

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

Morning dig with 18 LIHS diggers in attendance, then lunch at the Bull's Head.

Engine House near Califat Shaft - Excavation 2006-2017 - South of Engine and Boiler Houses



Near the BBQ, in the corner between the engine house and the boiler house good progress has been made digging out the gooey clay from the quarter circle. The brick surround is 10 bricks deep, the excavation went below the bottom of the wall surround. Total brick measure of wall 20 bricks from top to water level when the water table was reached. It was noted that two bricks near the bottom of the surround wall stuck out as if to support a vessel held within the curvature. Some of the brickwork was protected with a membrane.



The holes for the engine holding down bolts had been filled with stakes to prevent child sized feet from getting caught. The stakes were replaced with polystyrene blocks. Because the pit to the west of the engine house has been excavated, the pit's holding down bolt holes are now clearly visible from top to bottom, so these can now be used when explaining to visitors.

Old Shaft to East of Califat Boiler House



There was some digging in the tough ground at the south end of the old shaft. However, the main focus was removing the oak tree in one corner. Sad to see it go after 18 years but in the long term it would have damaged the excavation. Just a shallow depression remains and that can be excavated. The snow the following week made it easier to pick out the features.



A piece of bitumen and a "what is it?" were finds this dig.

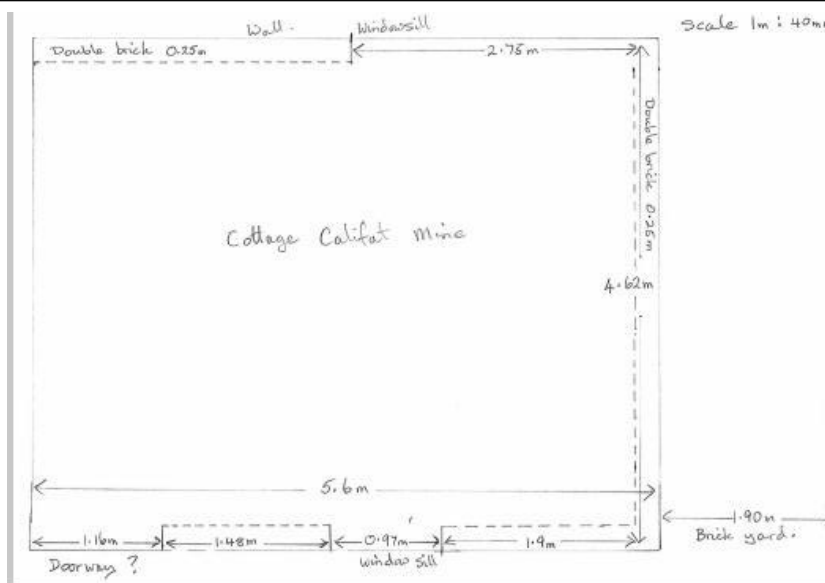


Cinder Pile Area



A large hole has been dug next to the pile of cinders near the south west corner of the engine house. The depression can be clearly seen when outlined by the snow the following week.

Miners' Cottages



Roz has provided a very helpful diagram of the layout of the cottage being excavated. There is more to the west.

Diagrams that give measurements are very helpful as part of the recording of the dig.



To the east of the cottage a brick pavement has been revealed, it is 1.9metres wide. So far only a four brick wide section has been exposed. This has been protected with a layer of loose bricks. The intention is to expose the whole east pavement. The soil is being carefully spread in the Califat woodland on the other side of the path.



Bit by bit the north wall (next to the fence and hedge) is being exposed, providing evidence of a double thickness brick wall and window ledge cemented in place.