



destea

department of
economic, small business development,
tourism and environmental affairs
FREE STATE PROVINCE

MEDIA STATEMENT

DIGITAL PLANETARIUM IS USED TO DEMONSTRATE ITS FULL CAPABILITIES

22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Bloemfontein: Since the official opening on the 1st November 2013, the Naval Hill Digital Planetarium has been visited by 12532 people of which 385 were teachers, 2872 were learners and 9197 were members of the public. The Naval Hill Planetarium provides shows and operates every day of the week and presents two shows per sitting. This project, which is inside a protected area, the only one in the centre of the city is envisaged to ensure that the Free State becomes the hub of eco and astro tourism in South Africa.

The planetarium, situated at the old Lamont-Hussey Observatory Building built in 1928 on Naval Hill, has been established by the University of the Free State (UFS) with the support of founding partners – the Department of Science and Technology (DST), the Free State Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA) and the Mangaung Metro Municipality (MMM). Other visitors to the planetarium are made up of engineering, ICT, groups, UFS students, church members and science fanatics just to mention a few.

Next step after opening and establishing the planetarium to learners, teachers, tourists, general public, science fanatics and engineering, the department is now illustrating and testing the technical capabilities of the system. Therefore the first full dome digital presentation day in South Africa will be presented at the planetarium today, Tuesday the 22nd September 2015. This is joint initiative between DESTEA and the UFS to raise awareness of the unique facility situated in Bloemfontein to benefit the Province as a whole.

This facility is ideally suited to entertain launches, school tours, educational and social events, private functions, general talks, musical shows, etc. The dozen high quality presentations will be from producers around the world and as varied as travelling in the universe to displaying 3D models of body cells images obtained in the lab.

The planetarium has with no doubt increased our international arrivals. It has added to the already existing tourism attractions of Heritage Site and Game Reserve found at Naval Hill. The planetarium promotes the Astro tourism in the province. This project has surely put Bloemfontein and the province as a whole on the international map and the city of roses is recognised as the learning hub of the Free State.

The media is invited to go to the presentation day at the planetarium.

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