

Surprise Reinstatement – Duke Maximillian Greystone of Ravenholt

In a move that caught even the Herald by surprise, His Highness Prince Kevynn Blackfox of Northmarch declared at the first gathering of nobles in Ravenholt City that his Knight, Sir Maximillian Greystone, would be serving as Duke of Ravenholt for the foreseeable future. Former Duke, Prince Roderick Ravenhurst, is being deployed to Evendarr City along with a contingent of Black Ravens, for extended military training and service.

On Friday evening of the gather, with very little fanfare, albeit with numerous local, regional, and visiting nobles in attendance, the barons were first released from their oaths to Duke Roderick, who was in turn released from his oath to Prince Kevynn (and then immediately re-sworn in personal service as Prince Roderick), and Sir Greystone was sworn to Prince Kevynn as Duke, then he re-swore all barons unto him. Former Duke Roderick's Knights were given the option to swear fealty to Duke Greystone as well. Then-Dame Saket Shabmah (see *Trial* for details) willingly re-swore, although then-Magistrate Sir Kovan Pax has stepped down.

His Highness, who favored us with a few words on his way out of town, said of the move: "Prince Roderick has had a

Trial Results Regarding the Regicide in Avendale

As almost all the kingdom surely knows, much of the recent gather in Ravenholt was taken up with a trial of unprecedented proportions, held due to the killing of His Excellency, Viscount Tavernier Aledaric Septorian of Avendale on March 28, 604. Implicated in the crimes were numerous nobles and commoners of Evendarr and Avendale. At the behest of Lady Ellimere Arundel, Queen Mother of Avendale, King Mykel Endarr pledged all aid in resolving the matter. As such, he sent forth Prince Kevynn Blackfox, Prince of Northmarch, and Sir Tivorak Nobel, Knight to the King, to oversee the proceedings. While no trial is necessary under such circumstances, it was deemed fitting that due to the considerable

confusion and contradictory evidence in the case, all who wished to do so would have their say. Lady Arundel and newly crowned Duke Greystone sat on the trial court as well, and the court was aided by a number of Advisors, including all four Barons of Ravenholt,

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fine, albeit incomplete, education at the hands of many worthy advisors during his tenure in Ravenholt. However, the time has come that more formal military and protocol training must be given to one such as he, who is a Prince of the realm, so that he may fully and completely understand the responsibilities and duties of his true station. Other matters of both Duchy and Kingdom level security, warrant that Sir Greystone, now Duke Greystone, who has served Ravenholt faithfully in the past, be put into place in a position he has held once before. His training and qualifications enable me to comfortably make such a change at this time, knowing that Ravenholt will be in good hands. It is important that the citizens of Ravenholt accept this decree and support their new duke, Maximillian Greystone, and follow him in word and deed.

While Prince Roderick has expressed sorrow at the need to leave his beloved duchy and people, he understands the necessity, and willingly and eagerly moves to fulfill his role within the noble structure of Evendarr proper. While it is uncertain how long his training will be, as there are numerous

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Return of Magics Throughout Ravenholt

In recent days, since shortly after the last Gather in Ravenholt City, reports have been pouring into the Herald offices that not only have the magicks returned in full to the duchy, starting with healing and other casting abilities, but that they seem to have stabilized, for the most part, in the last week. The invisible delimiter commonly referred to as the Magical Barrier itself still appears to be present – those with high level magics report being aware of it as they traverse the border of the duchy – but its “feel” has definitely shifted, reportedly making it less difficult to pass magics to and from.

Our reporters working the border beat tell us that items such as formal scrolls and magically enhanced items are traveling freely, although they are slightly harder to use in Ravenholt than in, say, Volta or Ashbury. In those bordering duchies, those carrying magical items report that they can control as many as five powerful items at one time, but that even when concentrating their efforts in passing through the barrier, they find they can only manage two items at a time. All except the most unusual of magical artifacts do in fact pass through the barrier, including all known formal scrolls and

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May Gather Moved to Longhope

Following the seeming return of magicks to all the lands of the duchy, it has been discovered that one small section of Ravenholt remains troubled by unusual fluctuations and spikes of power. Reports reaching the Herald from Longhope Castle and its surrounds, in northern Cumberland, suggest that the magic situation has not stabilized, but in fact may have grown worse. Most recently, on Friday, May 14th, just around the time of the repowering of magicks in the evening, a strange pylon appeared in the courtyard of the castle, which may be tied to the fluctuations and possibly to the magical barrier itself.

The Herald has managed to speak with His Grace, Duke Maximillian Greystone, during his return from Ravenholt City to Arkham City, concerning the problems and effects of the magical fluctuations within Ravenholt. His Grace has issued the following call for the May Gather:

“Unto the citizens of our fair duchy and all visitors – It is requested that the next gathering of nobles and adventurers be held at Longhope Castle, in the barony of Cumberland. Based upon reports from Lord Seneschal Alaric Malinruin and Guildmistress Keylandra Dirath of the Mages’ Guild subsequent to the last gathering in Ravenholt City, there are signs and indications that an ‘event’ may take place at Longhope Castle on or around the last weekend of May.

It is my decision to call forth any willing and able travelers, allowing time to prepare themselves before traveling to this region. As I have been advised, this event may include some happenings involving a realm known to us only as ‘Anar.’ It is unclear at this time what the event may be, so preparing for all possibilities is an absolute necessity before venturing to the region. For more information, and to offer your assistance, please get in touch with either Baron Moonwind of Cumberland, or his Knight, Sir Oberon Anduin, Lord of that estate.

Anyone with information deemed relevant to these possible events surrounding Anar should also speak with Baron Moonwind, the Lord Seneschal, or Guildmistress Keyla, who

are gathering information and overseeing investigations.

