The Legend of Stonehenge

History of the Kings of Britain is a famous story written by a well-known twelfth century writer called Geoffrey of Monmouth in 1136. In the story, Geoffrey tried to explain the truth behind Stonehenge. The legend of Stonehenge is associated to a famous magician by the name of Merlin and King Arthur, who was the nephew of King Aurelius Ambrosius. Geoffrey believed that Stonehenge was a memorial to Aurelius Ambrosius's battle victory at Amesbury and was brought from Ireland to Salisbury Plain by Merlin's magic.

The story began in the fifth century whereby about 300 noblemen were killed by Hengest, who was a treacherous Saxon leader at that time. Fortunately, King Aurelius Ambrosius wanted to seek justice and finally won the battle and managed to kill Hengest.

King Aurelius wanted to create a memorial for the noblemen killed and magician Merlin suggested transporting the Giant's stone rings from Ireland to Britain. According to Geoffrey, the stones rings were brought primarily from Africa to Ireland by Giants, hence explaining the name given to the stone rings.

In the later part of the century, King Uther and Merlin led a group of people to Mount Killaraus in Ireland to where the stones were situated. The stones proved to be too gigantic for them to move as neither do they posses any supernatural powers nor are they giants.

Therefore, it was up to Merlin to do the task. Merlin used his magic powers to dissemble the stones and shipped them back to Britain. The great stones were then set up and aligned in a circle around the graves of the murdered noble men.

In other periods of the century, various Kings at their time were buried at Stonehenge. Some of the Kings buried there were Aurelius, Uther, Arthur and Arthur's successor Constantine.

Origins of Stonehenge

The British Isles is famous for its many great monuments from the Neolithic and Bronze ages such as tombs, stones, mounds, alignments etc. We need to look at Stonehenge in a wider scope so as to understand the monument's mysterious history and living. It is known that the stone rings were constructed by the people of the late Neolithic period around 3000BC.

Stonehenge stands straight up in the British Isles and is extraordinary in many ways. The process of finding origins for Stonehenge and solving its mysteries is more astounding and interesting than the monument itself. It was in the early medieval period that the first pieces of literary and vivid evidence for Stonehenge was discovered.

Many researchers tried desperately to uncover the mystery behind Stonehenge, many coming up with their own theory of possible origins. Some archaeologists suggested Druids and Romans as possible origins but some claimed Egyptians and Mycenaean are more possible deductions.

John Aubrey was the first antiquarian to bring attention to Avebury in the seventeenth century. He was the first antiquarian to find cavities at Stonehenge. In his

1666 report, he noted ditches, which were later named after him as “Aubrey Holes”.“Aubrey Holes” were among the earliest features of Stonehenge.

Another famous investigator of Stonehenge was William Stukeley. In 1740, he examined many barrow burial mounds and recognized the solar alignment. He had made huge achievements in archaeology. Most importantly, he suggested Celtic and Druids origins for Stonehenge. He believed that Stonehenge was actually a temple built by the Druids of Celtic Britain who were priests of Celtic religion of the Iron Age.

However, it turned out that his historical analysis was flawed. In fact, John Aubrey was the first to classify Stonehenge with the Druids and Stukeley was the one who enthusiastically promoted the idea, which in turn led to a mistaken history.

With further investigation by other researchers in the later centuries, it was known that the Druids had nothing to do with the construction of the stone rings. It was about 1500 years after Stonehenge was built that the Celtic society in which the Druids priesthood flourished came into existence. It was about 300BC that the Druids started to live near the Stonehenge. Therefore, the Druids could not have been the ones who constructed Stonehenge.

Moreover, there were no evidence to prove that the Druids used the Stonehenge for any ritual purposes. In fact, researchers showed that they conduct their ritual activities in forest grooves. Hence, this questions Aubrey and Stukeley's deductions on any Druidic connections with the Stonehenge.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth century, some archaeologist suggested that it was the Romans who constructed the monument. However, later researchers claimed that this deduction is even more mistaken than the Druids because the Romans came to British Isles about 2000 years after the Stonehenge was constructed.

Prehistorians in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries suggested that it was the Egyptians and Myceneans who influenced Europe with Bronze Age culture. With the use of Carbon-14 dating techniques, the giant monuments in Britain were proven to have connections with the Egyptian, Mycenean and Greek cultures.

