

Freedom
PARK
a heritage destination

an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

FREEDOM PARK
QUARTERLY
BULLETIN



QUARTERLY STAKE HOLDER MAGAZINE

APRIL TO JUNE 2019

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The measurement by which any evolved society is assessed is how the past is acknowledged and how reconciliation is offered to those who have been previously discriminated against. This is the essence and the spirit of Freedom Park.

HoD Public Participation Ms M Makoela

The roots of Freedom Park initiative are clearly depicted in a statement delivered by the former President of South Africa, Dr Nelson Mandela, during the Freedom Day celebrations held in Umtata on 27 April 1999.

Said Dr Mandela: "It is a weakness on our part that we have yet to create a monument to remember all the South Africans who sacrificed their lives so that we could be free. With recent cabinet decision on this matter, the day will not be far off when we shall have a people's shrine, a Freedom Park, where we shall honour with all the dignity they deserve those who have endured pain so we could experience the joy of freedom."

Freedom Park is a constant affirmation of national identity and values and a celebration of the triumph of humanity that was realized when the country achieved democracy in 1994. The Freedom Park is a national monument located on a 52 hectare site on Salvokop Hill in Pretoria. It is strategically positioned opposite the Voortrekker Monument, juxtaposing the past with the processes of moving forward. It suggests a meeting place, a venue for the gathering of clans and nations, a place to listen to the voice of silence, a place to pray. It is a sacred place, a step to the heavens and to our humanity.

Indicative of how Freedom Park is invoking international acclaim was witnessed during Freedom Month in terms of internationally acclaimed Soweto Gospel Choir, Mahatma Gandhi Peace Walk and the social cohesion programmes with Thabo Mbeki Foundation and Voortrekker Monument.

Chairperson's Remarks



As we herald in this auspicious quarter, more significantly as we celebrate 25 years of our freedom and democracy. We are reminded that peace, unity, the preservation and the restoration of human dignity are the hallmarks of Freedom Day celebrations on the 27th of April of each year. This day will forever stand in the hearts and minds of our people.

~ Mr Ronnie Makopo

During this historic month we got to understand the importance of our nationality; about who we are so that we can ultimately gain an appreciation and embody our unique history, culture, spirituality national symbols and indigenous systems. We should be talking about deeper things. About the impact of reconciliation and nation building; riveting as we unpack exactly that it means to be South African and African.

It is here where we discuss as a collective; how would the Park express, in brick and mortar, the fact that this land was soaked in human blood so that we could be free? And how the Park would honour the far-ranging sacrifices by our people dead and alive which ensured the freedom of all South Africans?

Will we ever be one nation? And yet there is no other option. We must find each other, it is here that we learn these things. We invite each and every South African to celebrate with us – at a place that stands as a monument to humanity and freedom: Freedom Park.

Each and every South African should thus be aware that there is a place dedicated to them; to their history, heritage, culture and spirituality. This means that Freedom Park has a target audience of more than 54 million. What makes this even more challenging is that a large majority of this staggering number is unable to visit Freedom Park. Our visits to the communities across South Africa provide an opportunity for interaction and dialogue. As we interact with individuals we ensure that the history and heritage of South Africa is reflected in all its dynamic and diverse splendour. One such interaction was the Mahatma Gandhi Freedom Walk here at Freedom Park which brought in that diversity and global interaction.

We want to engage with the communities on a national level: by bringing diverse communities together, Freedom Park provides a platform for diverse individuals to realise that they share similar experiences, a similar past and similar pain. In terms of reconciliation and nation building, this is a pivotal realisation that will allow all South Africans to embrace each other as diverse brothers and sisters.

CEO's Foreword



Freedom Day marks not only the first democratic elections in South Africa, but also a qualitative leap in the history of our country.

It marks the end of a long struggle against slavery, colonialism and Apartheid and the beginning of moving towards a non-racial non-sexist inclusive society. We should, however, never forget that this qualitative leap came with a heavy price. Many people sacrificed or risked their lives for it and it is therefore imperative that their memory be honoured and kept alive.

~Ms Jane Mufamadi

We remember that South Africa's past is steeped in violence, pain, turmoil and anger. There is no denying this fact. However, similarly it would be impossible not to expect the victims of such past atrocities to function in the New South Africa as proud and productive citizens without a sense of acknowledgement and healing.

So this quarter was focused on Freedom Day and Youth Month Celebrations, which was quite historic and momentous, namely the Handover of Radio Freedom to Freedom Park, the Radio Freedom Equipment was repatriated to South Africa for the official handover to the Freedom Park. The symbolism for the institution resonates with the significance of the role of Radio Freedom and will provide an immense contribution to the country to better narrate the story of our liberation struggle. Much gratitude and appreciation for Madagascar's enormous support under the leadership of the former President Ratsiraka especially for authorising the establishment of the Radio Freedom, must be acknowledged. The Repatriation ceremony for the Radio Freedom Equipment is an emotional but a celebratory moment.

