

MEDIA RELEASE

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Planetariums - they're out of this world!

The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery will celebrate International Day of Planetariums with a wide range of shows in the Launceston Planetarium at Inveresk over the weekend.

The International Day of Planetariums is an annual event run under the auspices of the International Planetarium Society, and aims to promote knowledge of planetariums by bringing the magic of astronomy to everyone.

QVMAG Planetarium Coordinator Dr Martin George is the chair of international relations and former president of the society.

Across the world, International Day of Planetariums is celebrated on Sunday, March 8.

It is estimated that more than 152 million people visited planetariums last year worldwide.

Dr George said the goals of the International Day of Planetarium are to inform the public about planetariums: what they are and why they exist; to educate the public about the problem of light pollution; and to promote international exchanges and collaborations between planetariums of different countries.

"The role of planetariums is more relevant today than ever. With the advances in our knowledge of the Universe, better space technology than ever before, and the excitement of a possible human return to the Moon, planetariums are the ideal places to learn of these great steps forward," Dr George said.

On Sunday, the Launceston Planetarium will run four shows – at 10.30am and 11.30am and 1.30pm and 2.30pm – with the first show of the day being especially for children, with no lower age limit (the age limit for other Planetarium shows is five).

All Saturday Planetarium shows will run as normal at 2pm and 3pm.

As an extra attraction over the weekend, Dr George will present a free public talk entitled Astronomy Update at the Museum's auditorium at 12.30pm on both Saturday and Sunday.

This special talk is aimed at giving as many visitors as possible the chance to get up to date on what's happening in astronomy and space research. Find out about the largest known space explosion, hundreds of new satellites in orbit, how we discover planets belonging to other stars, and more!