



content manager:

charles rice, chris davis, phil reed

layout:

chris davis

proofreading:

donald kiesling, chris davis



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Avebury Henge

by James Maliszewski

While Stonehenge, located near Amesbury in Wiltshire, England, is probably the most famous collection of standing stones in the world, the less well-known Avebury Henge (located about 20 miles north of Stonehenge) is both larger and older. Indeed, the henge is the largest in all of Europe. Unsurprisingly, many occultists and students of arcane lore consider it far more mystically potent. Due to its comparative obscurity, these individuals can pursue their researches without having to fend off tourists, hippies, and self-proclaimed druids.

Physical Description

Avebury Henge consists of several distinct elements. The first element is an earthenwork ditch that was once 30 feet deep. It is quite likely that the ditch was filled with water to make the entire area look like an island in the middle of small body of water. The second element is the Outer Circle, which has a 1300 foot diameter and covers nearly 30 acres in area. The third element is the Inner Circles, which are contemporary with the Outer Circle and consist of two separate rings of stones. In addition, there are four causewayed entrances, one at each of the compass points.

The Outer Circle

The Outer Circle once included 98 *sarsen* (sandstone) stones, but only 27 survive, the rest having been hauled away, mostly during the 18th and 19th centuries when an exaggerated fear of pagan revivalism caused churchmen to encourage the destruction of this and other stone circles throughout England. One local farmer took down a large number of stones and broke them up, using the material to help construct

the nearby village's buildings. Of course, damage had been done to Avebury Henge previous to those centuries, but the advent of the Reformation made matters worse. The Church of England believed that the site was an affront to Christianity and its continued existence further evidence that the Church of Rome had had little concern for the spiritual well-being of God-fearing Englishmen.

From the 16th century onward, various Anglican leaders attempted to persuade the locals to pull down the stones and bury them, lest the "Devil's handiwork" wreak havoc upon them. By and large, these attempts were successful, as the widespread destruction of the site shows. However, these exhortations came to an end when one of the stones toppled over killing a barber surgeon. His skeleton was discovered under one of the stones on the southern side of the Outer Circle when stones were being restored in the early 20th century.

Inside the Outer Circle are two smaller circles of which little remains today.

The Inner Circles

The Inner Circles are two distinct rings of stones contained within the bounds of the Outer Circle. Because so few of their original stones remain, concrete pylons now mark the places where they once stood and give testimony to precisely how impressive a site Avebury Henge once was millennia ago.

The Southern Inner Circle

The Southern Inner Circle has 5 stones standing out of its original 29. At the center of this circle once stood a 21-foot high *menhir*, which was known locally as "the Obelisk." The Obelisk was surrounded by a peculiar arrangement of stones, a few of which have survived the destruction of the Obelisk itself. Well into Victorian times, locals used to dance around the former site of the Obelisk during spring festivals, which only strengthened the calls by clerics that the



A Sorrell

entire Henge be overturned so as to avoid corrupting the morals of the nearby villagers.

The Northern Inner Circle

Very little remains of the Northern Inner Circle. Only 2 of its original 27 stones still stand in the 21st century. At the center of the circle is what is known as “the Cove,” which faces northeast and at one time contained three stones. Two of these enormous stones remain in the Cove. They stand about 15 feet high and 8 feet wide. The third stone lies buried a few yards to the east, having fallen or been knocked down at some point in the past.

The Avenues

From the Outer Circle run two avenues of stones, each a mile and a half long and 50 feet wide. The West Kennet Avenue extends to the southeast and terminates on Overton Hill at “the Sanctuary.” Originally consisting of 100 pairs of stones, only 27 stones remain although markers provide an idea of how the avenue snaked into Avebury. The stones alternate in shape between wide angular shapes and tall thinner ones. The West Kennet Avenue was severely vandalized the day before the summer solstice in 1996. Pagan symbols were drawn on the first five pairs of stones. Although this paint was removed with laser treatment later, the scars remain. Unsurprisingly, there have been calls for the entire site to be fenced off as Stonehenge is. As of yet, there has been no move to do this.