We concluded the quarter with Youth Month celebrations with the Thabo Mbeki Foundation and Voortrekker Monument. What gave us immense joy was young both black and white dealt with issues of racism, land expropriation and xenophobia with maturity and immense finesse.

Regardless of your past knowledge, experience or association with this heritage institution, one fact remains: Freedom Park is the embodiment of all that is South African.

HANDOVER OF RADIO FREEDOM

As we reflect on the contribution of our neighbouring countries during the liberation struggle, the South African Government through the National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) in collaboration with the South African Embassy, and the Ministry of Culture and Communication of Madagascar will host the Radio Freedom Equipment Repatriation Ceremony.

The Arts and Culture Director-General, Mr Vusumuzi Mkhize led the South African delegation to Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, for the repatriation ceremony and return on Thursday 18th April to South Africa.

Following successful engagements between the two Governments, the Minister of Culture and Communication (Madagascar), Honourable Lalatian Andrian Tongarivo Rakotondrazafy handed over the Radio Freedom Equipment in the presence of the South African ambassador, HE, Ms Maud Dlomo, at the International Convention Centre in Madagascar. The ceremony was a fitting tribute to South Africa as the country also marks 25 years of democracy.



Established during the darkest days of apartheid regime, Radio Freedom provided waves of mass resistance to the regime with broadcasts from different radio stations (including those of Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, Ethiopia, and Madagascar). Radio Freedom was also one of the oldest liberation radio station in Africa.

A cultural programme ensued the handover event which included performances from Blondie Makhene (SA) and Paul Bert “Rossey” Rahasimanana (Madagascar). The duo presented songs with a repertoire that embraced 25 years of Democracy, including struggle songs.

The Radio Freedom Equipment was repatriated to South Africa for the official handover to the Freedom Park Museum on Wednesday, 24 April 2019 in the City of Tshwane. The symbolism for the institution resonates with the significance of the role of Radio Freedom.

“The donation of this equipment to us will provide an immense contribution to the country to better narrate the story of our liberation struggle. We express our gratitude and appreciation for Madagascar’s enormous support under the leadership of the former President Ratsiraka especially for authorising the establishment of the Radio Freedom. The Repatriation ceremony for the Radio Freedom Equipment is an emotional but a celebratory moment.....”



#ICANBE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH



Freedom Park together with the Albinism Advocacy Access launched the #ICanBe campaign during Freedom Month. The CEO of Albinism Advocacy Access spoke at length on the challenges, ignorance that people with Albinism still face. The ridiculous myths that still exist and the strides that they have made.

As a society in general, we get so used to the idea that when someone doesn't fit neatly into the boxes we have of what a person should look like, then we judge them. The Launch is to spread the word and help educate people about albinism. Young people living with albinism need to accept themselves for who they are, go for their goals and not allow people to break their spirits or take away their life experience from them.

Change attitudes – not only towards people living with albinism, but towards all persons that may seem different from us. Learning a little more about the condition will help other people to better understand it and raise awareness that will lead to greater acceptance by our communities.

The myths associated with albinism can be misleading and have a negative influence on lives of people with the condition, as well as their families.

It was a great day where myths were dispelled and a growing respect for the young people who participated in the programme with such confidence, self-assurance and immense talent.

OUR NATIONAL JEWEL – SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR

On the eve of Freedom Day; the powerful and majestic voices of the Soweto Gospel Choir echoed through Freedom Park.

Dazzling and unified...the Choir was much to look at as to listen. The human spirit...is what you cannot miss! There is an electrifying and sound visual experience that continue to capture the world. From the colourful outfits to the uplifting ambience, the Soweto Gospel Choir is food for the mind and soul.

We were euphoric and humbled to have hosted this multiple award-winning South African gospel group, the Soweto Gospel Choir, who won the Best World Music Album Grammy for their album Freedom at the 61st Annual Grammy Awards ceremony. Soweto Gospel Choir was formed to celebrate the unique and inspirational power of African Gospel music.



The Grammy Award-winning album "**Freedom**" was recorded in June 2018 as part of the group's tribute to the 100 Years of Mandela celebrations. It features a selection of South African struggle songs including their scintillating version of Johnny Clegg's poignant "Asimbonanga".

An initiative of Gautrain, Valhalla Arts and Freedom Park.



**AFRICA DAY CELEBRATIONS AT FREEDOM PARK
24 MAY 2019**

The Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC) Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA), Department of Science and Technology and Freedom Park hosted the Africa Day Expo at Freedom Park.

