

Preseli Bluestone

It was in 2005, when we were writing a crystal book for the publisher Duncan Baird (“The Essential Crystal Handbook”) that we first began to work with Preseli Bluestone. We had been considering including new material on some common rock types of the British Isles and some unique and special stones like Mermaid’s Tears (Connemara marble or Iona Stone), chalk and bluestone. There was a certain reticence to introduce bluestone to an often avaricious crystal-buying public because of the difficulty of obtaining specimens. (Furtive enthusiasts smuggling rock hammers into National Park and English Heritage site; crystal shop owners tearing their hair out once more over multiple earnest requests for near impossible to acquire minerals with exotic names.)

During this time, however, we received a phone call from Preseli Bluestone Limited (www.stonehengestones.com), a small business who had managed to secure the right to limited legal quarrying of Preseli Bluestone in Pembrokeshire. They were interested in seeing if we could work with sample of bluestone to assess its metaphysical and healing properties. The anecdotal evidence they had already collected seemed promising and they were keen to get more feedback.

One of the traditions associated with bluestone is that then healing or beneficial qualities are only transferred when it is offered as a gift (this is very suggestive of traditional Celtic client/obligation rituals) and for the previous two years we had, in fact, had our own small collection of spotted dolerite (one of the bluestone varieties) given to us by a friend from a colleague of her father who farmed in the Preseli region and who had outcrops on his land. (This is one of the reasons we had seriously considered including bluestone as a British stone in the forthcoming book).

Samples of the stonehengestones company bluestone were sent to us – beautifully cut and polished wands, beads and pendant shapes – and as there was now a safe and reputable source for the stone, we set about exploring its properties for our text.

The Investigations

Fortunately we were due to lead several weekends of crystal therapist training, and apart from our own private investigations, we decided to introduce Preseli Bluestone, to these, already experienced, healers. What was initially planned as an hour’s excursion into methods of metaphysical assessment, became several days of intensive exploration that confirmed the potential of Preseli Bluestone as a powerful catalyst for spiritual insight and healing. Much of the material gathered here is based upon the clues from those initial investigations. Since that time confirmation has been received from many other people. Psychics and sensitives in particular, sense very quickly the special qualities of the stone. In 2007 we gave our friend Judy Hall a couple of pieces of bluestone (she had been investigating ‘bluestone’ from an unverified source and was uncertain how it compared with the bluestone from the accredited sources).

Interest and publicity about bluestone and in the new research and theories about Stonehenge itself suggest that it is timely to present our findings to those who are drawn to using the stone themselves. Like the ‘moldavite-craze’ of the early nineties it is important to realise that Preseli Bluestone is a limited and finite resource that should be promoted and used responsibly.

The Preseli Bluestone we use and sell ourselves is strictly from the one accredited source that has been mineralogically verified as identical to several of the bluestone monoliths at Stonehenge. Aware of the limited supply of the stone, we have also prepared two gem essences, “Preseli Bluestone’ and “Preseli Bower” that can be used as well as or instead of, the actual mineral.

Excerpt from ‘Essential Crystal Handbook’ by Simon & Sue Lilly, published by Duncan Baird in 2006 £8.99 ISBN 1-84483-233-3

Preseli Bluestone (CaAlSi₃O₈)

Colour: blue-grey, blue-green with inclusions

The stone, some 480 million years old, is a dolerite found in the Preseli Mountains in Pembrokeshire, Wales. Dolerite is a metamorphic, igneous rock of calcium feldspar and augite with traces of copper and pyrites. 5000 years ago the people of Britain moved the stones from Wales 200 miles to Salisbury Plain where they form the inner circle at Stonehenge. Legend has it that Merlin himself moved the bluestones from an older circle to Stonehenge by magically lifting them into the air.

Identification and Care

- looks blue-grey when unpolished and blue-green when polished.
- grey inclusions of feldspar give the impression of stars in the night-sky in polished pieces

Magic

Preseli bluestone has a powerfully magic aura, giving focus, stability and anchoring into the Earth’s energy.

- travelling beyond time
- connecting with distant past
- amplifies ritual use of sound and movement
- doorway to different dimensions

Healing Functions

- relaxes, energises, focuses healing to the ear, nose and throat
- cuts through emotional entanglements
- steadying, drawing together of thoughts
- grounding, links to other lifetimes

Keywords

Battery

Grounding

Timelines

Practical ideas

To access the deep mind and far memory:

One bluestone placed above the brow chakra, near the hairline; two more or other blue crystals or clear quartz placed next to the elbows, hands resting on the solar plexus.

To bring deep and profound calm:

A bluestone at the brow and another at the base of the skull (occiput)

Similar-looking stones

Basalt – even, less granular, visible feldspar and olivine crystals

Granite – more granular, large crystals, rarely dark

Seraphinite – softer with a similar play of light

Dumortierite – a lighter blue, speckled

Blue Quartz/Aventurine – denser, more even blue

The Preseli Bluestone we use and sell ourselves is strictly from the one accredited source.

Preseli Bluestone can be obtained from

www.stonehengestones.co.uk

www.greenmanshop.co.uk

Where are The Preseli Hills?

The Preseli Hills are a narrow ridge of hills in the far west of Wales. Although they are not very high, they dominate a landscape of gentle valleys, marching in a line across Pembrokeshire down from west to east.



Often shrouded in mist and cloud the hills are the source of many local streams that tumble through ancient woods and farmland to the cliffs and sandy bays of the coast. The rocks in the area are very ancient sandstones with harder volcanic intrusions creating the wilder upland areas. The Preseli Hills are dominated by outcrops of dolerites and rhyolites whose weathered forms create striking and mysterious shapes on the skyline.