The Beckhampton Avenue ran in a southwest direction and the only evidence left of its existence can be found three-quarters of a mile to the west of the Outer Circle, where two “Longstones” stood. The Longstones were named “Adam” and “Eve.” Eve is the easternmost of the two stones and would likely have formed part of the avenue. Adam no longer exists and its purpose remains a matter of speculation.

The Sanctuary

“The Sanctuary” is a nearby site located on Overton Hill to the southeast of Avebury and predates the Outer Circle. Unfortunately, only marker stones remain, as the Sanctuary was completely destroyed in the 18th century. The West Kennet Avenue would have integrated this structure with Henge. Originally a round wooden structure stood alone here until a perimeter stone circle was added when the West Kennet Avenue was built. The Sanctuary might have been a mortuary house where the dead were left to the elements before being interred in the nearby West Kennet Long Barrow.

Knoll Down

About a mile and a half west of Avebury beside the A4 highway is “Knoll Down,” a section of ancient earthworks covered by a large stand of trees. The earthworks around this area are very extensive and some theorize that this site was once part of the Avebury Henge site or had some association with it.

History

Numerous theories have been advanced over the years regarding the age of the Avebury Henge complex, with the years between 2700 and 2400 B.C. being the most widely accepted. These dates are largely correct, as it was at those times that a Neolithic culture thrived in southwest England and constructed numerous stone circles and other monuments in the countryside. What is not well-known—or indeed even suspected—is that this culture owes its origin to a colony established by the lost continent of Atlantis.

The Atlanteans took great interest in assisting “lesser” cultures to reach new heights of sophistication, a role they played for millennia before the destruction of their homeland around 2100 B.C. In some cases, their assistance was overt and direct. In others, like Avebury, it was more subtle and hidden. Atlantean scientists traveled to England and made contact with the local priests and savants, teaching them advanced forms of astronomy, mathematics, and engineering techniques. They also instructed them in the rudiments of psionic power. Under their tutelage, a large number of psionically-potent sites were built across Britain, each of which pulsed with mental energies that further propelled these younger civilizations to higher stages of development.

At its height, the Neolithic cultures of southwest England enjoyed commerce with Atlantis and were on their way to becoming satellite states of the mighty Atlanteans. Had Atlantis not succumbed to disaster, there is no telling how history might have unfolded.

As it is, the Avebury Henge-builders suffered their own disaster, falling quickly into decadence once their Atlantean patrons were no longer present. Without their assistance, the true nature of the Henge and surrounding sites was lost. Over the centuries, some visitors to them have sensed that there is something “odd” about them. Most often, these visitors possess psionic wild talents or related mental powers. They can feel that the standing stones focus energies that their other senses do not detect, although few, if any, would begin to suspect the whole truth.

Using Avebury Henge

The destruction of the standing stones has certainly weakened their powers—but not completely. The original stones were not, in themselves, magically or psionically active. The Atlanteans’ grasp of higher-level mathematics was such that they could “see” lines of mental power across the globe. Tapping into that power simply required rearranging the local geography in such a way as to “bend” the lines into conducive patterns. Once done, anyone with the ability to detect and use psionic energy could do so. Of course, the number of people who possess psionic ability remains small and always has been. Without Atlantean techniques for detecting and nurturing psionic abilities, most wild talents never realize just what they possess. It’s little wonder, then, that most of the cultures whom the Atlanteans patronized fell into decadence after Atlantis sank beneath the waves.

The Henge could once again be made psionically potent. All that is necessary is to find new stones and arrange them in the appropriate manner. Doing so, naturally, is a monumental endeavor and many people over the centuries have attempted to do so. All of them have failed for one reason or another. The most common is that the original pattern of the Henge is unknown. Even the most well-informed opinions are little more than guesses and contain significant gaps. Without the proper knowledge of Atlantean science,

the Henge can never be made psionically active again, even though it continues to attract wild talents to it with increasing potency.

