

# Hands on Stamps: Germany, 1995—Discovery of X-Ray Beams

Ahmadreza Afshar, MD

On November 8, 1895, Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen (1845–1923), a German physicist, discovered a new kind of ray. The rays were termed x-rays because their nature was unknown to him. However; the unknown rays later carried his name as “Röntgen rays.” In about 2 weeks after his discovery, Röntgen took the first x-ray picture of the human body, using his wife Anna Bertha Ludwig’s left hand. He recognized the different transparencies of the bones, flesh, and wedding ring in the image.<sup>1,2</sup> Röntgen is credited as being the father of diagnostic radiology. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Würzburg and won the first Nobel Prize in Physics in 1901 for his remarkable achievement.<sup>1,2</sup>



**FIGURE 1:** A hand x-ray picture, Germany. A century of x-ray beams discovery. Scott Catalog # 1885. Day of Issue: March 9, 1995. Value: 100 pfennig.

In 1995, Germany issued a stamp to honor Röntgen and to commemorate the centennial of the discovery of x-rays (Fig. 1).

*From the Department of Orthopedics, Urmia University of Medical Sciences, Urmia, Iran.*

Received for publication January 4, 2013; accepted in revised form January 7, 2013.

No benefits in any form have been received or will be received related directly or indirectly to the subject of this article.

**Corresponding author:** Ahmadreza Afshar, MD, Department of Orthopedics, Urmia University of Medical Sciences, Imam Khomeini Hospital, Modarress Street, Ershad Boulevard, Urmia 57157 81351, Iran; e-mail: [afshar\\_ah@yahoo.com](mailto:afshar_ah@yahoo.com).

0363-5023/14/3908-0025\$36.00/0  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhsa.2013.01.006>

## REFERENCES

1. Wilhelm Röntgen. Available at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm\\_R%C3%B6ntgen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_R%C3%B6ntgen). Accessed: January 5, 2013.
2. Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen and the discovery of x-ray beams. Available at: <http://explorable.com/wilhelm-conrad-roentgen.html>. Accessed: January 5, 2013.