It is still a mystery how stones from this small, remote area of Wales found their way to Salisbury Plain, but geological examination has shown that many of the smaller central stones of Stonehenge came from this place. The famous bluestones as well as the Altar Stone of glistening green micaceous sandstone all come from the Preseli region.

Currently a few archaeologists are promoting the theory that Stonehenge was a major site for healing and that the Preseli Bluestones were of the greatest importance in this role. Amongst the local people in Pembrokeshire there are anecdotal tales that the older generations placed fragments of Preseli Bluestone in glasses of water to heal complaints. This is a well-recorded practice in all the Celtic Lands where special or holy stones were washed in water and that water was then drunk or bathed in as a cure

for disease. This method is given in Geoffrey of Monmouth's writing on Stonehenge as a reason why the stones were collected from so far away. Archaeologists have found many ancient prehistoric sites and ritual centres around Salisbury Plain have fragments of Preseli Bluestone.

From the top of the Preseli hills the views are spectacular, with sea on three sides and an unbroken view across all of the lands to the east. Their steep slopes and windswept ridges make them feel in a completely different world from the everyday farming lands below them. Smooth angular boulders rest in the long grasses of the lower slopes. On the ridges rise mounds of jagged, columnar fingers of dolerite. Each cairn is unique in its character but they all seem to be animated by ancestral spirits, star gazers and guardians of the peoples who dwell on the green lands below them. From their smoothed bases, tucked amongst reeds and sedge grasses fresh water springs arise and flow downwards, the silvery trails visible as they gush and meander across the landscape towards the sea. A source of fertility for crops and a source of inspiration and perhaps a link between earth and sky, ancestor and descendant, the dead and the living, the spirit and matter.



The Evolution of the Stonehenge Site

Stonehenge is one of the most famous sacred sites in the world yet very little is known about it for certain. New exploration has begun to clarify its long development but its purpose can still only be guessed.

Stonehenge, for certain, took a very long time to build – the site was special and sacred nine thousand years ago, four thousand years before the first stones were erected there. Over thousands of years people moulded the landscape, brought and erected stones, rearranged and rebuilt many times, all with extraordinary exact geometrical skill and huge feats of engineering.

Stonehenge sits on gently rolling, high chalklands of Salisbury Plain, in central Southern England. Now it does not seem to be an especially unique location – it is not on high ground, nor is it visible from a great distance. But the site was carefully

chosen because only here at this exact latitude can the extreme points of the Sun and Moon movement be seen each year.

These astronomical alignments are reflected in the placement of the stones and some people say that these same alignments extend into the landscape symbolically linking celestial and terrestrial forces together. For example, the Station Stones create a rectangle whose geometry exactly reflects the ratios of the Moon's cycle. The diagonal created by the stones can be extended until it passes through the Preseli Hills in West Wales from where the bluestones originated. Extend the line eastwards and eventually it is said to pass through the Giza pyramids in Egypt.

Five thousand years ago (around 3000BC) a large circular ditch and bank was built with alignments to the midsummer sunrise. Wooden posts were used to measure lunar positions and stones were erected to mark Sun and Moon rises. A ring of fifty six pits were cut into the chalk, each one metre deep and one metre wide with steep sides and flat bottoms. These Aubrey holes, as they are known, may once have held posts but also seem to have been offering pits to specific spirits. One of their functions was certainly to measure and keep track of the cycles of the lunar year and its variations over time.

Slightly later than this phase, more wooden posts were set up around the entrance to the circle, perhaps as ritual pathways or to make astronomical observations. Larger post holes may have held complete tree trunks (c 2600BC).

During the next phases, wood was replaced by stone. Around 2500BC (four and a half thousand years ago), a horseshoe arrangement of up to 80 bluestones was put up in the centre, together with the Station Stones of local sarsen sandstone.

About three hundred years later the bluestones seem to have been removed completely and replaced by the huge sarsen circle of lintel stones (30m in diameter) and the inner arrangement of five larger trilithon gateways in a horseshoe arrangement. These stones were from the Marlborough Downs, near Avebury, about twenty five miles from the Stonehenge site.

Finally around 2000 BC, bluestones were once more erected as a circle inside the ring of sarsen stones. Two more rows of holes were prepared outside of the sarsen stones but appear not to have been occupied, though some believe they were to take more bluestones.



Stonehenge – the Future?

The following was reported by the BBC on the 9th May 2006:-

An ambitious project to recreate Stonehenge as it would have looked 4,000 years ago is being planned.

Fragments of only three circles remain, but quarry firm Preseli Bluestone wants to build all seven from scratch.

It is hoped the circles will be completed by 2009*. The new site would be open to visitors.

An exact location is yet to be decided, but the Cotswold Water Park, which straddles Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, is one of several sites being considered.

** this has been delayed, but the site was marked out in 2008, it is in Wiltshire, but not at the Water Park*

Heritage sculpture

Preseli Bluestone owns the quarry in Wales where the stones for the ancient Wiltshire monument originally came from.

Colin Shearing, from the company, said: "We don't want to replicate Stonehenge as it stands today, but rather as how it would have looked when completed about 4,000 years ago."

The new Stonehenge would be built using both modern and ancient methods which the public would be invited to watch.

The plans are in the very early stages, but the aim is to create a 21st Century 'landmark architectural heritage sculpture' which allows visitors to walk among, and touch, the stones.



Simon & Sue Lilly