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SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL™ TO PREMIERE
“STONEHENGE DECIPHERED”

*Documentary uncovers new findings based on first dig in 50 years – airs
Sunday, September 27 at 9 p.m. ET/PT*

(Washington, DC – (August 27, 2008) – The meaning of Stonehenge – the fascinating prehistoric monument in Great Britain believed to be erected from 3000 BC to 1600 BC – is explained as never before in an all-new documentary that utilizes evidence from a recent Smithsonian Channel™/BBC Timewatch-sponsored dig within the inner circle – the first dig to be allowed in nearly 50 years.

With evidence and conclusions contrary to those posited in June news accounts and elsewhere, British archaeologists Prof. Timothy Darvill of the University of Bournemouth and Prof. Geoffrey Wainwright, President of the Society of Antiquaries – both world-renowned experts on Stonehenge – share the conclusions they have reached in **STONEHENGE DECIPHERED**, premiering **Sunday, September 27 (2008) at 9 p.m. ET/PT on Smithsonian Channel.** The documentary will premiere in the U.K. on the same day as part of the BBC Timewatch series.

In addition, an article about the program will appear on the cover of Smithsonian Magazine’s October issue and on Smithsonian.com, concurrent with the film’s premiere on Smithsonian Channel.

From late March to mid-April of this year, the dig, part of the U.K.’s Bluestone Project, was filmed by Smithsonian Channel and BBC Timewatch under the supervision of English Heritage, which maintains the UNESCO World Heritage Site. So far, all

conclusions about why Stonehenge was built, and what it was for, have remained under wraps, but the professors will break their silence at a press conference in the U.K tentatively scheduled for September 22.

Those associated with the project will only say that new carbon dating establishes the most precise date ever for Stonehenge, and that the recent evidence shows that most earlier explanations for the purpose of Stonehenge were focused on the wrong stones. The secret to Stonehenge, they believe, lies not in the huge, iconic sarcen stones, but in the monument's smaller bluestone rocks, which were carried over 150 miles in a feat of engineering that has never been fully explained, from the Preseli Hills in Wales, an area reputed to be magical, to the Stonehenge site.

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ABOUT SMITHSONIAN NETWORKS

Smithsonian Networks (SN) is a joint venture between Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution. It was formed to create new channels to showcase scientific, cultural and historical programming based largely upon the assets of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum complex. Smithsonian Channel features original documentaries, short-subject explorations and innovative and groundbreaking programs highlighting America's historical, cultural and scientific heritage. Visit Smithsonian Networks on the internet at www.smithsonianchannel.com

For information, contact:

Michael Shepley
212-786-9064
shepleypr@aol.com

Stuart Zakim
Showtime Networks Inc.
212-708-1590
Stuart.Zakim@showtime.net