

Drachenberg, Carlos Emilio (1921–2001)

EUGENIO DI DIONISIO

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Carlos Emilio Drachenberg was a doctor, pastor, educator, and founder of medical institutions in Argentina, Paraguay, and Mexico.

Carlos was born in Guatraché, La Pampa, Argentina, on February 17, 1921. His parents were Eduardo Leopoldo Drachenberg, originally from Germany, and María Schmidt, from Volhyula, Russia. His siblings were Federico Guillermo (1906–1967), Eduardo Leopoldo (1907–1968), Enrique Jacobo (1913–1993), Emilia Paulina (1917), and Roberto Renaldo (1924).¹ Carlos was baptized in the River Plate Junior College, Entre Ríos, Argentina, in 1936. He studied medicine in the School of Medical Science in the National University of the Littoral, in Rosario, Santa Fe, Argentina, graduating in 1951. On March 12, 1945, he married Clara Frida Sittner Lust, piano master and teacher. They had three children: Donaldo Hugo, René Carlos, and Haroldo Edgar.²

Drachenberg started his activities in the River Plate Sanitarium, Entre Ríos, Argentina, on September 1, 1951. He was granted a scholarship in the United States; he specialized in Washington Adventist Hospital, in the Mayo Clinic, and in the Adventist Health White Memorial of Los Angeles, California. While he was in Washington, he took the theology course in the Theology Adventist Seminary. He returned to Argentina in 1953. He founded the Nursing School of the Argentina Red Cross, in the River Plate Sanitarium, where he was a teacher while working as a doctor in the institution.

In 1958 Drachenberg was entrusted to found the Belgrano Adventist Clinic, in the city of Buenos Aires, which started its activities in 1959,³ by using the property that was previously the administrative headquarters and offices of the South American Division.⁴ To raise the number of patients, he would do home visits at night. In addition, he performed surgeries in Rawson Hospital, in Buenos Aires. On Sabbaths he was pastor of Flores church, in the city of Buenos Aires. Dr. Drachenberg was director and doctor between 1959 and 1963. In 1964 he was invited to the Republic of Paraguay to open the medical work in Hohenau, Itapúa Department. As a result, he opened Hohenau Adventist Sanitarium on February 1, 1965, and established an Adventist church there.⁵ C. E. Drachenberg directed the institution between 1965 and 1967.⁶ In the morning he had appointments to attend, in the afternoons surgeries, and at night ER. His wife, Clara, worked as a receptionist and cashier. Basilio Zawadzki was the first manager.⁷

From 1968 to 1971 he specialized in obstetrics in the White Memorial Medical Center in Los Angeles, United States. After this specialization he went back to River Plate Sanitarium to start a gynecology and obstetrics

residency program. He was dedicated to strengthening the spiritual impact of the sanitarium, by leading the Parque church organization, located in the same institution. He was ordained as a pastoral minister on February 7, 1975.⁸

The School of Medicine of Montemorelos University, in México, invited Dr. Carlos Drachenberg in 1977 to perform as head of education, be a professor in the courses of gynecology and obstetrics, and teach Christian medical ethics. When he retired in 1986, he settled in Loma Linda, California, United States.

Drachenberg was an active member of the Azure Hills church. He died on December 6, 2001, in Loma Linda. He left behind a legacy of identity with the church's integral mission, a legacy of pursuit for excellence and leadership in the emerging of new Adventist medical institutions.

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. See: "Find a Grave," accessed on October 19, 2018, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/189325023/carlos-emilio-drachenberg>.

2. Austral Union Conference Archive, Carlos Emilio Drachenberg file, September 14, 1953. "Vidas al servicio de *Dios*" [Lives at the Service of God], *Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], August 2002, 16. Clara Sittner was born at home in 1922 to Felipe Sittner and Amalia Lust.
3. Juan Carlos Silva, "*Mil historias y un propósito*" [A Thousand Stories and One Purpose] *Salud! Clínica Adventista Belgrano* [Health. Belgrano Adventist Clinic], August 2009, 14–17; Héctor J. Peverini, *En las huellas de la Providencia* [In the Footsteps of Providence] (Buenos Aires: South American Spanish Publishing House, 1988), 333, 334.
4. "*La Clínica Adventista Belgrano festeja su 50° aniversario*" [Belgrano Adventist Clinic Celebrates Its Fiftieth Anniversary], *Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], March 2010, 20. Belgrano Adventist Clinic is located in Estomba 1710 Street, Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, Argentina.
5. H. E. Rice, "A New Light in South Paraguay," *ARH*, April 22, 1965, 48; Peverini, 353-355; Mario H. Utz Goltz and Nilda T. Potes Maschmann, *La Iglesia Adventista en el Paraguay* [The Adventist Church in Paraguay] (Buenos Aires: South American Spanish Publishing House, 2013), 148–150.
6. The project was initiated by the president of the Paraguay Mission, Benoní Cayrus, by request of people from the south of the country who wanted an institution similar to the Asuncion Adventist Sanitarium. In 1965 Dr. Drachenberg started attending patients at his house.
7. Basilio Zawadzqui to relatives and friends, October 29, 2013.
8. Seventh-day Adventist Church Ordaining Certificate, Carlos E. Drachenberg, February 7, 1975.

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