Every year, psionic individuals from across the globe find themselves heading to Avebury and have no idea why. Though they do not know it, many are actually Atlanteans, the modern-day descendants of one of the mightiest human cultures ever to walk the face of the Earth. These contemporary Atlanteans are heirs to science lost for millennia and it is only a matter of time before they reclaim their birthright and change the course of human history forever.

The Power of the Henge

The Henge has two powers, one of which is currently active and the other of which is merely a potential power. The first is the ability to activate latent psionic powers in human beings (whether Atlantean-descended or not). If an individual spends 24 hours within the boundaries of the Henge and *fails* a DC 20 Will save, she may then purchase the feat Wild Talent at any time thereafter when she has the opportunity to do so. The Gamemaster is, of course, the final arbiter as the circumstances of the manifestation of psionic abilities. However, Avebury Henge provides a good way to allow existing heroes to manifest psionic powers.

The second power is active only after the original stone pattern has been restored. The restoration of this pattern is a massive undertaking. Achieving it would require not only a great deal of time and effort, it would also require an understanding of the Atlantean sciences that constructed it. At a bare minimum, this would require a DC 40 Knowledge (arcane lore) check, in addition to having the information in the first place. There are very few sources of this information extant in the 21st century, with hidden colonies of Atlanteans being one of the primary ones. Furthermore, any attempt to rebuild Avebury Henge would attract a lot of attention from local and national

governments in Great Britain, as well as the news, academia, and conspiratorial groups that might also have an interest in the site.

Assuming all these problems can be overcome, the activation of Avebury Henge's second power is significant. Within the confines of the Outer Circle, a psionic character has an effectively unlimited supply of power points with which to manifest powers. Within a mile of an active Avebury Henge, his power points are doubled. Within two miles, they are increased by half again as many. After two miles, her power points are unaffected. In ancient times, a web of psionically-active henges enabled the Atlanteans and their allies to manifest their powers without almost any strain on themselves and their psychic resources. Restoring that web could take generations but it's a goal toward which the existing Atlanteans and their descendants work from behind the scenes, both in Britain and elsewhere across the globe.

The Atlanteans

The lost continent of Atlantis has been discussed and fantasized about since at least the time of Plato, whose dialogues *Timaeus* and *Critias* are the first recorded references to the island kingdom. The Atlanteans themselves were once ordinary humans but, through the power of psionics, they evolved into a "higher form," one better suited to the harnessing and manipulation of mental energies. Their skill with psionics brought them to the attention of the alien Grays (see *Alien Heroes*, from Ronin Arts, for more information), with whom they engaged in an exchange of knowledge nearly 10,000 years ago. Unfortunately, despite their psionic aptitudes, the Atlanteans were unable to control some of the devices the grays gave them, sinking their continent beneath the waves. A handful of Atlanteans escaped and established colonies on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean and kick-starting civilization in those areas. Thanks to psionics, many Atlanteans are effectively immortal

and a handful of the original refugees survive into the 21st century, watching millennia-long plans come to fruition.

Personality: Atlanteans, by and large, are self-confident and aloof. They believe themselves to be the epitome of human development and some look down on other humans as "atavisms" or even "sub-humans." Others adopt a more paternalistic attitude, seeing other humans as adolescents in need of instruction and a firm guiding hand. Atlanteans prize knowledge of all sorts, especially self-knowledge, which they regard as the beginning of true wisdom. Their near-immortality gives them much patience and the ability to take the long view of events. At the same time, many Atlanteans immerse themselves in the now, seeking out sensual and esthetic pleasures as a way to alleviate the tedium of millennial lifespans.

Physical Description: The original Atlanteans were a Mediterranean people, swarthy complexioned and having dark hair and eyes. The core of the culture still retains these physical attributes, but, over the millennia, the Atlanteans have "adopted" other humans into their culture, teaching them their psionic secrets, thereby broadening their gene pool and giving them agents from every conceivable human genotype. Thus, there is no "typical Atlantean." They could like any human being, although most are extremely attractive and physically fit regardless of their ethnicity.