Sir William Gowland was the first modern investigator in the twentieth century. Even though his excavation area was small, his 1901 scientific excavations revealed construction methods and predicted that the monument was built around 1800BC. His research provided a lot of important information for the archaeologists.

The mysterious story and fate of Stonehenge almost came to an end in the twentieth century!

In the Great War, the Air Ministry wanted to demolish Stonehenge much to the dismay of many dedicated researchers. The reason given is that its height poses a threat to the low-flying aircrafts. Luckily, there were some wiser counsels around and they prevailed. The right for Stonehenge was finally being given to its present owner, English Heritage in 1918.

Lt-Col William Hawley conducted excavations for many seasons between 1919 and 1926. His research focuses mostly on the dates of the monument and the characteristics of Stonehenge. His phasing and dating continues to the present day. In 1950s and 1960s, Oxford University engineer Alexander Thom & astronomer Gerald Hawkins discovered that there were many astronomical alignments among the stones. They deduced that the stone rings were used for astronomical purposes.

However, there were some researchers who disagree with Hawkins. In 1987, Aubrey Burl and Benjamin Ray states that Hawkins overestimated the number of solar

and lunar alignments in Stonehenge and that it is not used to predict eclipses. He claims that the Stonehenge was used more for religious purposes than astronomical uses.

In the later part of the twentieth century between 1950 and 1964, Professor Stuart Piggott and Professor Richard Atkinson made great achievements in archaeology. They identified a specific “Wessex Culture” during Bronze Age and popularized the monument’s archaeology.. Professor Stuart Piggott suggested that the bluestones were transported from Wales and not from Ireland as stated in the earlier centuries by the legend of King Arthur. They published a book in 1960 to explain their achievements. Atkinson’s phases are now refined by carbon dating

Construction

To the uninformed observer, Stonehenge might be just made up of stones placed at strategically sacred places in a circle, which carries a special meaning exclusively to its builders. It is often normal to overlook the tedious task that the builders, over the span of more than a thousand years, took to build this famous stone monument. In fact, the construction of Stonehenge was broken into 3 phases.

Phase 1: Earthwork monument

The first phase is more of laying the groundwork for future construction of Stonehenge. It started around 2950 to 2900 BC. Stones were not involved during this time. The construction started with an encircling ditch. It consists of 2 earth banks, a high internal bank with an exterior one encircling the inner one. There are at least 2 entrances into the 2 earth banks. The main entrance is to the Northeast, while a much less significant one is to the South.

Animal bones have been found at the bottom of the ditch, especially at the entrances. They consist mainly of jawbones of cattle and because the ditch was not cleaned, the bones were left to decay, leaving a dark organic layer and bone residue.

Inside the ditch, the builders dug 56 holes. They are called the Aubrey Holes after John Aubrey, the 17th century antiquarian. They are about 5 metres from the inner bank. The Aubrey Holes vary greatly in depth and size, but are almost circular. These holes are not filled up with anything and discoverers have found remains of chalk and dark deposits which might have been the remains of timber posts that were implanted into these holes.

It is being inferred that Aubrey Holes belonged to the construction of Phase 1 simply because the circles of the Aubrey Holes and the encircling ditch and banks all share the same centres, while the stone monument which was constructed much later, had a different central point.

Phase 2: The timber monument

The second phase seemed to happen between 2900 and 2550-2400 BC. During this time, parts of the encircling ditch were filled up with fresh chalk. Small cuts into the in filled ditch and Aubrey Holes were partially up with animal bones and remains of human cementations. A complicated and complex setting of upright timber posts was also in place.

Archaeologists find that the postholes were scattered at random, with roughly a circular cluster in the centre (not a perfect nor a recognizable circle though), an extension of a narrow-like corridor towards the South entrance and a very ordered group of postholes at the Northeastern entrance.

From afar, postholes seem to have been arranged haphazardly. There are actually 3 groups. A (at the principal Northeast entrance), B (at the centre of monument), C (at the Southern entrance).

The postholes in the centre are the most difficult and hardest for archaeologists to study. It is impossible to link up the post holes to form circles and studies have found out that the ground had been disturbed many times during the construction, with the continuous relocation of timber posts within the interior of the earthwork monument. However, it was believed that the final Stonehenge resembled the wooden structures that existed.

These confusing and complicated patterns of postholes arrangement at the centre leave much speculation for future archaeologists.

