



NEWS RELEASE

April 27, 2006
For Immediate Release

Royal BC Museum Looks to the Stars on International Astronomy Day

VICTORIA, BC – The Royal British Columbia Museum and the Victoria Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC) have teamed up to present International Astronomy Day, a full day of family – oriented space activities **at the Museum on Saturday, May 6 from 10 am to 4 pm and** with telescope viewing of the night sky at the **Centre of the Universe from 7 pm to 11 pm.**

Astronomy Day activities range from telescope views of sun-spot activity and telescope mirror-grinding demonstrations, to displays on astrophotography and engaging of children's programs. Visitors will have an opportunity to talk with astronomers from the University of Victoria and the Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics at our "Ask an Astronomer" booth – can you stump the professionals? The *Centre of the Universe* will give you a preview of the night sky in their traveling StarLab planetarium. See where you fit in our scale model of the solar system.

Astronomy Day events at the Royal BC Museum will be followed in the evening (from 7 pm to 11 pm) with a star party at the *Centre of the Universe* at the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory on West Saanich Road. A variety of telescopes will be set-up by the RASCALS (members of the Victoria Centre of the RASC) so visitors can get up-close and personal with the cosmos.

As a warm up to Saturday's Astronomy Day activities, the Royal Astronomical Society and the Astronomy and Physics Department of the University of Victoria will be hosting world renowned astronomer Carolyn Porco. Dr. Porco is the leader of the Cassini Imaging Science team – controlling the cameras on the spacecraft orbiting Saturn as we speak. Check out <http://saturn.jpl.nasa.gov/home/index.cfm> to sample the exciting pictures coming from the Cassini Spacecraft every day.

Her talk, entitled, ADVENTURES IN THE PROMISED LAND: CASSINI EXPLORES SATURN, TITAN, AND THE FOUNTAINS OF ENCELADUS, is free and will be held at the David Lam Auditorium, MacLaurin Building, Room A144 at the University of Victoria, Wednesday, May 3, at 7:30.

Admission to all events in the museum's Clifford Carl Hall, Newcombe Conference Hall, and outside courtyards is free. Regular admission applies to the museum exhibits and IMAX Theatre. Admission to telescope viewing outside the Centre of the Universe is free as well. Regular admission applies to all centre programs and exhibits.

Astronomy Day at the Royal BC Museum is jointly produced by the museum and the Victoria Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, in partnership with the National Research Council of Canada, Pearson College of the Pacific, Capital Regional District Parks and the University of Victoria.

For more information on Astronomy Day, please phone Scott Mair at 250.889-8021 or Sid Sidhu at 250.391.0540, or visit the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada's website at <http://victoria.rasc.ca>.

Contact: Scott Mair
President, Victoria Centre
Royal Astronomical Centre of Canada
250.889-8021

Gordon Green
Public Programs
Royal BC Museum
250-387-6034