

This photo report is produced by 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. Thanks Harry for the photos of the old shaft trench.

It has been great to meet new diggers during recent digs, everyone welcome 9.30am-1pm second Tuesday of the month.

October and November 2018 dig report.

Califat Engine House Area



During the two sessions diggers continued excavating the coal stacking pavement outside the largest of the boiler house's three stoke pits. The hole was enlarged to leave room for the proposed sleeper retaining wall. The Trust has agreed that a 1m trench can be dug to both the north and east to find the edge of the pavement. The pavement floor has been reached and found to be in good condition, a thin layer of soil has been left to protect it.



Within the heras fence, the trench on the east side of the old shaft has been filled in. The pipe area will be filled in when the notes and drawings of the pipes have been completed. Marker posts have been positioned to provide a grid for recording the position of buildings and other features.



During October the Trust engaged a Mining Engineer to undertake a safety review of the four shafts and the proposed work in their vicinity. Verbal recommendations included digging test pits near two of the shafts to ascertain the depth of filled ground before reaching undisturbed rock or clay. At the end of November a test pit was dug near the Califat shaft down to the clay bed and Katrina is feeding the details to the Mining Engineer so that the amount of fencing can be determined.

Miners' Cottages



Work continued on excavating the fireplace near the step. A number of soot blackened bricks have been uncovered, as well as part of the fire grate. It has been suggested that there could have been back to back fires in the two rooms.



During October a lot of the soil heap was moved to the Coal Authority fenced off area. At the end of November the soakaway / sump was extended and dug down to 2.8m. Trust volunteers have moved the half bricks and slate from the spoil heaps to part fill the sump (now 1m deep at the south end) which has been fenced as it will take several months to fill it.

Alabama Engine House Area



The other test pit was near the Alabama shaft. Katrina measured the depth to the clay bed and has passed the details to the Mining Engineer to calculate fencing requirements. The test pit was filled in. A brick structure was uncovered in one corner, in line with the memorial bench. LIHS may wish to include this in their proposal for returning to the Alabama engine house.



A metal bolt and a shorter metal item (which broke in two when picked up) were uncovered during the test pit excavation. These have been added to the items in the Trust repository.