

# CONSERVATION OF THE MONUMENT

## The Pleasure Tendency

Something very important is happening at Stonehenge. It is not at all surprising that the Government should stamp on ancient rights for its own ends, but what these ends are is as yet unknown. It may be that they are connected with as yet undisclosed military activities. Or, more interestingly, with the persecution of a dissident element which stands in the way of the New Britain, that is, one in which the Consumer Society extends into every area of life. On the last night of 1900, two of the stones fell of their own accord, perhaps an omen; in the next year, tolls were established for the first time for entry to the site.

In a post-industrial commodity economy, intangibles will increasingly have to become objects of consumption, and be degraded because of it; Stonehenge is only one example. The 'damage' caused to the site by the festival is just an excuse to clear the national as well as local terrain ready for making all experience bought and packaged. The damage done by mindless tourism is infinitely more than that by festivals, and the impulse that brings it contemptible.

That the festival last year was the subject of a 'D Notice' (or its equivalent) means that, whatever the reason, it is very important indeed to the State that the festival is crushed. That alone would be reason enough to continue - a nerve has been hit. As we can show this year, conservation is not reason enough to stop this gathering, and no other is good enough.

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### *Conservation*

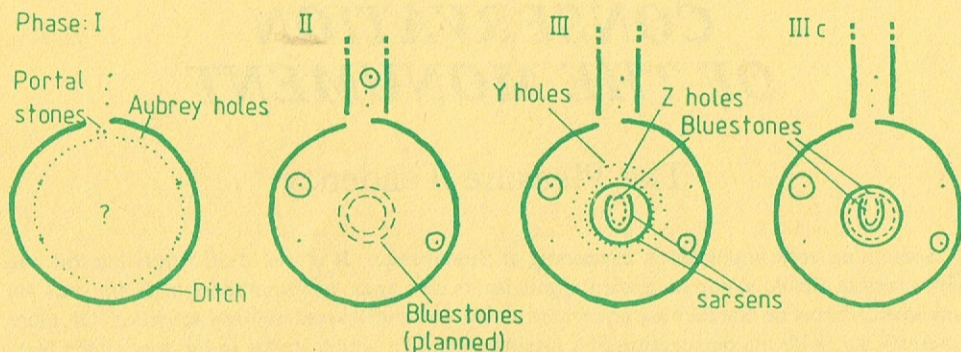
The area around Stonehenge is covered with significant sites and remains which are easily damaged some of which leave no trace on the surface.

*Ground disturbance.* Holes should not be dug anywhere. This can completely destroy archaeological evidence.

*Soil erosion.* The layer of soil on the chalk is thin and very subject to damage. Vehicles should not be driven on any sensitive area.

*The Stones.* Stone wears away surprisingly quickly under the human touch, and there are carvings on the rocks, so avoid doing this. They should certainly not be climbed on, as they can fall down, also breaking.

*Land Use.* The area is very much in use today for farming, and it is obviously very important to respect this too. It is completely irresponsible to damage living trees, break fences etc. and light fires which damage surface vegetation. The same goes for the needless trampling of intact ground into a mire. Discardation and litter are also damaging to land use. It is not clever to bury rubbish.



### History

The area already had a spiritual significance long before Stonehenge was built. People lived nearby, buried their dead here, and one of the cursus (long narrow banks & ditches) may already have been built.

The earliest work at Stonehenge is connected with the circular bank and ditch, circa 2180 BC. This survives. All the work, including the huge sarsen stones later, was done without the aid of metal tools. There may have been a wooden structure in the centre at this time, the traces of which have been obliterated. Wooden post holes at the entrance of the bank and ditch may be preliminary sightings.

The middle phase, circa 1700 BC, entailed the construction of at least part of the Avenue (running from the entrance to the River Avon) which survives, and a double Bluestone circle. Bluestones, from Pembrokeshire, were already used on the Plain at this time. The double circle, was never finished.

Phase III, circa 1240 BC, was the erection of the great sarsen circle and lintels, and the trilithon horseshoe, remains of which survive. An oval of the discarded bluestones, some of them trilithic, was placed inside the sarsen horseshoe. The Y and Z holes were dug to take more of the bluestones, but this scheme also was never finished.

In Phase IIIc, the oval Bluestone setting was dismantled and re-made as a horseshoe, some of which survives. More Bluestones were set in a circle between the sarsen circle and horseshoe. Some of these survive. The alter stone was set up (standing) in front of the central sarsen trilithon. In the Bronze age, carvings of daggers were made on the sarsen uprights.

(source: 'The Age Of Stonehenge', Colin Burgess)

**Remember, here as anywhere else, if it's not free, it's not worth anything!**

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T/SOR/40/4

20/05/86

Dear Mr Frew,

Keith Miller of 'Here & Now' mentioned to me recently that you might be going to Stonehenge this year, or know some people who were going. I am therefore enclosing some relevant leaflets in the hope that you might see your way to helping distribute them. We would be very grateful if you could find time to do this, or if not maybe leave them in a likely bookshop/ cafe, or something. I have also enclosed some 'Money' stickers (gummed on the back). I hope you like them. Look forward to hearing from you if you have any comments.

Yours sincerely,

G. B. *Brumfellow*

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P.S. MORE COPIES OF ANYTHING AVAILABLE ON REQUEST. G.B.

With the compliments of

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The point is to make History jump