The Limeyards

Village Limeyards

Members of Ticknall Preservation and Historical Society enjoyed a talk on Ticknall Limeyards given by Dr Marylin Palmer of Loughborough University.

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When I was in Miss Handley's class in the last year at the Melbourne Infant School, we had to learn parts of the poem Hiawatha. You would take your exercise book out to Miss Handley's desk and using an ink roller, she would put a picture into your book. I can still remember the first couple of lines of the poem today. The section in the poem that most interested me was the part where Hiawatha became involved with an argument with - I think - a fish called a sturgeon and quite how I do not know, the sturgeon told a pike to break Hiawatha's fishing line. This is my vague memory and perhaps someone will explain it more clearly. For me, however, it was the inclusion of the pike that was important. My great aunt had emigrated to Canada and each year, she would send a parcel to my grandmother. Inside the parcel would be 'goodies' - tinned foods that are taken for granted today but at the time were luxuries. One year, at the bottom of the parcel was a book about fishing in Canada. The book contained artist's impression of the different fish and one was a pike. The fish looked so fierce and my grandfather told me that sometimes, the pike in Melbourne Pool would eat the baby ducklings. This made the pike in the book with its sharp teeth seem all the more frightening. I told Miss Handley about the book and asked if I could bring it to school to show the other children, and she agreed to this. So, the next day, I took my book and for all of 15 seconds I was allowed to stand up and with the book open at the appropriate page, I showed the class - fame at last! I recount the story because as I reached the age of 18, I had gone to Ticknall Limeyards with my cousin - Ronald Tivey - and we saw the largest pike that I have ever seen. We were sitting on the bank of one of the ponds when there was literally a wave that washed onto the land as a pike turned after attacking some luckless smaller fish. We both just looked at each other and I'm not sure which of us said, "Did you see that!" It all happened so quickly and then it was gone.