

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

Morning dig with 16 LIHS diggers in attendance.

Engine House near Califat Shaft - Excavation 2006-2016 - South of Engine and Boiler Houses



The area to the south of the boiler house and to the side of the chimney was excavated, the material was primarily burnt cinders.



In the corner between the boiler house and chimney were a small number of loose clean bricks that had never been cemented. Some of the material came out in clay lumps.



The corner between the engine house and boiler house was excavated, the material included a lot of clay. A curved brick structure was revealed and will require further excavation next time.

Tunnel from pit towards shaft



Some of the material excavated from the BBQ area was used to cover the tunnel. Since the dig SHT have used turf removed from the horse gin circle to cover the tunnel.

Cottage Slates



Two types of slate were at the cottages. The Welsh slates are purple and thin, the quality of the slate allows it to be cut very thinly. This makes it popular with builders as they can use less wood in the roof structure.

Our slate guru was unable to identify the thicker blue/grey coloured slates. This is partly due to the 1850's being a time when Swithland slate was declining as railways brought slates in from other parts of the country.

Some of the slates had small drilled holes. Others had larger less circular holes that were punched by the nails.

Old Shaft to East of Califat Boiler House



The north western corner of the structure around the old shaft was excavated around the pipes. The excavation expanded when another wall was discovered to the north, this requires further investigation.



In the north east corner the wall has proved to be quite substantial with the brickwork being 18 courses deep. Although the shaft is 18th century, a theory is that the brickwork is 19th century, as Georgian bricks were smaller than Victorian bricks.



To the north of the structure a pony shoe (4in long by 3in wide) was found. The trench along the western side of the old shaft structure has been extended to the south, then continued around the corner. There appears to be an arched wall, although this could be down to subsidence and ground pressure.