

Monthly dig report for Leicestershire Industrial History Society and Swannington Heritage Trust. Morning dig with 16 of us.

### Pipe east of Boiler House



For a number of months there has been digging activity around the vertical pipe to the east of the boiler house and close to the fenced off old shaft. This month the pipe became loose and there was great excitement when Dave wrestled it out of the ground.



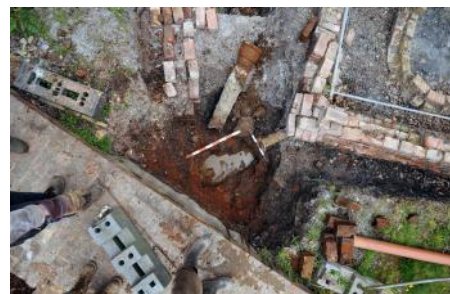
Below the pipe there was the remains of a french drain (brick sides and a roof of stone). There was also a horizontal pipe that appears to run under the third boiler cradle towards its stoke pit.



The cavities and bricks that could be seen when the pipe was vertical were the french drain.



The drain hole from the horizontal pipe to the covered drain is about 70cm in length.



Bill has an array of gizmos in his camera kit so used his expertise to take these photos from above.

David Ramsey's measuring sticks show the piece of pipe is about a metre long.



Cast iron pipes since the 18th century were originally horizontally cast but in the 1840s they started vertically or "pit" casting them which made them stronger. It's not easy to tell which ours is, unless we got it grit blasted which is expensive.

The joints were made by the plain pipe end, or "spigot" inserted into the bell mouthed end and sealed with tarred yarn that was hammered in place with a caulking chisel. The annulus between the bell mouth and spigot was then filled with molten lead after a clay mould was placed on the end of the bell mouth. This was to keep the lead yarn in place.

Pretty well all pipes of this era for water and gas under any pressure were cast iron. Lead yarn joints were cheaper and more versatile than flanged joints such as the buried cast-iron drainage pipe by the engine house.

Steam pipes were usually made of wrought iron and later steel, as cast iron is rather brittle and unsuited to any thermal use.

### BBQ Area South Of Engine House



Work continued on removing the clay to the south of the engine and boiler houses.

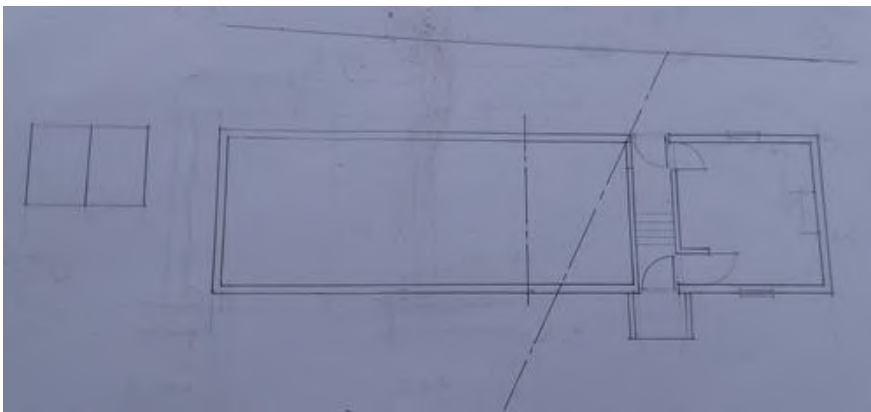


We don't just dig, we try and look after the site. The area around the tunnel entrance was landscaped.

Weeds growing in the engine and boiler houses were removed.



### Miners' Cottages



Alan has been busy expanding the shapes on the map to provide a sketch of what the layout of the cottages might have been. The diagonal line is the border between the smallholding owned by the Rush family and the Trust's land. The privy on the left and one and a bit cottages are on the smallholding. The Trust owns about 80% of a cottage. The photo shows the Trust part of the room to the left of the porch and stairs.



There is a marked difference between the floor of the porch and the area that is believed to be under the stairs.



The rear of the cottages continues to be uncovered, lots more to do.