

Weston Observatory 75th Anniversary Celebration of Earthquake Monitoring

John Ebel – Opening Introduction

I would like to welcome everyone, and thank you for coming. It turns out that we are really celebrating two anniversaries today. One is 75 years of earthquake monitoring at Weston Observatory, which began in the basement of this building in December 1930. The other is an important reason why we need earthquake monitoring in our region. November 18 is the 250th anniversary of the most destructive earthquake in New England. It is called the 1755 Cape Ann earthquake by scientists, because we think its epicenter was offshore east of Cape Ann. Its magnitude was 6.0 or greater, and it caused significant damage in Boston as well areas to the north in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and even Maine. Thus, today we commemorate both our earthquake research and the earthquakes that we are studying.

I want to say a special welcome and thank you to some distinguished guests who are with us here today. I want to begin by acknowledging members and representatives of the Boston College administration who have come to attend the proceedings today: Here on the podium we have Fr. William Neenan, Vice President and Special Assistant to the President; Fr. James Skehan, Director Emeritus of Weston Observatory and Professor Emeritus of Geology. Also, Ben Birnbaum, Executive Director of the Office of Marketing Communications; Mary Lou DeLong, a Vice President in the Office of the President; Cutberto Garza, our new Academic Vice President and Dean of Faculties; William Mills, Director of Community Affairs; Fr. Donald Monan, Chancellor of Boston College and former President of Boston College; John Neuhauser, who recently stepped down as Academic Vice President and Dean of Faculties; Robert Newton, Special Assistant to the President; and Jerome Yarkovskiy, University Librarian.

I also want to especially thank those representatives of federal, state and local governments and agencies who are here today. Here on the podium is Kerry Healey, Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts. Also here is Joseph Dalton from Congressman Markey's office; James Devine from the U.S. Geological Survey; Edward Fratto, Executive Director of the Northeastern States Emergency Consortium; Daniel Grabauskas, General Manager of the Massachusetts Bay

Transportation Authority; Kenneth Horak from the Federal Emergency Management Agency; Kenneth McBride and Peter Judge from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency; and State Representative Alice Peisch.

These persons represent some of the many government and private organizations with which Weston Observatory works in order improve earthquake safety and earthquake information delivery in our state and region.

I am now pleased to introduce my good friend and colleague Fr. James Skehan. Fr. Jim has seen much of the history of Weston Observatory that we celebrate today. He will offer an Invocation and some personal remarks for this celebration.