

EMANUELE "LITTO" DANONTE: HUBCAP RANCH

BIOGRAPHY

- 1892 February 2, born in Arenzano, near Genoa, Italy
Helped father do marble and mosaic (terreza) floors.
Wanted to be a priest.
- 1907/
or 1911 Moved to U.S. with his mother and sister. The boat took 16 days to New York
followed by a 6 day train ride to San Francisco, Ferry Building.
- 1920's-40's Worked as a cement contractor in San Francisco
- 1942 Litto retired. He hated paying taxes and so moved to Pope valley where there
was no taxation. He started to build on his property.
- 1943 Litto started his collection of hubcaps.
He constructed a barrier of cement, old tires, rock posts and hubcaps to prevent
motorists from turning around in his driveway and scattered gravel hauled from
the local quarry. Later neighbors began bringing him their unwanted trash. He
built wishing wells and bird houses. Washing machines and toilets were
incorporated in his environment.
- 1954 Litto's wife, Elizabeth, died.
- 1957 Started to hang hubcaps (according to Smithsonian Magazine article. Check)
- 1981 May. Hubcap Ranch was nominated as California Registered Historical
Landmark #939.
- 1984 3,000 hubcaps (estimate) (source unknown check)
- 1985 Hubcap Ranch was allocated a plaque by the State Historical resources
Commission.
- Litto has 3 sons and 4 daughters; 24/25 grandchildren and 25 great
grandchildren.
- Litto has been on Bay Area TV Stations 3,4,5 and 7.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- KIRSCH, Jonathan
1978 Four California Visionaries: Lost and Found Art. *New West* Vol 13. No. 10. pp.
229-33
- PENNY, Lynn
1974 Litto "Collects" and Makes It Art. *The Register*. (Napa Valley) (Dec.7) pp.1-2.
- ? Pope Valley Man Loves Unique Folk Art. p.3. (Newspaper--source unknown)
- ? 1984 Ripley's believe it or not Hub-a-Hubba
- ROSEN, Seymour
1979 *In Celebration of Ourselves*. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Littorf 2

THOLLANDER, Earl
1971 *Back Roads of California: Selected Trips and Solo Roads off California's Major Highways.* Menlo park: Lane Magazine and Book Co.

WAMPLER, Jan
1977 *All Their Own: People and the Places They Build.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.

WELLS, Bob
Pope Valley Yard a Head Swiveller. (source unknown)

EXHIBITIONS

1976 *In Celebration of Ourselves.* San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

?? *Dreambuilders.* Chevron gallery. San Francisco.

SOURCES

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Office of Historic Preservation
Albert L. Hurtado prepared historic resources inventory 10/4/77.
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Saint Helena Star (closest local newspaper)

Pacific Union College, Arcwin, CA. (nearest local college)