

# Les Fouillages long mound

Early Guernsey Archaeology Site

## 7 Prehistoric passage grave

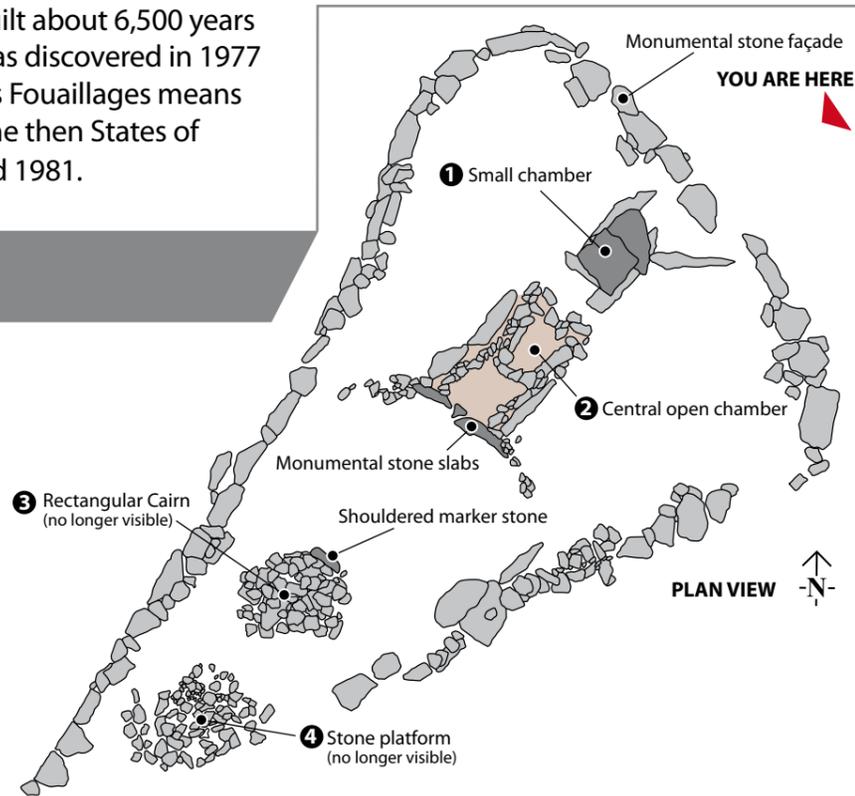
The first structures of this complex burial monument were built about 6,500 years ago. It is one of the earliest monuments in Europe. The site was discovered in 1977 when the furze (gorse) died back after a very dry summer. Les Fouillages means 'furze break' in Guernsey French. The site was excavated for the then States of Guernsey Ancient Monuments Committee between 1979 and 1981.

### 1 THE EARLIEST MONUMENT 6,500 years ago

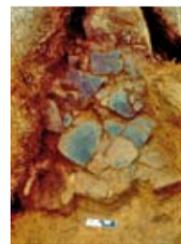
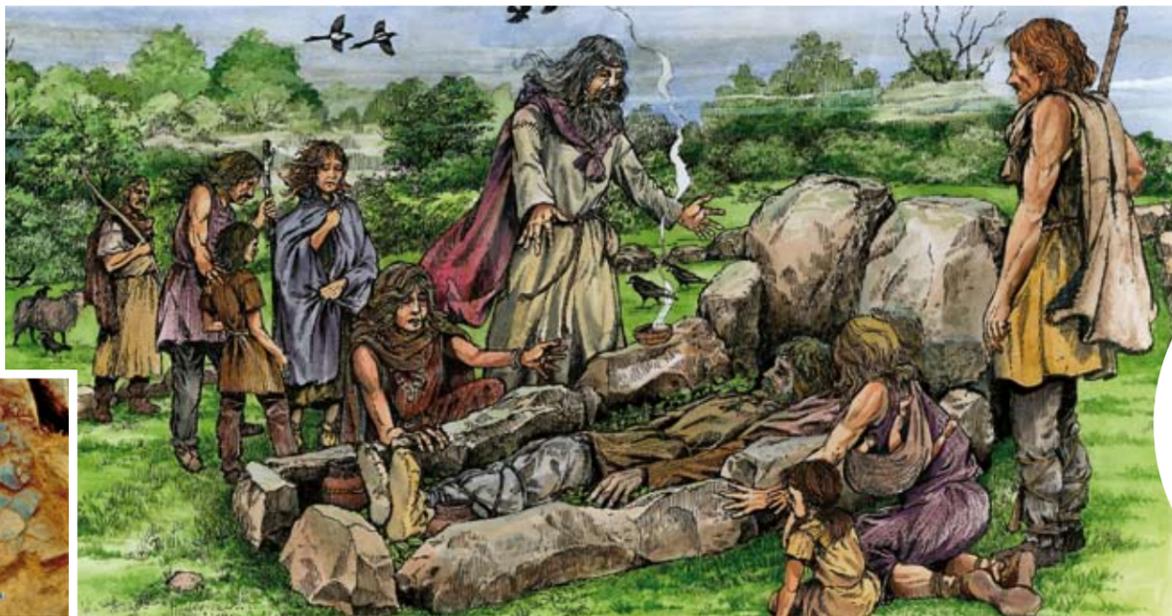
The monument as it is seen today is much as it would have appeared in 4,500 BC. Four separate stone structures were used for burial and served as special places in an elaborate Neolithic ritual concerning death, burial and the afterlife.

