

TRA Imaging News

PRINTED FOR THE REFERRING PROVIDERS OF TRA MEDICAL IMAGING CENTERS

60 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE AT TRA



William B. Jackson, MD

TRA Radiologist

The first known x-ray in Tacoma was described in the Tacoma Daily Registry in 1897.

“Three times the x-rays were turned upon Policeman Brotton last night at the Fannie Paddock Hospital, for the purpose of locating the remaining bullet which he received a week ago from a burglar’s pistol. Although the experiments were unsuccessful, they were by no means a failure, and, will be renewed at the first opportunity. The failures were due to the shortness of the exposures, the longest of which was 10 minutes.”

“ **William Jackson, M.D.**

**You have to stay
on the cutting edge
to compete — If you
don’t, someone
else will.**

This x-ray was a crude experiment in radiology. Thankfully, technology has come a long way since that first attempt, and TRA has always strived to be a part of this evolution. Since 1943, in an effort to aid area providers, TRA has been bringing the best and most up to date technology to Pierce County.

“You have to stay on the cutting edge to compete—If you don’t, someone else will,” Dr. William Jackson says. Dr. Frank Rigos was putting this statement to use well before it was verbalized. Along with Drs. Raymond Mac Rae and John Flynn, the three created Tacoma Radiological Associates in 1943.

The group was spread thin throughout its early years. The radiologists read at Tacoma General Hospital, St. Joseph Medical Center, Puget Sound Hospital, Allenmore Medical Center, the Doctor’s Hospital, the Medical Arts Building and other facilities in the area; they even read in Aberdeen and Ketchikan, Alaska.

Right from its inception, the company’s radiologists and staff always strived to be on the cutting edge in an effort to ultimately benefit the patient. “We were and still are the leaders in town, offering procedures before the competition,” says Dr. Milton Bleiweiss, retired radiologist. In 1973, they were the first to perform ultrasound in the area. Headed up by Dr. Emory Bourdeau, these primitive ultrasound scans were mainly used to detect renal masses and limited obstetrical studies. In the late 1970s, TRA was the first in the area to perform head CTs (body CT would arrive much later). Head CTs were acquired by placing the patient’s head in a rubber diaphragm that would fill with water and act as a conductor. (con’t pg. 2)

FOCUS ON:

Radiologist Contact

The field of radiology is increasingly becoming more complex, especially over the last 10 years. This sometimes makes it hard to decipher what test to order for a particular clinical concern. TRA radiologists would like to remind our referring providers that if there is a question about what radiological exam to order for a given clinical problem, please do not hesitate to call one of our outpatient centers and ask to speak with a radiologist directly.

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(253) 761-4200

LAKEWOOD
(253) 588-7050

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From left: Drs. Henry Maki and Frank Rigos stand next to the Cobalt radiation machine at Tacoma General Hospital. This machine was purchased for \$50,000

In 1986, they introduced the first MRI scanner to the area (Tacoma Magnetic Imaging). More recently, in 1997, they introduced Open MRI (Union Avenue Open MRI) to the community, and in 2001 it was Positron Emission Tomography (PET) at TRA-Tacoma. This modality has fundamentally revolutionized the way providers care for their cancer patients.

In addition to introducing new technologies to the community, the radiologists and staff have also been responsible for bringing life saving procedures to the community. In 1979, Drs. Bleiweiss and Jim Kenney performed the first angioplasty in Tacoma. There were a number of other procedures including needle biopsy; and more recently breast MRI. Breast MRI is an excellent problem solving technology, often used to investigate breast concerns first detected with primary imaging exams, like mammography.



Breast MRI is just one of many procedures used to detect many types of diseases. Retired radiologist Dr. Gilbert Roller commented on this aspect, saying "radiology is so exciting in that it touches upon every area of medicine." Dr. Kenney agreed, adding that it was like reading someone else's mail everyday.

Change within the company not only affected staff, but also those providers in the community that referred to TRA. In 1974, marketing of the group was strictly not allowed. In fact, the over 200 referring providers in the community all used a different method of referral. Tacoma Radiology spearheaded the effort to universalize these forms, leading to the standard radiology order form used today. More recently, with the addition of so many new modalities, like PET, TRA is helping providers to offer the most advanced and compassionate care to their patients. TRA plans to sustain this effort for the next 60 years and beyond.

TRA NEWS

TRA Imaging News is produced bi-monthly for referring providers of TRA- Medical Imaging Centers. It is designed to aid in the understanding of TRA and its services. If you have any questions, please contact the following:

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