

Tucson's Gateway To The Stars...



Grace H. Flandrau Planetarium

University of Arizona

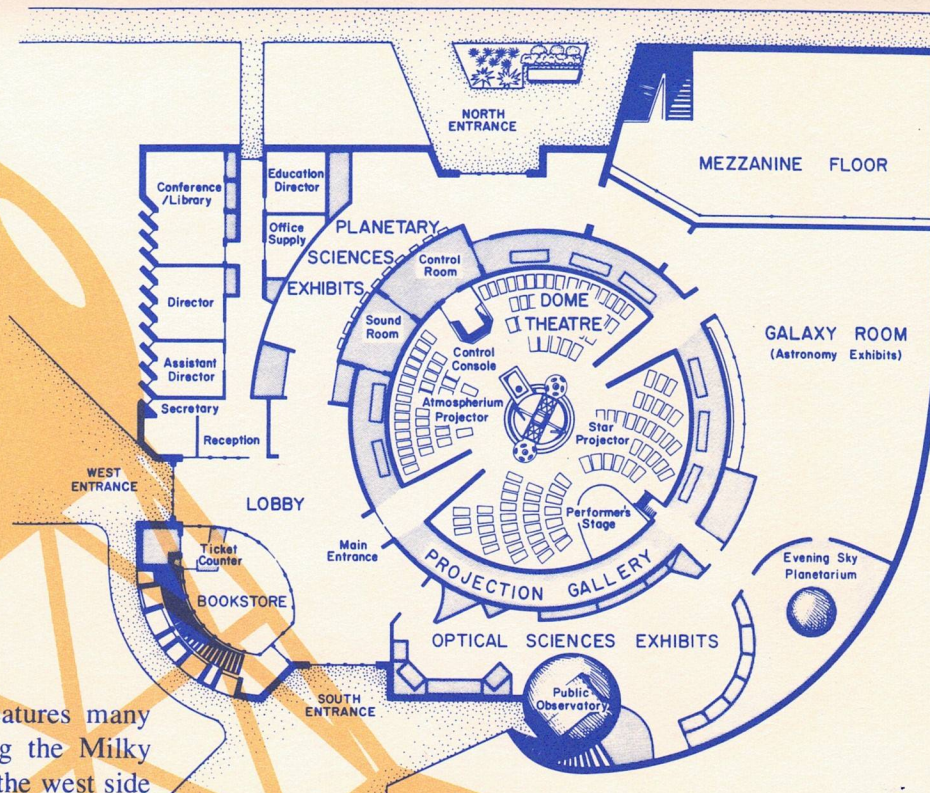
Opening Fall 1975

PLANETARIUM FLOOR PLAN

The Flandrau Planetarium reflects both utility of function and beauty of design. Its first floor covers almost 13,000 square feet. Surrounding the dome theater are science exhibit halls containing fascinating displays in optical sciences, space sciences and stellar astronomy. The underlying theme is the encouragement of increased perception through operation and involvement with the displays by the individual visitor.

Within the Optical Sciences Hall is an observatory housing a 16-inch telescope reserved for public viewing on clear evenings. A small planetarium between the Optical Sciences displays and the Galaxy Room automatically illustrates the current evening sky as seen in Tucson. The Galaxy Room features many exhibits in modern astronomy involving the Milky Way, our Galaxy and the Universe. On the west side of the building is the Space Sciences Exhibit Hall that features displays on recent studies of the moon and planets. The west side also contains the Administration Offices for the planetarium.

The west and south entrances lead into the lobby where visitors will see one of the most remarkable astronomical murals in existence. The lobby will house numerous scientific works of art. Within the lobby is a bookstore where visitors may purchase a variety of science books, scientific toys, star maps and astronomical slides.