The most easiest to interpret are the post holes at the main North Eastern entrance, It seems to suggest that there is a series of wooden walls, making a triple entrance into the monument. It could also have meant that the timber posts served as barriers, obstructing access into the monument.

A very organized and ordered arrangement. It suggests a triple entrance, comprising of wooden walls. It might have also served as restricted areas.

The postholes at the southern entrance also suggest parallel walls that channelled people into a corridor, with a line of posts running across

this passageway as a barrier. Archaeologists felt that the people were made to walk through a confined space before allowing them into a larger, holier space.

Phase 3: Stone monument

The third phase is the longest and most elaborate construction, which the site had undergone. This phase is sub-divided into 5 different stages and it lasted from 2550 BC to about 1600 BC.

Phase 3i: Arrival of the Bluestones

Bluestones were the first stones to be placed in Stonehenge.
The first bluestone arrangement was placed in the centre of the ditch. Instead of a stone circle, bluestones were concentrated more on the Northern and Eastern sides.

To the left of the picture, we can see dumbbell shaped holes, known as Q and R holes. Some archaeologists figured that the arrangement might have been an arc or a square setting with rounded corners.

Phase 3ii: Arrival of the Sarsen Stones

During the next 100 years, the former bluestone arrangement was dismantled and huge sarsen stones were erected, forming a circle. They were about 4 metres in height, with a continuous lintel of stone blocks (about 1 metre thick) places on top. The lintels were shaped with curved surfaces, to form a circle. The top of this circle was almost horizontal despite the fact that the monument was situated on a slightly sloping ground. The stones were joined together using techniques such as mortice-and-tenon and tongue-and-groove joints.

Inside this circle, 5 pairs of 'trilithon' sarsens with a lintel stone on top of each pair were set in a horseshoe formation, with its opening towards the North Eastern entrance.

It is important to note that the centre of this sarsen stone circle is different from that of the central point of Phase 1 and 2. In fact, it became a few degrees further east, and the new axis was the central line of the Avenue- (a pair of parallel earthen banks with a ditch on the outer side of each, running from the River Avon to the North Eastern entrance.) It was thought that the Avenue was the route, which the original bluestones were brought from the river to the site. The width of the Avenue gradually decreases as it approaches the monument.

Phase 3iii: Bluestones and Sarsens

The bluestones, which arrived in Phase 3i, were continuously moved about. More than 20 of these stones were shaped and dressed and were placed in an oval shape, within the horseshoe formation. It is believed that the Altar Stone was also being erected during this time. Bluestones were also randomly selected and placed in a circle, surrounding the outer sarsen circle. These stones did not survive well to this day, as compared to the sarsen stones, as they were small and ancient people could have easily carried these stones away.

Phase 3iv: 2 Circles and 2 Horseshoes

During 1900 or 1800 BC, the oval of bluestones were changed to that of a smaller horseshoe, by taking away most of the bluestones from the northern part. Hence, at this stage, there should be two circles of sarsen and bluestone, followed by 2 horseshoes of sarsen and bluestone. A single standing stone (the Altar Stone) acts as the focal point.

Phase3v: The Y and Z Holes

Two concentric rings of pits were dug around the stones. They are called Y and Z holes by their excavator, Lt-Col Hawley. These holes are much more rectangular in shape and they are not really circular. Some of these holes were partially filled with animal bones. It is plausible that these holes were meant for another series of stones to be added. However, this phase was never carried out.

There are also 6 outer stones (the Heel, Slaughter and Station Stones), which are found inside the circular bank and ditch. The age of these stones are hard to predict through dating. Thus it is not known if they belong to any of the three phases of construction.

The Heel Stone

This stone is the most famous of the lot. It stands inside its own ditch at the Northeast entrance from the Avenue. It is to be believed that the Heel Stone was meant to be a pair. This is because during midsummer solstice, the Sun rises beside the existing Heel Stone. It will only make sense if the Heel Stone comes in a pair, then the first light would have shone directly through them and into the enclosed monument.

The Slaughter Stone

The Slaughter Stone now lies flat by the Avenue entrance and it is only in the late 18th century that people associated this stone with rituals of sacrifices. Initially, the Slaughter Stone was upright, even during the year 1620. It was not clear what made this stone topple. During WW1, a track way passing through Stonehenge was being set up and drilled holes were found across the corner of the stone. But given the harsh conditions, which it was made to undergo, it is indeed a miracle that it survived till this day.

