



Esperance Stonehenge

Category:
AUSTRALIAN STONE
Best Commercial
Project

Project:
Stonehenge Esperance,
Western Australia

Architecture:
Michael Sorensen /
Sorensen Architects


Supplied, processed & installed by:
AustralAsian Granite Pty Ltd

Stone used:
Desert Brown Granite
 (~1200 cbm)

Apparently there are 66 replicas of the original Stonehenge which is located on Salisbury Plain, England. It is hard to imagine that any of them are as impressive as the new attraction located a few kilometres east of Esperance in Western Australia. Semi-retired farmers Kim and Jillian Beale's property is positioned across the road from AustralAsian Granites quarry, the source of the Desert Brown granite which was used to replicate the world's most famous Neolithic monument. The Beale's appreciated the potential pulling power of an attraction which draws more than a million visitors annually in England. The monument which was exactly produced to the precise dimensions of the original is designed to catch the sun's rays at sunrise and sunset during the winter and summer solstice.

Built as a concentric ring of stones it is hard to imagine how the original monument was erected almost 5000 years ago. During my last visit to the original site American visitors quizzed the Tour guide about the possibility of aliens being involved in the sites creation.

The Beale's are using "Out of the way, out of this world", as a tourism slogan. Visitors are interested in the site, with many vowing to return, three couples have already been married within the impressive circle of stone. The new Stonehenge is an equally compelling piece of engineering. Approximately 1200 cubic metres of Desert Brown granite was used to construct the Henge which consists of 137 granite standing stones, 97 of which are quarry processed dimensional stones, the remaining 40 are random pieces which form the inner circle.

The largest stones are 7 metres high and weigh between 57 and 58 tons, they are capped by a giant 13 ton lintel. Each stone is made of a single piece of stone, that was burned all round with an oxi-torch to produce an aged finish. While millions of people visit the site in England, the new Stonehenge is capturing significant print and TV media coverage. ABC Open producer Serena Shaddick reported that the town of Esperance is in for "interesting times". In the next edition we will examine how the stone was processed.  WORDS: Anthony Stock

