

November dig report for Leicestershire Industrial History Society and Swannington Heritage Trust. Present - 14 diggers.

Engine House Area



The team is still uncovering areas of interest, but the focus is increasingly becoming:

- Preparation for the next stage of consolidation - the bricklayers will require easy access to the site, good wheelbarrow runs plus an absence of holes and obstacles so that they can get on with the job once funding has been secured.
- Facilitating safe public access, initially during tours then at other times.



Look carefully to see the difference between the bricks:

- Victorian red bricks
- Georgian bricks are a lighter colour and thinner.

Pipes east of Boiler House



For many months one team has been investigating the network of drainage pipes between the boiler house and the old shaft.

It takes a lot longer to dig out material in a confined space then lift it out of the hole.

As with other parts of the site, there are plenty of lumps of shale.



An exploratory trench to search for the route of the pipe closer to the former reservoir (now the pond) did not uncover anything.

Miners' Cottages



The diggers concentrated on the inside of the cottage, carefully removing more material.

The team worked inside the front (southern) wall and along the right (eastern) wall, working around what may be a fireplace.



The left photo shows the floor when standing near the porch, looking west to east.

The right photo is the opposite direction looking from the east towards the step down from the porch.

It seems the roof had been dropped on top of the floor as it was covered by roof tiles.



The left photo is the east wall (right wall) and shows the floor leading to what could be the fireplace.



The remains of some shoes were uncovered underneath the step leading to the porch. It was a common practice during the 19th century to hide shoes in walls, chimneys and other places to protect the family from evil spirits.

Christmas Social



In December the snow gave the woodlands and dig sites a particular. Although we knew that we would not be able to dig, that did not stop a dozen diggers turning up (plus another three at the pub for lunch). Many thanks to Paul for bringing the barbecue, logs, sausages, bacon and rolls, as well as Rod for his Califat Black porter and his good lady's hot Banbury cakes.

Next dig - Tuesday 9th January, 9.30am-1pm at the Califat Coal Mine, St George's Hill, Swannington, LE67 8QW.

- All heritage / LIHS emails for Bis to please use swanningtonresearch@gmail.com
- Emails for Katrina please use swanningtonchair@hotmail.com
- Heritage Trust membership forms are on website or email shtmembership@btconnect.com to pay online.