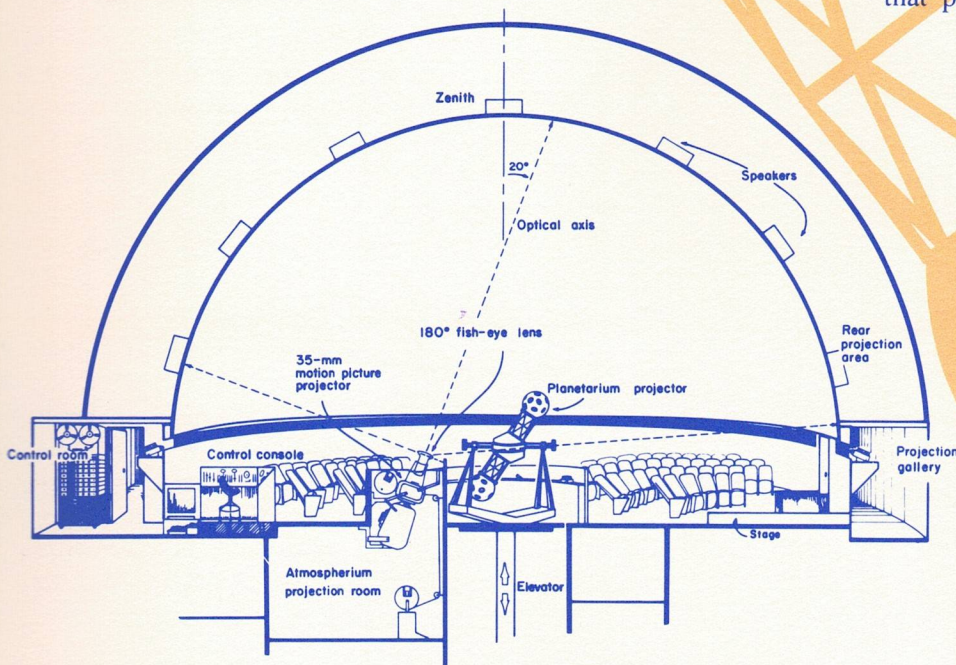
THE DOME THEATER

Dominating the center of the planetarium is the dome theater. The theater is covered with a hemispherical projection screen 50' in diameter. In the center of the theater is the planetarium projector that projects 9000 stars, the sun, moon and planets, onto the domed ceiling. The projector may be lowered into a pit to facilitate the use of the "fisheye" motion picture projector, the Atmospherium, located adjacent to the planetarium. This projector can project a motion picture over the entire dome, thus surrounding the audience with the scene.

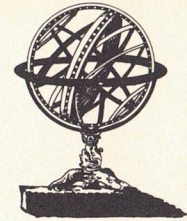
On the left of the picture is the operator's console from which all equipment can be controlled and programmed. Around the perimeter of the theater is a projection gallery containing some 200 auxiliary special effects projectors that project through a continuous slit in the wall that completely encircles the theater. A control room behind the console contains the computer and electronic components that control the projection and sound equipment. Adjacent to the control room is a sound room where the program scripts are recorded.

The Omniphonic sound system is composed of 33 speakers arranged in concentric circles behind the dome ceiling. A computer moves the sound to any point in the room or the sound can be programmed to follow any moving visual projection.

Visible on the right side of the picture is the stage from which live performances of the arts are given. By using either the star projector or the "fisheye" motion picture projector, any desired environment appropriate to the particular performance (stars, clouds, undersea scape, etc.) can be projected on the dome above.



THE BEGINNINGS In December of 1972, the University received a bequest of more than \$1,000,000 from the estate of the late Grace H. Flandrau, an accomplished author and winter resident of Tucson. For some time the University of Arizona has been committed to an active program of increasing public understanding and appreciation of science. As Tucson is a major center for astronomical research it was only natural that the gift be used to increase understanding of astronomy, specifically in the construction of a major planetarium. The Tucson firm of Blanton and Company was selected as the architect.



THE PROGRAM The Grace Flandrau Planetarium will house some of the most sophisticated and highly diversified equipment ever assembled in a planetarium. Tucson's unique astronomical environment assures that the programs presented will offer the latest and most provocative subjects currently under investigation by astronomers. The programs, besides being educational and thought-provoking, will be of a highly entertaining nature. Theatrical techniques will be extensively used to highlight the drama of the subject. By using the arts as a means for communication in the sciences, the programs will become truly memorable personal experiences.

In addition to a re-creation of the heavens, the Atmospherium will create a variety of environments from the depths of the oceans to the life in a drop of water; from the turmoil of a summer thunderstorm to a peaceful journey into space. Audience involvement is the objective here.

Monthly productions in the performing arts will be held in the planetarium through the joint sponsorship of several University departments. Live performances of instrumentalists, vocalists, poets, and dramatists "under the stars" will be featured.

WHEN WILL IT ALL HAPPEN? The Flandrau Planetarium, located on the corner of Cherry Street and the University Mall, is now under construction and is scheduled to be opened to the public in the fall of 1975. Programs will be offered to the public daily. You are invited to visit the building site often to watch one of the world's most unique planetariums rise out of the ground!