



[Home](#) > The Secrets of Stonehenge

The Secrets of Stonehenge

Books Reviewed:

[The Secrets of Stonehenge](#) [1]

Issue:

[200](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Clive Barnes](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Manning and Granstrom have produced some striking and award winning picture book histories for junior school age children. Here they turn their hands to a challenging subject. Challenging in two senses: first, the story of Stonehenge is complicated and more conjecture and dispute than fact; secondly, its story provides little of the contextual visual and documentary evidence that Manning and Granstrom have exploited so well in their histories of more recent times. Nevertheless they make an excellent fist of it: introducing us first to developments in Stone Age life, agriculture and worship that provide the context for the beginning of the monument: then taking us carefully through the various stages of its erection and alteration. They illustrate how the bluestones and sarsens might have been transported from where they occur naturally to Salisbury Plain, and the kind of organisation and society that this implies; and finally place Stonehenge in the context of the sacred prehistoric landscape that surrounds it and the latest archaeological discoveries and thinking. At each stage, without unnecessarily complicating matters, they make clear how little is actually known, how much is informed guesswork, and the way that explanations can be drawn from evidence. They even offer glimpses into some of the wilder speculations about the origins of Stonehenge. With a two page glossary and a timeline on the endpapers, it's an excellent introduction to its subject that touches on the awe and mystery that the monument still inspires. Most important, the comic empathetic touches in the illustrations, as, for instance, the stone lifting team contemplating with dismay an incoming rain storm, bring the people of the past to life.

Source URL (retrieved on Jul '19): <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/200/childrens-books/reviews/the-secrets-of-stonehenge>

Links:

[1] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-secrets-of-stonehenge>

[2] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/200>

[3] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/clive-barnes>