Relations: Atlanteans get along well with ordinary humans, albeit in a parent-child sort of way. They likewise have respect for the grays, particularly since gray psionic technology is superior to their own. They have few contacts with and less regard for the other intelligent species of Earth, although individual Atlanteans may establish relationships with them, whether positive or negative.

Allegiances: Most Atlanteans have an allegiance to their people. A few belong to conspiracies like the Rosicrucians or Illuminati (see *Thirteen Conspiracies*,

from Ronin Arts, for more information) who share their philosophical outlook. A handful of rogue Atlanteans has joined human organizations like Department-7 and owes their allegiance to them.

Atlantean Territories: Atlantean colonies can be found all across the world, although the largest concentrations of them are in Europe and North and Central America. A remnant of Atlantis called Poseidonis is located in the North Atlantic and is protected from prying eyes by a powerful psionic device. The king of Poseidonis claims dominion over all Atlantean colonies but his reach far exceeds his grasp and very few colonies pay him more than token recognition.

Religion: The Atlanteans have no gods but they do honor the memories of their ancestors. Atlantean religious ceremonies are simple and straightforward, with the communal use of psionic powers playing an integral role. A priestly caste exists, as well as specially trained channelers who contact the psychic spirits of revered ancestors.

Language: The melodious Atlantean language is known as Senzar. It is very easy for human beings, even non-Atlanteans to master, because of its extremely logical and precise grammar.

Species Traits

Atlanteans share the following traits:

Type: Humanoid.

Size: Medium. Atlanteans have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Ability Modifiers: -2 Charisma

Speed: 30 ft.

Naturally Psionic: Atlanteans gain 2 bonus power points at 1st level. This benefit does not grant them the ability to manifest powers unless they gain that ability through another source, such as levels in a psionic class.

Resistance (Su): Atlanteans can use psionic energy to increase their resistance to various forms of attack.

An Atlantean can spend 1 power point to gain a +4 racial bonus on saving throws until the beginning of her next action. This supernatural ability can be used at any time—even on another creature’s turn.

Resilience (Su): When an Atlantean takes damage, she can spend power points to reduce its severity. She can reduce the damage she is about to take by 2 hit points for every 1 power point she spends. This supernatural ability can be used at any time—even on another creature’s turn.

Repletion (Su): An Atlantean can sustain her body without need of food or water. If she spends 1 power point, an Atlantean does not need to eat or drink for 24 hours.

Free Language Skills: Read/Write Senzar, Speak Senzar.

Level Adjustment: +0

Reverend St-John Atherton

The Reverend St-John Atherton is an Anglican clergyman who has, in the years since his retirement from active ministry, felt himself drawn to Avebury Henge. His wife died several years ago and his children are adults with families of their own. Atherton has moved to the village of Avebury and spends countless hours exploring the henge and other nearby ruins. He is convinced that there is something, some power at work in the area, but he cannot quite explain it. A devout, if unorthodox, Christian man, Atherton cannot bring himself to believe, as many suggest, that the power of the henge is demonic in origin. He knows nothing of the Atlanteans and would probably be quite skeptical of anyone who claimed that they were the origin of the site. Atherton has become something of a local celebrity, as his knowledge of the site is second to none. He is frequently consulted as an “expert” on the henge. Consequently, he is the sort of person whom the heroes might encounter either deliberately or while exploring the region in their own investigations.

Reverend St-John Atherton (Dedicated Ordinary 6): CR 5; Medium-size human; HD 6d6+6; hp 22; Mas 12; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 13, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+0 Dex, +3 Class); BAB +4; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +3 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +4 ranged; FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL Church of England; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +8; AP 0; Rep +2; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Occupation: Academic (bonus class skills: Gather Information, Research)

Skills: Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +13, Investigate +12, Knowledge (arcane lore) +11, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +12, Read/Write English, Read/Write Welsh, Research +10, Sense Motive +9, Speak English, Speak Welsh.

Feats: Attentive, Educated (Knowledge [arcane lore] and Knowledge [theology and philosophy]), Iron Will, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Trustworthy.

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