

MEDIA RELEASE

Skating towards a united community

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The suburb of Hout Bay celebrated the opening of the Eyethu Hout Bay Skatepark on Friday, 26 July 2019. An initiative of the Rotary Club of Hout Bay (RCHB), the state-of-the-art facility was built for existing and new skateboarders, as well as the youth, from the diverse communities in the area.

The original idea was developed four years ago by the skate park community and RCHB. One of the Rotary club members, Keith Bull, saw a child almost killed after skating down a side road and into the main road. He suggested the idea of a Rotary project on the Hout Bay organised Facebook page, and sparked the realisation of a dream for the skateboarding community.

After running into problems with funding for the construction of the skate park in 2017, Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (CCPB) responded to the RCHB public pleas for corporate support. CCPB then approached Rotary Club Newlands, their CSI partner that works closely with the company on major community projects, to connect with the Hout Bay Rotary team and offer the funding shortfall.

“Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages takes community development and enrichment very seriously. It brings us great joy to be able to play a role in providing a safe place for communities to enjoy this recreational activity,” says Priscilla Urquhart, Public Affairs and Communications Manager for CCPB. “The skate park is a fantastic space where everyone can come together, for the love of skateboarding, while also forging stronger ties.”

“Our organisation, its intent and even its brands are and will only ever be as good as its team members and it is their commitment to being better leaders, better people, better parents and better “selves” that will truly enable us as an organisation to contribute meaningfully to create an environment and society that thrives,” she added.

According to John Winship from RC Club Newlands, funders include the Rotary Clubs of Hout Bay, Newlands, Claremont, Totnes England, Vilshofen Germany, Club 790 and the Cape Town Cycle Tour Trust, while the site was provided by the City of Cape Town.

Construction took place over the last 6 months and cost a total of R 1,5 million. The Skate Park area is 950 square meters in total and is designed to accommodate both novices and professionals with a bowl, ramps in different sizes, rails and various other features. The park is set up for spectators to comfortably watch friends or family skateboarding, and is situated in the busy Main Road, opposite the police station and fire station.

“The joy of skateboarding, is that it is a low-cost activity, involving both young and old, where much of the equipment is recycled, and hence, affordable to many,” Winship says. “Above all, it is enjoyed by all the communities in Hout Bay, including Imizamo Yethu, Hangberg and the Valley.”

He adds that the establishment of the park has brought about an affirmation of togetherness, shared ownership and partnership. “‘Eyethu’ is a Nguni word meaning ‘ours’, so of course it all ties in quite nicely. The reality of skateboarding culture is its inclusivity and the park serves as a safe space for youth to engage with one another.”

The park sets a precedent for other local communities to follow, drive and lead their own public spaces and aids the community in creating their own crime prevention strategies, through unconventional sports, youth leadership and after-school training programmes.

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For more information about Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (CCPB), visit <http://www.peninsulabeverage.co.za/> or contact 021 936 5500.

Note to editor: Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (CCPB) is the local bottler and distributor of the products of the Coca-Cola Company in the Western and Northern Cape. Products and brands include Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta, Stoney, Appletiser, Powerade, Bonaqua, Glaceau, PowerPlay and Monster amongst others. CCPB has been operational for 79 years, having first opened for business in 1940. Their state of the art bottling facility is based in Parow Industria, with distribution centres in Athlone, Worcester and Koelbly. For more information visit www.peninsulabeverage.co.za.