William Robert Stecher, M.D., F.A.C.R.
1906–1980

Dr. William R. Stecher, who was Chief of Radiology at Prince George’s General Hospital in Cheverly, Maryland from 1950 to 1971, died in Tampa, Florida on September 20, 1980.

Dr. Stecher, a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, received his undergraduate education at Temple University and the medical doctor degree from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia in 1929. He trained in radiology under Dr. Bernard P. Widmann at Philadelphia General Hospital and subsequently practiced radiology in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

When Dr. Stecher moved to Silver Spring, Maryland in 1950 and assumed his duties as chief radiologist at Prince George’s General Hospital, a position he held until his retirement in 1971, he also was associate clinical professor of radiology at Georgetown University and an instructor at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. He authored more than 20 articles in the radiologic literature. He was a Fellow of the American College of Radiology and a member of the Radiological Society of North America.

Throughout his career, Bill Stecher combined academic excellence with his love of athletics, music, and painting. He was graduated first in his class at Jefferson Medical College, was awarded gold medals in anatomy and internal medicine, and was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha. He found joy in golf, tennis, and figure-skating, and was an oil painter of no little talent. Dr. Stecher played violin with the Lehigh Valley Symphony when he lived in Pennsylvania and he composed the music and wrote the lyrics for ten operettas.

But above all, Bill Stecher was a radiologist of incisive diagnostic acumen and an extraordinarily well-read and sharp-eyed practitioner. He always displayed the uncanny ability of moving intellectually through irrelevant data straight to the kernel of the radiologic problem. Dr. Stecher was one of the original “Walter Reed Gang,” a group of Washington, D. C. area radiologists who met on Monday afternoons and traded their difficult and unusual cases with each other. For many years, these Monday meetings were wonderfully provocative, stimulating, entertaining, and, above all, educative. Bill Stecher generously contributed his time, his discussion of cases, and his knowledge at these sessions with great insight and bright good humor. Bill once said that if he could know that he would be remembered as a good teacher, he could conclude his career with contentment. In that hope Bill Stecher attained signal success.

Dr. Stecher is survived by his wife of 51 years, Erna Eckert Stecher, of Florida; a son, William A. Stecher, M.D., of Rockville, Maryland, who succeeded his father as Chief of Radiology at Prince George’s General Hospital; a daughter, Winifred Diane Peoples, of Bethesda, Maryland; and a brother, Alfred Stecher, of Willow Grove, Pennsylvania.

ALVIN C. WYMAN, M.D.