These structures were covered by stacked turves and an impressive stone surround. The small chamber ❶ with an entrance through the stone façade seems to have been secondary to the central open chamber ❷ bounded by two massive slabs. No human bone was recovered but within this central chamber two complete decorated pots (now crushed) were placed as grave offerings. Post holes were also found indicating a timber structure associated with the chamber.

To the west of the central chamber was a cairn ❸ which is no longer visible. This rectangular cairn covered a small cist with a shouldered marker slab at its eastern end. This has been left visible. Further west was a stone platform ❹ on which lay sherds of a decorated pot and part of a stone bracelet.

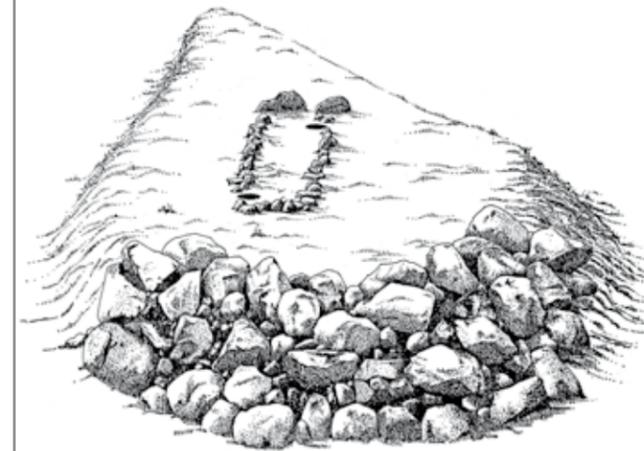


Artist's impression of a burial in the central chamber  
Illustration by Brian Byron



Linearbandkeramik pottery from the chamber

### 2 A NEW PHASE 5,500 years ago



Around 3500 BC the site entered a new phase. A large boulder foundation was laid over the first mound and a timber structure was built on top. Two sockets for large wooden posts marked out the burial area. After some time the area was redefined by a rectangular boulder enclosure.

### 3 THE FINAL MONUMENT 4,000 years ago

Around about 2000 BC a votive offering of eight barbed and tanged flint arrowheads was placed on the surface before the whole monument was covered by a larger turf mound around 35 metres long.



These secondary features were removed during the excavation. Excavations also revealed that people who lived during the Bronze Age built the nearby monument of La Platte Mare and lived in the area to the south of the mound.

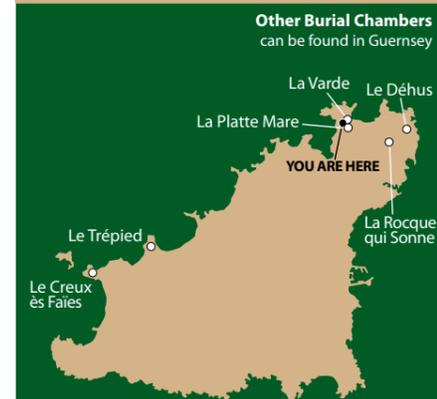


The site after the final excavation  
Photographed in 1982

### 4 THE LATER PHASES & excavation

Later in the Iron Age period there is some evidence that the mound was used as a field boundary and during medieval times the whole area was covered by wind-blown sand which created the heathland of the common today.

Over 35,000 finds were made during the excavations on the long mound. Material from the site is on display at the Guernsey Museum and Art Gallery.



Other Burial Chambers can be found in Guernsey

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This scheduled Ancient Monument is cared for by the Culture & Leisure Department  
If you have any comments about it please telephone us on 01481 726518 or write to us at  
Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery, Candie Gardens, St Peter Port, GY1 1UG  
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