The canvas of our culture is vast and has hues and vibrancy of all sorts. This festival was a celebration of all that is African, the warmth in relations and euphoria in celebrations attracts people to its vibrant culture which is an amalgamation of religions, food, art, craft, clothing, food, dance and other subtle things. Everything from culture, tradition, values, and panel discussions was the focus here.



**NATION BUILDING DIALOGUE WITH THABO MBEKI
FOUNDATION AND VOORTREKKER MONUMENT**



On Sunday June 16 Freedom Park, Voortrekker Monument and the Thabo Mbeki Foundation held a Nation Building Dialogue for the diverse youth of South Africa to craft solutions for a better and united South Africa.

Former President Mr Thabo Mbeki presided at the dialogue and his wisdom and composure calmed the sometimes heated outbursts of the audience with his ability to use logic rather than emotion and redirected the young people critical issues that the country is facing.

Young people are usually at the forefront of experimenting with new ways and ideas, so it is often the youth who embrace new cultural influences. And yet, many young people also have great respect for the culture in which they grew up and do not wish to abandon them.

Since the advent of democracy we have been trying to define our identity, as a country. We have grappled with questions like, what makes a person a South African. What if anything brings our people together?



Discussions sometimes heated yet needed; were issues of land expropriation, racism and xenophobia. Can we construct a national identity that avoids the pitfalls of racism and xenophobia? And yet it encourages us to learn more about each other's cultures and to approach differences with a positive spirit

And it starts here with our young people, bringing them together to promote a message of racial harmony and tolerance, multiculturalism and racial integration.

Underscoring the fact that all South Africans are inextricably bound. Young people are usually at the forefront of experimenting with new ways and ideas, so it is often the youth who embrace new cultural influences. And yet, many young people also have great respect for the culture in which they grew up and do not wish to abandon them.



MAHATMA GANDHI FREEDOM WALK



The Indian High Commissioner Mr Jaideep Sarkar, CEO of Freedom Park together with the Indian Consulate General Dr K.J. Srinivasa opening the Mahatma Gandhi Freedom Walk.

South Africans might never have the opportunity to visit Freedom Park and yet we want people to know that there is a place dedicated to them; to their history, heritage, culture and spirituality.



It is imperative that we remember our history and celebrate how far we have come as a nation. As per Freedom Park's mandate of guiding the nation on a route of reconciliation and nation building, we are enthusiastic about a closer collaboration with the Indian community more especially high profile individuals in the communication, business and cultural space.

The South African Maha Sabha in association with the centurion Hindu Society and Freedom Park, hosted the Mahatma Gandhi Freedom Walk at Freedom Park.

The objectives of the event was to observe the 150th birth anniversary of the Mahatma as well as fostering unity and cohesiveness within our communities.



CORPORATE CALENDAR

GALP CLASSIC CAR SHOW

Galp Classic Rally Race officially began here at Freedom Park on the 14 June. The Rally which started on the 14th offered the perfect opportunity to showcase the beauty of Freedom Park but also our beautiful country, as they drive through Mpumalanga to Mozambique where it ends.

We are hoping that it brings people to South Africa and to Freedom Park where they become tourists and then ambassadors for the country.

Freedom Park with its spectacular panoramic view of our city and beyond, is fast becoming a heritage destination of choice. From marathons, cycle races, market days its offers the esoteric visitor the most breath-taking scenery.



Lauded for its effortless beauty, Freedom Park is the perfect hidden venue, as visitors enjoy the serenity and peace of the surrounding nature. Amidst the enchanting architecture, Freedom Park helps create unforgettable memories. But more than its aesthetic beauty Freedom Park is a Gift to the Nation, Our core mandate is honoring our Heroes and Heroines in the Struggle as well as Reconciliation and Nation building is what our Patron –in-Chief Nelson Mandela advocated and fought for. There can't be a nobler aspiration.

The Rally offers the perfect opportunity to showcase the beauty of Freedom Park but also our beautiful country, as they drive through Mpumalanga to Mozambique where it ends. We are hoping that it brings people to South Africa and to Freedom Park where they become tourists and then ambassadors for the country.



City of Tshwane museums celebrated the launch of the 2019 International Museums Day on the 17th of May at Ditsong Cultural History Museum



Museums as Cultural Hubs: the future of Tradition was the theme used by International Council of Museums for raising museum awareness globally. Freedom Park took the opportunity by participating in a collaborative effort with a selected number of museums in the City of Tshwane. The International Museums Day (IMD) launch took place on the 17th of May 2019 at Ditsong Museum of Cultural History. The participating museums had their cultural table-top exhibitions to create awareness of the different museums to both learners and the community at large. The day was jam-packed with activities including an intergenerational dialogue between learners and retired professionals, performances from a youth group, storytelling and poetry.

