

Worcester launches Robert Goddard festivities



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Robert Goddard stands next to the rocket that he launched on March 16, 1926. It was the first successful launch of a liquid-fueled rocket. [Photo/Clark University Archives]

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WORCESTER — Mayor Joseph M. Petty officially proclaimed Saturday “National Robert Goddard Day,” kicking off a year of festivities honoring the Worcester native and engineer coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the historic moon landing on July 20.

“You can’t get to the moon without Worcester,” Mr. Petty said in a ceremony at Mass Audubon’s Broad Meadow Brook sanctuary Saturday. Mr. Petty noted Mr. Goddard’s contributions to technology used in satellites, cell phones, global positioning systems, and more. “It was all because of Robert Goddard, and from here.”

Mr. Goddard was an engineer and physicist who successfully created and launched the first liquid-fueled rocket in Auburn in 1926. His contributions helped make space flight possible, including the quest to put a man on the moon.

The 50th anniversary of that moon landing is July 20, and Worcester-area organizations including The EcoTarium, Worcester Historical Museum, Clark University, the city of Worcester, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Mass Audubon Broad Meadow Brook and others are planning events to commemorate the occasion.

“This collaboration between organizations in Worcester is really because Robert Goddard was innately curious about the world, and that is the way we want people to be,” said Lucy Hale, president and CEO of the EcoTarium. “There are lots of wonderful things happening in the city of Worcester to celebrate Robert Goddard.”