The 4 Station Stones

4 Station Stones were erected inside the circular ditch. It formed a rectangle, with its longest sides facing northeast and Southwest, Only the Northern and Southern stones had barrow mounds built around it.

It is interesting to note that when lines are drawn from the 4 stones, they from a rectangle whose centre points directly at the centre of the site.

Materials

Immersing oneself in the almost scared and mysterious aura of Stonehenge, it is inevitable to wonder how ancient people were able to carry such heavy stones and arrange them in ways that are precise in alignment and direction.

Both bluestones and the sarsen stones were not from Salisbury Plain. Evidences of these stones were found miles away from the original site. How did these heavy stones get there?

Bluestones

It is assumed that these stones came from the Preseli Mountains in Pembrokeshire, Southwest of Wales. Strange enough, these stones are mostly grey-brown, rather than blue, as the name suggests. Bluestones do not particularly belong to a specific rock type, but comes in a variety of mixed minerals.

Even though bluestones are small compared to the sarsen stones, they are in fact much taller than an average man's height! Since bluestones are not at all light and come from a far away placer, just how did the ancient people transport them?

The two most common explanations are by human transportation and glacial action.

Human Trasnportation

There are at least 27 standing stone monuments in Southwest Wales, and it is assumed that the bluestones from Stonhenge might have been raided or transported entirely from an even earlier monument of standing stones. Furthermore, the age of the stones from Wales and Stonehenge are of the same time bracket.

Land transportation might have been impossible due to demanding terrain and many areas of water. The only way these stones could have found their way to Salisbury Plain would have to be using canoes, navigating through small waterways.

Glacial action

Transportation of bluestones by glacial action was overruled by certain scholors as no clear evidence of post-glacial features could be found at the site. If glaciers were able to carry such huge rocks, stones of smaller sizes would have also been carried down to Salisbury Plain. However, no such stones were found.

Sarsen Stones

Sarsens were formed after seabed chalk deposits were covered in sand and the sand had hardened, with the loose sand being eroded away. All these occurred some 70 million years ago. Sarsen stones came from the Marlborough Downs, some 30km to the North.

Despite being very hard, these stones were mostly shaped into blocks with integral fixing features. The vertical stones might appear straight, but they actually have a slight convex taper to counter the foreshortening effect of looking up at them from ground level.

The builders also had a brilliant way of joining the upright stone with the horizontal lintels. Every upright stone was worked away to leave a protruding ‘tenon’, which was to secure the hollowed out ‘mortice’ of the corresponding underside of the lintel. Each horizontal lintel was linked to the next with a ‘tongue’ on the side, and is fitted into the ‘groove’ of its neighbour.

Because of the size and weight of these stones, transportation must have been a difficult one for ancient builders with limited resources. Scholars have come up with 3 hypotheses of how these stones might have been transported.

The Roller Hypothesis

This suggests that the stones were placed on wooden rollers. As the stones moved, men would quickly run to the front of the moving stone to add on more wooden roller (tree trunks) in order to get a continuous momentum. It resembles a modern-day conveyor belt. However, some people argued that the heavy weight of the stones would have crushed the rolling tree trunks.

The Cradle Hypothesis

This hypothesis describes the stone being placed in a protective casing and being rolled on the ground by men until they reach their final destination.

The Sled Hypothesis

The most likely hypothesis is that the stones were placed on a sled and it would be able to travel along a wooden track way with the aid of animal fat as lubrication to overcome frictional forces. In 1995, practical experiments were carried out to test the possibility of this hypothesis and it was able to move the stone at the speed of a normal walking man with only manpower of about 100.

Erecting The Stones

There are many ways, which seemed possible for the builders to erect the stones. Evacuation showed that some large pits were dug, with one side having a sloping back to form a ramp. The stone was placed on rollers, with the base facing the pit.

By pulling and levering, using a seesaw action, the Sarsen stone was able to stand upright and stone fragments, chalk and flints were used to fill up the pit in order to secure the stone in its upright position.

Adding The Lintels

Lintels were being raised gradually. First, the lintel was placed on the ground, with each end being lifted alternatively to place supporting stones underneath it. A wooden deck is being erected under crisis-crossed timbers and the builders would continue the entire process of levering the Sarsen stone to add more supporting stones to raise its height. Such process would be repeated until the lintel was at level with the top of the upright stone. It was then levered sideways to make the lintel fit into the tenon of the vertical stone.

