

This photo report is produced by a member of the dig team. It is given to Swannington Heritage Trust and Leicestershire Industrial History Society to use, publish and distribute as if they own the copyright without attributing the author.

May to July 2018 dig report.

Weather



After April's rain and washout (the second one of 2018) it was good to make progress during May, June and July.

What a contrast between flooded April and sunbathing with sunglasses in May.

Engine House Area



Diggers dug out a slope at the north end of what is believed to be a winding drum void. Between digs the Trust JCB excavated some additional material.

Engine House Area

The dry spell was an opportunity to investigate the base of the “BBQ” as the amount of water had reduced.

Site measurements were taken.



While investigating the “BBQ” a fragment of pottery was found.



Three temporary information boards were erected explaining the dig and the two fatalities in 1863.



Weeds grow rapidly during the summer and time, so some gardening was undertaken to remove some of them. The aim being to tidy the site and make it easily visible for the tour visitors, without making the site too pristine.



The hotchpotch drainage system comprising glazed pipes, a cast iron pipe and a stone covered trench is another of the Califat conundrums.

Miners' Cottages



Removing the tree roots continued to be a struggle as they had had nearly 60 years to embed themselves in the rubble.



Having a range of plastic containers enabled debris to be sorted (slate, glass, mortar, tiles, broken bricks etc) as it was dug. This reduced the amount of final sorting. The aim being to produce a mound of usable soil that only has small stones and other bits.



During two years of digging a considerable portion of the floor area of the east room has been uncovered. Progress is deliberately slow as significant resources are devoted to sorting the debris. Finds are shown below.



A brick with letters.



A metal corner.

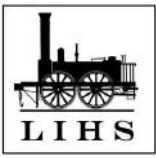


Thick flat stone slabs, possibly from the fire area.



A gutter support spike and nails. Artefacts are stored in plastic boxes and removed from the site for safe storage. Surplus artefacts are left on site to enlighten visitors at any time.





Califat Coal Mine Tours



The tours on Saturday 14th and Sunday 29th July were very successful. It gave an opportunity to show children what coal is. On the 29th tours lasted 90 minutes and people were very interested despite being drenched by heavy rain.

The tour leaflet produced by the Trust was used to promote the tours at the Coalville Miners' Gala and Strawberry Fayre, supplemented by a lot of internet and social media promotion. Tour participants were given a copy of the leaflet.

Next tours 2pm and 3pm Sunday 2nd September.



Tour the
Califat Coal Mine
at the
Califat Spinney

