

Monthly dig report for members of Leicestershire Industrial History Society and Swannington Heritage Trust.

Morning dig with a dozen LIHS members in attendance, it was particularly good to see Harry after his illnesses.

**Engine House near Califat Shaft - Excavation 2006-2016**



Underpinning the wall of the ventilation fan / winding drum pit. Cement blocks were inserted, some had to be cut to shape. A single layer of mortar was used to infill the gap between the top of the blocks and the bottom of the bricks. The blocks thus support the weight of the wall. Nearly at north end of wall, south end not yet exposed to this depth.

The rag holes have been left in the brickwork above the blocks. There may have been gaps in the timbers located underneath the wall, but as the wood had rotted these could not be confirmed.

The lower row of blocks have not been mortared in to facilitate their removal for further investigation. Once the first block has been prised out, the remainder could be removed very quickly and easily without damaging the wall.



Created a wheelbarrow ramp up the slope to the south of the ventilation fan / winding drum pit, thus making the removal of excavated waste easier. The spoil removed was clay next to the wall, plus cinder ash and some bitumen, it was stacked near the noticeboard. There is a brick square part way along the wall, this requires further investigation.

Removed large weeds from south of engine house so that tunnel and holes can be clearly seen.

**Engine House near Alabama shaft - Excavation 1993-1999**

SHT had applied weedkiller which had killed the taller weeds. LIHS decided it was not necessary to do any work on this area before the Festival of Archaeology sessions. This will be reviewed at the July dig.



### Miners' Cottages



SHT had applied weedkiller which had killed the taller weeds

Ferns and other weeds removed from front of miners' cottage. Gradually clearing site moving northwards towards the hedge. Instead of telling visitors that there were cottages under the brambles, it is now possible to point to clear evidence of the cottage.

Walls are two bricks thick. Some of the bricks are very crumbly.

Found a metal strip in front of wall, purpose unknown.

Evidence of slate roof from the number of slate pieces and the nail holes. Also clay tiles possibly coalport as one tile had end of word "lport". Roz took these pieces home for safe keeping.

Materials being stacked to the south of the cottages next to the fence, separate piles for slate, clay, broken bricks and nearly whole bricks.

### Festival of Archaeology

#### Leicestershires longest ongoing dig - Victorian Coal Mine site - LIVE at Swannington, Coalville

Leicestershire Industrial History Society, (LIHS) are celebrating 10 years of monthly digs with 3 additional "live" digs just for you ! Visit the Victorian era Califat coal mine & talk with the diggers about their discovery of the engine house, boiler bases, ventilation tunnels, drains and either a winding drum or fan foundation. Discover their plans for the future the challenges of making progress and why parts of the mine are named after a Romanian City and a Confederates States Ship !

Sundays 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016 14:00-17:00

Paul is leading the dig on these dates and would welcome more diggers as some LIHS members will be opening the Glenfield tunnel and SHT members opening Hough Mill. If you aren't a digger, this is an excellent chance to see the progress made.

### Next Dig Dates

Tuesdays 12<sup>th</sup> July, 9<sup>th</sup> August and 13<sup>th</sup> September. Dig 10am-1pm, optional lunch at the Robin Hood and continue dig until 4pm.