Possible Uses of Stonehenge

Other than the origins of Stonehenge, another important aspect of the monument, which is under constant argument and controversy, is the purpose of the monument. What was it used for? This is the question many tried and are still trying to explain. Despite not being able to come up with a definite answer, we hope that by examining various theories, we can reach a higher level of understanding and a more realistic conclusion, not just of the purpose of Stonehenge, but also about the society that existed then.

Stonehenge as Observatory

It is undeniable that Stonehenge has certain astronomical or celestial implications.

Its main entrance faces northeast, the direction of the midsummer rising sun. In fact, most of the barrows, henges and cursuses within the Stonehenge region face the rising sun in the east or northeast. Directly opposite, to the southwest, is the direction of the midwinter sunset, when the sun's rays shine between the two huge uprights of the great trilithon in the inner horseshoe of Stonehenge. Between Phases 2 and 3 of Stonehenge's construction, the main axis on which the monument is aligned was shifted to place it more squarely in the direction of the rising midsummer sun. This

suggests that its northeastern aspect was considered crucial at that time. The Avenue, Stonehenge's approach route, built as part of the monument, also approaches on this northeastern line.

In fact, Stonehenge is famous for the enchanting view when the sun rises beside the Heel Stone at the midsummer solstice, when viewed from the centre of the stone circle. This is made possible by the structure's particular alignment. It is believed that there was another stone in the past, forming a pair with the Heel Stone. This pair of standing stones, if both were still in place, would have framed the sun's first appearance and the light would have shone down a stone corridor, into the centre of the monument.

Another possible alignment can be seen through the Station Stones. The axes of the monument, if drawn through the positions of the four Station Stones, seem to indicate the direction of midsummer sunrise and midwinter sunset. Moreover, the Station Stones themselves may be related to lunar observations. Their positions form a rectangle, with the longer sides of the rectangle pointing in the direction of moonrise and moonset at their furthest points. Thus, the exact position of Stonehenge is reckoned to be significant as well, since the solar and lunar alignments, marked by the Station Stones, meet at right angles only at this latitude. This could account for the choice of this site for the building of Stonehenge. It seems nearly impossible that such alignments could occur by change. In any case, all these proved Stonehenge's connections with celestial observations. However, is Stonehenge an observatory?

Alignment through the Station Stones

The lines indicate the midsummer sunrise, midwinter sunset and the furthest points of moonrise and moonset. These alignments only meet at right angles at Stonehenge's latitude.

As mentioned before, Gerald Hawkins supplied a computer with the basic astronomical information and celestial positions of the night sky around the time Stonehenge was in use and concluded that Stonehenge was used to predict the positions of the sun and the moon relative to earth and thereby, the seasons, and thus, illustrating Stonehenge's calendrical function. This notion came under great scrutiny. As Benjamin Ray had argued, had the ancient builders been primarily interested in making precise astronomical observations, they would not have chosen Stonehenge's circular form with tall stones. This form contains far more stones than are needed, has too many imprecise sightlines and prevents observation over the tall stones. Moreover it is also suggested that the astronomical sighting lines at Stonehenge are well established long before the building of Stonehenge, a heavy and immobile structure. Thus, the

structure is at most a ritual site commemorating past discoveries, rather than for the purpose of seeking new knowledge and discovery.

Thus, it seems that Ray's suggestion of the ritual function of Stonehenge seems more probable.

Ritual Function of Stonehenge

Ray suggested that the primary purpose of Stonehenge is its ritual function, while astronomical observation comes as a secondary use, in service to the ritual function. He also theorized that Stonehenge, being situated in an area rich in burial tombs, might had been associated with burial rituals. However, its shape resembles that of Neolithic ceremonial buildings. This suggests the possible use of Stonehenge as a shrine for the living, rather than for the dead. This would explain the importance of Stonehenge's capacity to determine dates of the solstices and equinoxes.

In many societies, past and present, the sun's annual journey is of great significance. This is especially true in the ancient times when celestial observation could only be carried out with very limited resources. The relative time of the day can be told by looking at the sun's position in the sky, while the sun's point in the seasonal cycle may be determined by watching the horizon. Natural objects, like stones or notches in a line of hills, are often used among pre-literate societies as markers in solar observation. During the equinoxes, approximately 21st March and 21st September, the

sun rises directly due east and sets directly due west. At the solstices, around 21st June and 21st December, the sun appears to rest for a few days before continuing its journey. This routine of the sun is crucial to the many societies that were dependent on the sun for the growing of crops or seasonal migration. This meant that they relied on the sun to know the times for sowing and harvesting, or the time for moving to new territories.

