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JOHN MEDICA

Site: John Medica's Garden

Date of birth: 1900; born in (what is now) Yugoslavia, near Trieste

Came to the U.S.: 1922; went to work in a Eureka logging camp

Employment: worked in several states in the lumber industry as
a logger; had a store during the depression, lost everything;
started raising chickens and turkeys until 1955

Came to Santa Rosa: 1932

Bought land in Santa Rosa in 1943--103 acres

Began building houses on his land in the 1940s: built three houses
in the 1940s and 1950s

Self-taught in masonry and rockwork: "I invent everything--I don't
have no picture, anything--all in my imagination"

Began building walkways, bridges, castles, wall: 1955. "There was
nothing here in 1955"

Population of Santa Rosa at the time: 5-7000 in the 1940s (accord-
ing to John)

Acquired discarded chip-rocks from the quarry nearby to use in his
rock-work: "I'd go around back and find a nice rock, that's
what I wanted, and I started."

The quarry had been there since around 1880 and provided rock
and cobblestone for San Francisco. Workers would haul the
rocks by horse and wagon to the railroad about a mile away

John remembers when Howard Park was created: the city bought land
from various owners and named the park after Howard, who was
"some big shot"

Did rock-work for many people, worked on restoring part of a
Winery

JOHN MEDICA (cont.)

John's property in 1983--4 acres

Stopped building on his property in 1976/7

At present some of John's rock-work is on other people's property because he lost so many acres. The property was foreclosed on the Medica's several times ~~dx~~ during the 1960s or 1970s; they didn't, at the time, have the money to buy the property back. Their case was tried in court but the attorney they hired (or the city attorney) "stood up" for the other side and they lost. The Medica's feel that the city "did us dirt"--now they cannot use their own bridge to enter their property because someone else owns $\frac{1}{2}$ of it

Road was named after Medica in the 1950s

At one time Medica's work attracted many people every day coming to see it

A local television station did a story on Medica and his work at one time

The Press-Democrat newspaper published three articles on Medica
One of his sculptures is in front of the local post office