

Historical Tidbit

by Leo Finneran

In the 1880's, the L. Scolari family homesteaded about 160 acres covering an area starting at the "S" curve at the south (now Burrmac), ending about 1400 feet north of the start of Large Oak. The Scolari's were Swiss Italians like the Bassi's at the end of Bassi Road, now known as the Vicini Ranch. Their Swiss style barn and foundation of the workshop (and possibly the home) were located where the Finneran home and barn are today. The Scolari's raised Swiss cows and made cheese in a covered cellar close to a small pond on the property. In the spring, they would take a wagon load of cheese to the mining community of Virginia City to generate cash. The grain fields were on both sides of Arrowbee Drive. Since Lotus was the main center for food and mail, their road started at the Homestead and generally followed the existing road to the Trails End Road area, connecting into the road now called Bassi Road. Another route used to get to Lotus was on a mule trail (no wagon access) down and around the hill east of the Finneran home into the Lotus Valley. Although the Lotus grade road did not exist at this time, Thompson Hill road did.

A brother of Mr. Scolari who lived on the property drowned crossing the river on his horse. Around 1913, a fire moving north from Luneman Road destroyed all their buildings except the Swiss style barn. It was built with wood pegs and square nails. The barn later had to be torn down due to age.

This information was given to me by a Placerville Druggist in the early 1960's who said he was a nephew of the Scolari's. There is also evidence that many Indians lived on this land well before the Scolari's. Many spear arrows, acorn and pine nut grinding stones have been found nearby. The arrows were dated to 500 AD by a friend at the University of Colorado, and in fact, a large boulder with grinding holes is right under our deck.