This reliance of the people on the sun is sometimes accompanied by the fear that, without appropriate action, the sun will not repeat its life-giving journey. It is also known as a fact that many ancient cultures held festivals on the solstices and equinoxes. The most common interpretation of these festivals is that they are occasions for renewal, held at these charged energetic periods determined by astronomical observations. These festivals may also involve the celebration of the periodic energetic effect of solar, lunar and stellar cycles on human beings, animals and the earth itself. This energetic effect, meaning the increased presence of energy at sacred sites, may be the focus of the ritual function of the monument. Thus, it could be said that one important possible function of Stonehenge is being a sort of battery for gathering, storing and ultimately expressing the earth energies of the site on the festival days.

The power of the site is perhaps, hinted at in an old surviving record of a more ancient folk memory. Written in AD 1200 by Layamon, in his poem “Brut”, describing Stonehenge:

The stones are great
And magic power they have
Men that are sick
Fare to that stone
And they wash that stone
And with that water bathe away their sickness

Mystical Findings

Skeletons Excavated

In 1923, a skeleton was unearthed from Stonehenge and arose speculations that an execution was carried out at the monument. It was being held at the Royal College of Surgeons at that time. However, in 1942, the Royal College of Surgeons suffered three hits by the Nazi bombings on London and the skeleton was assumed to have been destroyed by the bombings.

Fortunately, an archaeologist who was doing some researching some time later rediscovered the skeleton in the Natural History Museum.

With modern equipments and analysis, results revealed that the skeleton belonged to a man who died about 2000 years ago when he was 35. His head was cut off by an acute sword. It was assumed that there was no foul play involved.

However, Jacqueline McKinley of Wessex Archaeology had some other explanations. He discovered a "small nick on the lower jaw and a cut mark on the fourth neck vertebra". Through his analysis of the skeleton, he realized that the man's head was cut from behind and the cut was clean. He concluded that the man could not have died in a battle.

English Heritage, who manages Stonehenge, claims that the man might have been executed as a form of punishment. Therefore, this evidence suggests that the monument still retained its importance centuries later after it was abandoned in 1500BC.

Other than the skeleton mentioned above, there were various rare finds of skeleton unearthed from time to time as well.

Another two skeletons were excavated in the 1920s. One skeleton was believed to be a Roman and was reburied at the Stonehenge in 1922. The other was excavated in 1926 from the center of the circle but has been lost ever since. Another complete skeleton was excavated in 1978 from the ditch and it was concluded that the man had died after being shot by deadly arrows.

Face Found on Stonehenge

A British archaeologist by the name of Terrence Meaden, who was intrigued with the gigantic monuments of the British Isles, claims to have seen a face carved into the side of one of the powerful stones at Stonehenge.

The face looks across the Salisbury plain in a solemn expression. It is the first face seen on Stonehenge and if it was carved by the people who built the monument, then the face is one of the oldest work of art ever found in Britain.

Dr Meaden said, " I just happened to be there at the right time of the day and because only when the light is right can you see it properly. During the summer months it is only obvious for about a hour each day around 1400."

Dr Meaden insists that we can see the carved face only at certain times of the day when the position of

the light is right. He also maintained that the previous researchers failed to notice the face that is carved at the side because they concentrated too much on the front of the Stonehenge.

However, there were speculations that the face could have been carved much later by some artist and not by the builders of the Stonehenge.

But, Dr Meaden still believed that the carving was made at the ancient time and not much later because the stone, which was used to build Stonehenge, Sarsen, is a very hard stone. In fact, it is one of the hardest stone around. Therefore, it would take hundreds of hours to carve the face on Sarsen. It is also impossible to do the carving unnoticed because researches on the Stonehenge began centuries ago. The only possibility is that the face was carved by the builders of Stonehenge.

So if the face was really carved by the people of Stonehenge, a common question asked is “Whose face is it on the Stonehenge and what is his intention in doing so?” There were guesses that the face could be the architect who designed the monument or one of the influential persons during that period of time.

Up till now, there were no concrete evidence on the face of Stonehenge and it could well have been the art of a mischievous artist. The truth behind the face on Stonehenge will continue to be a mystery until further evidence can be found to support Dr Meaden’s assumption.

Connection with UFOs?

