

Photographic Report Of LIHS Excavation - June 2019

The Excavation

Swannington Heritage Trust own the Califat Spinney, which is the site of the Califat Coal Mine (1855-1873). Leicestershire Industrial History Society have led the monthly excavation of the coal mine buildings near the Califat winding shaft since June 2006.

Swannington Heritage Trust produce this monthly photographic report for the benefit of SHT and LIHS, so that they can share it with their members, volunteers and supporters. LIHS make the technical recordings of the dig and will produce a report at the end of the excavation.

Engine House - Winding Drum Void



The sleepers had been delivered before the dig.



It was a wet morning when the gravel bed was laid. The first of the sleepers required some gentle persuasion to snugly fit into place.

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Yes the team did use a spirit level. A plastic sheet was secured to protect the wall from moisture. Bricks behind the sleepers kept them in place and provide drainage.



Brick columns at each end kept the sleepers in line. Regular spirit level checks ensured the wall was level.

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The wall builders were pleased with their work and even raised a smile on such a wet day. After ensuring the area was clear of people, bits of brick from the excavation were thrown down. Some of the mud from in front of the wall was dug out. Somewhat too late the rain stopped.

At the next dig excavated spoil will be moved from the other side of the coal storage pavement to produce a gentle slope.



Even on a wet day the sleepers were drying out. The clay between the sleepers and the brick floor will be dug out and stone laid to provide a suitable floor.

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Coal Storage Pavement



A lot of wet soil had to be shovelled off the coal storage pavement before work on the sleeper wall could start. The focus was on a level baseline and fixing angle iron to the brickwork. Drilling the holes in the bricks required quite a bit of pressure with the drill. Sleepers to be laid in July.

Social



The copper beech tree provided shelter for the morning break for the eight damp volunteers.