

## **Award Honors Dr. Keats' Glowing Career in Radiology**

“Is it normal?”

For more than three decades, Dr. Theodore E. Keats, U.Va. professor of radiology and orthopedics, has heard or asked this question while interpreting countless X-rays. He has also written dozens of book chapters, hundreds of papers and articles and six books on radiological topics and has lectured around the world about normal anatomical phenomena that can be mistaken for disease on X-rays.

“Diagnosing a disease that a patient does not have is the worst mistake a doctor can make,” he said. His classic 1973 textbook, *An Atlas of Normal Roentgen Variants That May Simulate Disease*, now in its sixth edition, lists hundreds of X-ray variations that may closely resemble disorders.

For his work, Dr. Keats, U.Va.'s chief of radiology for 28 years from 1963 until 1991, has received the 1995 American College of Radiology's Gold Medal, the most prestigious honor the 30,000 member international group gives, on the year that marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of X-rays by Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen.

Born in New Jersey in 1924, Dr. Keats earned his undergraduate degree at Rutgers in 1945 and his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1945. While on the faculty at the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1956, he helped start a four-year medical school.

In 1963, Dr. Keats went on sabbatical to Sweden's Karolinska Institute, the mecca of radiology. “In Sweden diagnostic medicine was a centerpiece. It was on the first floor of hospitals, [whereas] in the United States radiology grew up in the basement. Its location was an afterthought and it had to fight its way out of the basement to a respectable location”, Dr. Keats said.

He arrived at U.Va. in 1963, determined to bring the Department of Radiology the same level of sophistication he had seen at the Karolinska Institute. U.Va.'s radiological services were limited to film and the department had no central office.

Today, U.Va.'s radiology department provides everything from X-rays to the latest in both diagnostic imaging and radiotherapy; the science has come a long way since the first unit was installed in the basement of the old hospital in 1910.

As early as 1973, the radiology department was blazing trails towards today's advanced academic program. The university installed equipment and hired technicians to perform innovative procedures. For example, U.Va.'s mammography unit was the first in Virginia and one of just a few in the mid Atlantic region.

As chief radiologist Dr. Keats directed a department that grew substantially in size and sophistication as imaging technology made use of both the computer and radioactive substances. No longer simply the X-ray department, it now includes a range of diagnostic and therapeutic

radiological procedures: abdominal radiology, breast imaging, chest radiology, interventional radiology, angiography and special procedures, musculoskeletal radiology, neuroradiology, nuclear medicine, radiological physics and therapeutic radiology oncology. CAT scan, ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and the gamma knife are also among the imaging techniques available.

In 1985, the University received a \$900,000 grant to build a radiology research lab. The laboratory, located at the MR-4 site, enabled Dr. Keats and his colleagues to conduct research and provide radiological support to other departments.

Throughout his career, Dr. Keats has taught thousands of medical students and more than 125 residents, many of whom have distinguished careers in academic radiology.

He was the Baker Visiting Professor in Australia and New Zealand, an honor awarded annually by the Australian College of Radiology to a foreign professor. In 1968, he won the Robley Dunglison Award, U.Va. medical school's most prestigious clinical teaching award.

A diagnostician with emphasis on skeletal and pediatric radiology, Dr. Keats was further honored by the naming of the Keats Professorship in Radiology in 1992, which is occupied by current chair Dr. Bruce Hillman.

Today, Dr. Keats spends his time doing what he enjoys most: teaching, writing and singing. Somehow between roles as clinician, author and teacher, Dr. Keats has found time to perform. He recently sang at his secretary's wedding, making "the day very special for me and my family," said Pat West, who has worked with him for almost 20 years.

Dr. Keats also has a passion for operettas. "I fell in love with Gilbert and Sullivan while in high school," he said, but was told by a guidance counselor that he'd be better off pursuing the theater as an avocation, rather than a vocation. Following the advice, he has enjoyed a successful career in medicine, without abandoning the stage, and hopes to form a theater group with his wife, Patt. "She'll choreograph and I'll get to sing Gilbert and Sullivan again," he said.

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*Inside UVA – October 20, 1995*