There were speculations that Stonehenge has connections with UFOs. Some researchers believed that Stonehenge is surrounded by "electromagnetic energies" as light effects have been observed around it.

Were they hinting the presence of UFOs near the Stonehenge?

In the 1990s, flat regular patterns in growing crops called crop circles came into sight about 50 miles radius of Stonehenge. It appeared suddenly overnight and there were no obvious physical cause. The mysterious Crop circles located near the area of Stonehenge, makes people incredulous and surprised. Most importantly, it initiates public interest, especially the imagination of the press.

The pubic linked the crop circles to Stonehenge, saying that the mysterious crop circles could be the work of UFOs. Hence, Stonehenge, which is situated only a short distance away from the crop circles could also have been the work of UFOs centuries ago as well.

This linkage of Stonehenge with UFOs attracted many visitors who wanted to see for themselves the great monument's beauty.

In 1996, a world known crop circle investigator, Colin Andrews discovered a 7 inch glyph in one of the inner rings of the Stonehenge which is about 4 feet from the ground. This is weird because over the past centuries, researchers have been following closely to the Stonehenge and never had they discovered the glyph before. Hence, Colin hints that the pattern could be related to the crop circles sensation.

Hence, due to Colin's mysterious find, a Stonehenge researcher, Professor Gerald Hawkins who was the author of famous books such as "Stonehenge Decoded" and "Beyond Stonehenge" is now studying the glyph, trying to explain the significance of the pattern observed. He is trying to investigate any linkage between the crop circles and Stonehenge and if there is, could it be the work of UFOs?

Whether Stonehenge has any connections with UFOs will remain a mystery but we know for sure that this amazing connection has made Stonehenge more mysterious and has invited more attention.

Present Day Stonehenge

From the originally isolated landscape, Stonehenge today has evolved into a bustling tourists' attraction. Initially, there was only a pair of tracks to link this majestic place to the outside world. It was until the late 20th century when this pair of tracks developed into major highways to allow traffic mobility through the highways which were on the sides of the Stonehenge. This was to enable the public to get from the east to the west. The Southern road, A303, is one of the main routes that lead to holiday-destinations in the South-West while the Northern road, A344 today, comprises an official car-park for tourists and visitors. The public's interests and development of the landscape, however, seemed to jeopardize the existence of this primitive structure. Due to the high figures of visitors, the Stonehenge became such a congested place that there was soil erosion and the stones were threatened. Subsequently, the central stone circle was prohibited entry during late 1970s.

Since the stones were treated and seen as a sacred territory to contemporary beings like how the prehistoric people deem them to be, the plan to enlarge A303 twice its original size due to constant congestions angered many as the plan seemed to infringe and endanger the sacred even more. Only in 1996, the British government finally came to a consensus that any plans held with respect to the surroundings of the stones only could be carried underground.

The present day Stonehenge situation of the stones is not at all that optimistic. Although its mystical ambience and majesties still holds, as compared to the original state, the hallmark seemed to have lost much of its look. Not only has it

been commercialized, the structure itself has been subjected to some pretty serious damages. In AD 1750, Stone 14 loses its grip of the earth and fell inwards. “On Jan 13, 1797, a trilithon fell back across the sarsen circle” and “a circle stone, 23, was blown down in a gale in 1963”. Plenty of other primitive stones either collapsed or were taken away by ancients for usage of building houses or roads. Carvings on the sarsen stones revealed age as they showed wear. Although the climate played its part in destroying the Stonehenge, a considerable amount of harm was actually constituted by man. For instance, before the ban to close physical contact with the stones in 1978, tourists or visitors actually broke parts of the structures for memorial sake, not considering the harm they did to the stoned. Some of the smaller bluestones were, thus missing and this results in the destruction of the original.

Stonehenge today is in the hands of the English Heritage which is responsible for the well-being of the spot. However, it is under the ownership of the National Trust who owns majority of the land as property.

Stonehenge lovers have a resolution about the attraction’s future. They hope that the upland spectacle could once again revive its primitive flavor and would be able to do away with all the commercialization it has been subjected to today. The Stonehenge people would have wished that the landscape would revert to be nothing but greens and Stonehenge lovers would once again be allowed to have up-close sessions with the stones once again. Despite not having a clear definition for the usage or purpose for Stonehenge, it is nevertheless, still an important architecture to the Stonehengers and the mystery of it would be for them to know and for us to find out.