

## Stonehenge

- Neolithic Farmers:
- Agriculture spread to western and northern Europe
- Farming societies built megaliths that contained burial areas beneath the earth. A sort of artificial cave.
- Tens of thousands and megaliths across Europe.
- All created 5,000-2,000 years ago
- Stonehenge is a ring of massive standing stones located it Salisbury Plain, southern England
- It is an enigma, and been a mystery for centuries.
- Who built it?
  - Greeks, Romans, Druids, Danes?
- For some, Stonehenge is product of mystical forces.
- Construction:
  - Not single construction of one monument. It is a sequence of monuments over a 1,000 year period.
- Three Phases: Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age
- 5,000-3,500 years ago
- Archaeology now reveals Stonehenge development and regional context.
- High status burial ground and ceremonial site?
- Social and economic organization still a challenge
- **Megalith**
  - 3 categories:

- Menhirs: Large standing stones, single or collectively in a linear fashion.
  - Henge monuments: Circles defined by enclosure
    - Circular ditch and bank
  - Dolmen: Tomb or chamber with a roof
- May be used for ancestor worship
- **Phase 1: The Earthwork Circle**
  - o Late Neolithic (5,000 ya)
  - o Round bank and ditch
    - 330 ft in diameter
  - o Ring of 56 Aubrey holes around outside
    - Post holes?
    - Cremation internment?
  - o Faunal bones (cow jaw, ox skull) buried in ditch
  - o A few cremations
- **Phase 2: Burials and Timber Structure**
  - o Late Neolithic (5,000-4,500 ya)
  - o Extensive remodeling
  - o Ditch and Aubrey holes filled in
    - Cremated burials within fill
  - o Wood henge built in center of monument
  - o Avenue built

- **Phase 3: Stone Monument**
  - Monumental standing stones constructed and erected
    - Early Bronze Age (4,500-3,500 ya)
    - Six sub-phases
    - Phase 3A:
      - Stones set up in circular or semicircular formation
        - Center of monument
        - Series of Holes known as Q and R holes
      - Not the most impressive, but raises lots of questions
      - Transported from Wales
        - Enormous effort
        - What value? Don't know...
    - Phase 3B:
      - Circle and Trilithons
        - Timber circle in center replaced with stone
          - Most intensive phase at Stonehenge
        - Sandstone pillars quarried and carved
          - Almost 20 miles away
        - Largest: 25 ft high, 3 ft thick, weighing 50 tons
        - Moved on Oak rollers
        - System of scaffolding to raise stones into position