The day was also adorned by Chris Hani's grandchild Nosivo Khumalo who spoke as a youth ambassador. The participating museums had free entry for both learners and the community according to their museum operational plans. Freedom Park was also amongst the museums that opened for free for a week for learners only. The participating museums were also grouped by the City of the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality according to their proximities in order to dispatch learners with their buses to the grouped museums. Freedom Park was grouped with the Voortrekker Monument where learners would start their educational excursion at Voortrekker Monument and end at Freedom Park.

A special education program was developed for learners that coincided with International Museum Day. The education program was "My Flag, My Pride, and My Culture". The program was interactive and challenging learners to dig deep in their cultural reservoirs and other people's cultures. The rationale behind the education programme was to embrace the South African cultures using the most cohesive symbol which is the South African Flag. The education programme even attracted the committee that organized the Africa Day celebration which took place at Freedom Park on the 24th of May as it was Africa month, they requested the same concept on an African map. Learners got the opportunity to be able to interchangeably take part in both the International Museum Day and Africa Day education Programme.

REACHING OUT TO THE NATION



Freedom Park belongs to each and every South African. However, a number of external factors render a visit impossible for a large section of our population more especially schools. As such, we are taking the Park and its vision to the nation. We want to instill a sense of national pride in this icon of humanity and freedom. More importantly, we want to create awareness that a site exists where those that died fighting for freedom and liberation in this country are being honoured,

Taking Freedom Park and its message of patriotism and pride in our identity, culture, history and heritage as South Africans and Africans to schools across South Africa.

We believe that racism and intolerance often result from ignorance and misconceptions about who you are. Freedom Park also focuses on school tours but is aware that accessibility becomes an acute challenge; hence the outreach programmes that aim to take Freedom Park to the people.

The Outreach unit worked tirelessly during this quarter to ensure that schools come to visit the Freedom Park. The unit mobilized schools in the Gauteng Province, Limpopo, and part of North West province.

We want every South African child can visit Freedom Park at least once in their lifetime. We believe that we are the foundation of identity and heritage as well as the foundation of unity and diversity.

Visit by the Cuban Deputy President H.E Mr Salvador Valdes Mesa



Freedom Park hosted the Cuban Deputy President H.E Mr Salvador Valdes Mesa and his eminent entourage: Cuban Ambassador to South Africa H.E Mr Rodolfo Benítez Verson, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ms Ana Teresita Gonzales Fraga and Brigadier General Arnaldo Tamayo Mendez, the first Latin American in the space, held a wreath laying ceremony at the Wall of Names.

Wreath-laying Ukraine Embassy - 7 May 2019



It was a Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for those who lost their lives during the WWII. The Embassy of Ukraine to the Republic of South Africa hosted a wreath-laying ceremony on the 7th of May 2019 at the Wall of Names in Freedom Park.

Guests included the Ambassador of Ukraine, Mr Taras Kuzmych, Ambassador of Georgia, Mr Beka Dvali, representative of SANDF, diplomatic councillor - Embassy of Portugal, Military Attache of the Embassy of France, Military Attache of the Embassy of USA and Embassy of Poland.



FREEDOM PARK – NEW FEES STRUCTURE



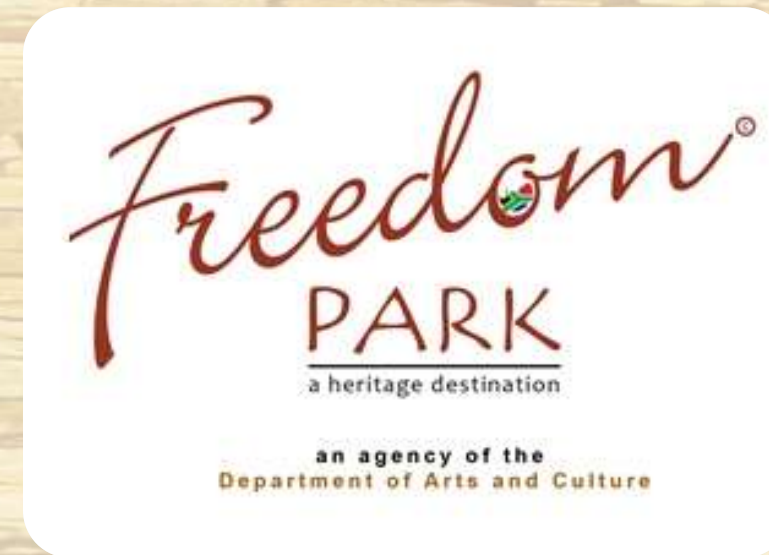
From the 1st of July 2019 our Admission fee will be as follows:
R60 per Adult, R40 for Children/Senior Citizens
R150.00 for International Visitors

Guided tours 9am, 12pm and 3pm
We value and appreciate your patronage!!!



UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST - WOMENS DAY
SEPTEMBER - HERITAGE TOURISM FESTIVAL



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