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and support for White Ice and Fire that we have received from Bermuda" said Audette Exel of The ISIS Foundation, "we particularly want to thank our sponsors for their help in bringing together this weekend celebration. We also want to acknowledge the strong support of the Bermuda Government, and the Ministry of Tourism. We expect that the weekend will show the world that Bermuda is back on the map post Fabian, as a truly international location."

The ISIS Foundation is a Bermuda-based and registered charity that works with local community groups in Uganda and Nepal to fund and support development projects focused on maternal and child health care and education. The Hillary Himalayan Foundation is a New Zealand-based charity founded by Peter Hillary to fund and support health and education projects in the Everest region, including funding projects run by the Himalayan Trust, Sir Edmund Hillary's charitable organisation in Nepal.

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Selected media will be invited to attend. Press enquiries or requests to attend should be directed to Audette Exel as set out above.

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