

SISTER
GEORGANNE DUGGAN,
1917-2000

Nun founded Dominican Hospital

Bio-D
Health-care worker known
for her sense of humor
and determined spirit

By **DARREL W. COLE**
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

SANTA CRUZ — Sister Georganne Duggan, who helped establish two area hospitals, including Dominican Hospital, died Saturday in Santa Cruz.

The Chicago native was 83 years old and is remembered by her friends and colleagues as a dedicated sister with a determined spirit, a sense of humor and a heart of gold.

When she arrived in Santa Cruz in 1941 to help fix up the former Hanley Hospital on West Cliff Drive, she said "It was like a little cottage by the sea," according to a 1991 Sentinel interview.

Soon, however, she and several other sisters from the Dominican Sisters of the Order of Preachers would transform that facility into a respectable operation. In 1949, they also took over Santa Cruz Hospital on Soquel Avenue, which would later become Dominican Hospital.

She recalled in the 1991 interview that the sisters and about 20 to 30 physicians worked and lived together like a family in order to provide much-needed health care to the area. As the only registered nurse, Duggan worked especially hard and put in long hours.

Her lifelong friend and fellow sister, Brigid McDonald of Santa Cruz, said others have described her as "a treasure."

"She had a sense of humor and was even timid in some ways but she had some one-liners that you just wouldn't

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DUGGAN

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Duggan: Dominican founder known for wit, determination

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believe," McDonald said.

She had a sense of humor and she truly cared for the people she helped but McDonald said Duggan was also intelligent, determined and knew how to accomplish goals.

"One of the doctors working with her liked to call her Little Caesar," she said, laughing. "She was stubborn when she knew she was right."

Born in 1917, Duggan entered boarding school at Mount St. Mary's in St. Charles, Ill., and soon developed an interest in nursing. She later attended nursing school in Chicago and then entered the Adrian Dominican Congregation in Adrian, Mich.

Soon after, she was sent to Santa Cruz with other sisters to provide establish a hospital, specifically to take over and renovate Hanley Hospital, which had been closed down for about a year.

Duggan and other sisters took over operation of the Santa Cruz Hospital in 1949. She was later responsible for the first accreditation of Dominican Hospital and started the Founders' Club, the fund-raising arm of the hospital.

After getting that operation up and running she moved to Las Vegas in 1965 to become a hospital administrator there.

On returning to Dominican in 1978,

she found a flourishing hospital and eventually became manager of the sterile processing unit. She retired in 1991 from Dominican Hospital and celebrated 50 years with the Dominican Order of sisters.

According to the 1991 Sentinel article, Duggan said she became a nurse because she enjoyed taking care of people but her father didn't think his mischievous daughter would stay with it.

"My father thought it was a whim and I'd get over it," she said, pointing out that she'd been a nurse for 50 years. "That's a pretty long whim, isn't it?"

A mass will be held 11 a.m. Monday at Holy Cross Church, 126 High St., Santa Cruz. Friends are invited to

come at 10 a.m. until the service begins. Burial will be later in the week in Adrian, Mich.

Donations are preferred to Dominican Hospital Outreach, 1555 Soquel Drive, Santa Cruz, 95065 or Dominican Life Center, 1277 Siena Heights Drive, Adrian, MI 49221.

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Sister Georganne Duggan, pictured here in 1986, was sent by her Dominican order to found a hospital in Santa Cruz.

Sentinel file photo

