



New evidence suggests Stonehenge is a second-hand monument.

Original Stonehenge 'was built in Preselis'

EXCITING new research suggests Stonehenge was originally built here in Pembrokeshire.

It has long been accepted that the bluestones that make up the inner ring of the Wiltshire monument came from Pembrokeshire, but now archaeologists believe the prehistoric builders made their own monument in the Preseli Hills some 500 years before what we now know as Stonehenge was erected.

A team of scientists discovered a series of gaps in the rocks at Carn Goedog and Craig Rhos-y-felin that match Stonehenge's bluestones in size and shape. They also found similar stones that the prehistoric builders extracted but left behind, and a loading bay from where the bluestones were dragged away.

By Ceri Coleman-Phillips

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Mike Parker Pearson, professor of British later prehistory at University College London, said: "We have dates of around 3400 BC for Craig Rhos-y-felin and 3200 BC for Carn Goedog, which is intriguing because the bluestones didn't get put up at Stonehenge until around 2900 BC.

"It could have taken those Neolithic stone-draggers nearly 500 years to get them to Stonehenge, but that's pretty improbable in my view."

Professor Parker Pearson thinks it is far more likely that the stones were first used in a local monument,

somewhere near the quarries, that was then dismantled and dragged off to Wiltshire. Stonehenge would therefore be a second hand monument.

"Stonehenge was a Welsh monument from its very beginning," he said. "If we can find the original monument in Wales from which it was built, we will finally be able to solve the mystery of why Stonehenge was built and why some of its stones were brought so far."

Local researcher Dr Brian John has described the new theory as "profoundly disappointing".

Dr John does not accept the idea of a Neolithic quarry in the Preseli Hills. He said the claimed signs of 'quarrying' by humans at Craig Rhos-y-Felin were entirely natural.

Dr John is also increasingly convinced that the rhyolite debris at Stonehenge comes from glacial erratics which were eroded from the Rhosyfelin rocky crag almost half a million years ago by the overriding Irish Sea Glacier and then transported eastwards by ice towards Salisbury Plain.

Responding to the new theory, Dr John said: "So the whole focus is on the extremely inconvenient radiocarbon dates pushing the archaeologists towards the only explanation they can think of - namely that there was a proto-Stonehenge somewhere else, preferably within striking distance of Rhosyfelin, which was shipped off to Wiltshire 500 years after it was created. It's a very old idea."