



Stonehenge

Alkinoos Alissandrakis

General

- Stonehenge is a prehistoric monument located in Wiltshire, England, about 3 km west of Amesbury and 13 km north of Salisbury. One of the most famous sites in the world, Stonehenge is the remains of a ring of standing stones surrounded by the most dense complex of Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments in England, including several hundred burial sites. Archaeologists believe it was constructed from 3000 to 2000 BC.





NORTHERN IRELAND

UNITED KINGDOM

NORTH SEA

IRELAND

ENGLAND

NETHERLANDS

WALES

London

Stonehenge

BELGIUM

English Channel

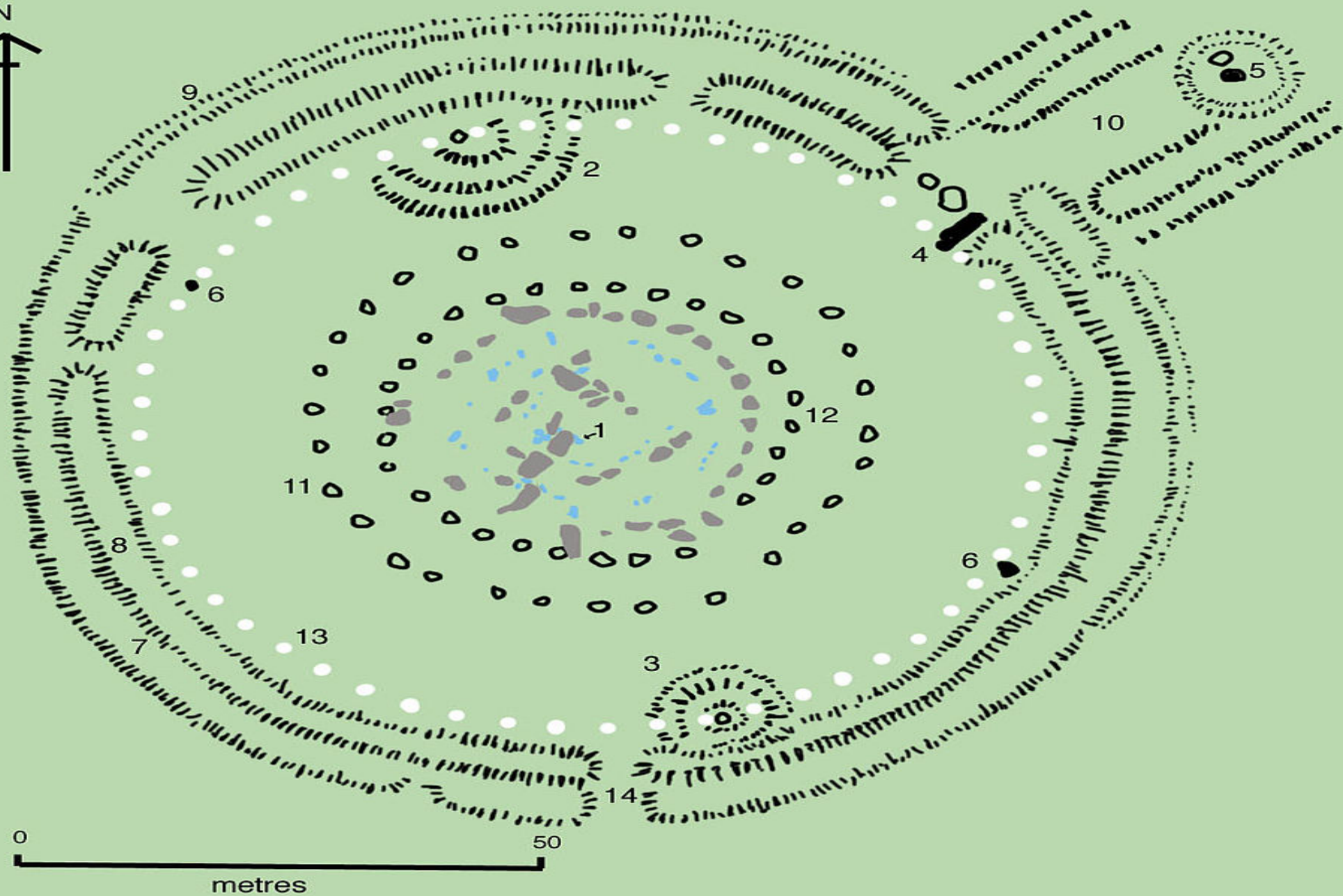
ATLANTIC OCEAN

FRANCE

★ Stonehenge

Construction

- Stonehenge was constructed by a culture that left no written records with little or no direct evidence for the construction techniques used by the builders. Over the years, various authors have suggested that supernatural or futuristic methods were used, usually asserting that the stones were impossible to move otherwise. However, conventional techniques, using Neolithic technology as basic as shear legs, a form of two-legged lifting device, have been proven effective at moving and placing stones of a similar size.



Function

- Many aspects of Stonehenge remain subject to debate and there are a number of myths surrounding the stones. Proposed functions for the site include usage as an astronomical observatory or as a religious site. More recently two major new theories have been proposed one of which being the use of the site as a healing place or a place for ancestor worship based on the several graves found leading to this conclusion. The other theory states that it might be part of a ritual landscape where the journey towards Stonehenge signified the passage from life to death.

A. Saxa que vocantur Corbetsones pendere 12 tonnarum
altitudine 24 pedes, latitudine pedes 7 ambitu 16
B. Saxa que vocantur Cronet 6 vel 7 tonnarum
C. Locus ubi ossa humana affodiuntur



Archeological research

- Throughout recorded history Stonehenge and its surrounding monuments have attracted attention from archeologists. John Aubrey was one of the first to examine the site with a scientific eye in 1666, and recorded in his plan of the monument the pits that now bear his name. William Stukeley continued Aubrey's work in the early eighteenth century, but took an interest in the surrounding monuments as well and it was his interpretation of the site that linked it to Druids. William Gowland took the opportunity to further excavate the monument in what was the most scientific dig to date, revealing more about the placement of the stones than the previous 100 years of work had done.

Restoration

- William Gowland also oversaw the first major restoration of the monument in 1901 which involved the straightening and concrete setting of sarsen stone number 56 which was in danger of falling. In straightening the stone he moved it about half a meter from its original position. In 1958, the stones were restored again, when three of the standing sarsens were re-erected and set in concrete bases. The last restoration was carried out in 1963 after stone 23 of the Sarsen Circle fell over. It was again re-erected, and the opportunity was taken to set in concrete three more stones.