Based on our limited knowledge, these regions are rated as highly dangerous for the duration, and it is recommended that only those of strong constitution and great fortitude and preparedness present themselves in aid of the situation. Any who are unfit for such activities should avoid the region entirely. As always, my thanks to any who work in support of Ravenholt and of Evendarr.”

Baron Moonwind had this to add: “Longhope has (at last report) both circles active. Ravenholt Guild members are invited to assist in these circles during the gathering. As well, merchants are invited, as this area does not see a lot of trade.”

The Herald has been able to determine only minimal information about this place called “Anar,” other than to know that it may either be a kingdom that in long years past stood on the region we now know as the Duchy of Ravenholt, or that it may be from an alternate plane. What is agreed by any who speak of it is that the region has much in common with our lands. The geography was, at one point, quite similar to our own region, with boundaries roughly equivalent to our own, and with ocean on the eastern shoreline. This region, too, had a great barrier; although they themselves seem possibly to have constructed it to keep a neighboring warring kingdom at bay. Additionally, Anar seems to have been beset by the creature we came to know as Garn, but all reports show that Garn caused considerably greater destruction upon their lands than the already heinous devastations we have seen.

The only clue that confirms speculation of a connection between the pylon which appeared in Longhope and Anar was from one adventurer who wished to remain anonymous, who said “Yeah, it looks like those obelisks that appeared in Ravenholt City a few years back. People touched ‘em and started hearing voices in their heads from some people who kept asking for help. I didn’t go near ‘em.” Little more could be determined about these strange structures.



Baron Alan Moonwind Invites All to Feast at Longhope Castle

We are holding a feast to welcome all visitors and travelers who are journeying to Longhope to aid in this time of crisis. Housing will be provided by the Estate of Longhope in the luxurious safety of the keep walls. For the feast, we are looking for entertainers (paid), musical in nature, skits, feats of acrobatics, etc. Nothing treasonous, please. (This would be an excellent warm-up for Baron Alaric’s bardic rehearsal being held the following night.) We are also looking for paid servers to help with the feast.

Please contact the Barony of Cumberland directly if interested.

Raven’s Herald Seek Brave Explorers as Reporters

The Raven’s Herald is looking for combat experienced travelers to submit reports worthy of publication herein, and will pay up to 5 gold for material submitted that is deemed properly newsworthy. Get your name in print or submit material under condition of anonymity (no treasonous material accepted).

Ghosts of the Past / The Spirits Vote

By Hezekiah Wright, Raven's Herald Staff

During the last gathering, I had the fortune to come across two spirits wandering within our fair city. The two could not be more different, and yet their stories lead to the same path.

During the afternoon on Saturday, I saw a pale figure moving through town. He was human, and seemed dressed in a soldier's uniform. His name was Nathan Williams, and he was a soldier in the service of Cecil Swordhand. (For those of you unfamiliar with that name, please read my article on the History of the War with the Northmen.) Nathan spoke with me of his life, which ended some 36 years ago, in 568. He was a Lieutenant in the 3rd Arcadian Footmen, and now resides in the Heroes' Graveyard. Early in the War, his unit was ambushed by Northmen. As they made a fighting retreat, Nathan observed some Northmen killing wounded soldiers whom were left behind. Nathan spoke vehemently against this behavior, telling me that he believed that fallen soldiers and captives deserved the honors of war.

"Soldiers and Warriors are all brothers. We have the common bond between us. Between brothers, there must be a level of respect. Murdering the wounded is the most foul crime I can think of," he said to me. Nathan fought the Northmen many times. His men sometimes took prisoners, and he always saw to it that they were taken care of properly. He felt that war needed to be conducted "by the rules." One night, unfortunately, Nathan's ideals lead to his death. A desperate ploy by some Northmen prisoners attempting to escape lead to Nathan's final death. For his commitment to his ideals as a soldier, Nathan found himself a resident of the Heroes' Graveyard. When his liege, Cecil Swordhand, died in 569 he, too, became a resident of the Heroes Graveyard. Then, in late 569, he was told that Theodorik, the leader of the Northmen was within the Heroes Graveyard. His rage at this was boundless. But some 36 years later, he has a chance to act. Somewhere within the structure of the Heroes Graveyard, there has been a question raised about Theodorik's being there. A judgment is to be held in late October of this year. At it, cases may be made for or against Theodorik's being in the Heroes graveyard. If he is found to be lacking, he will be cast into the Graveyard of the Four Winds. If he is found deserving, he will be allowed to stay. The spirits of each Graveyard will walk the lands of Ravenholt, seeking mortals to sit in judgment of Theodorik. A council of eight will be invited to cast a vote. Nathan was allowed to choose one of the four mortals who will speak for the Heroes Graveyard. I do not know whom he will choose, but I do know that he is absolutely seeking someone who would vote to cast Theodorik out. He indicated his time on Tyrra was short, and that he must complete his task within a few hours. I wished

him well, and we parted ways.

Later that same day, I saw a pale figure of a woman who was dressed in barbarian furs. Curious, I approached and asked to speak with her. Indeed, she was a counterpart to Nathan, sent from the Graveyard of the Four Winds. Her name was Ahzri. She recounted to me her life in the Northlands, and her thoughts on the War with the Northmen. She was a wife, and a mother. Her husband and her three sons joined the ranks of Thorhiem's army in 567. They fought with Thorhiem, defending their lands from the encroaching forces of Evendarr. One night, in 568, a group of Evendarrian prisoner were brought into the camp. Some of the barbarians wanted to kill them and some wanted to torture them. But Ahzri was a strong minded woman and among the barbarian women, she had great respect. She defended the captured soldiers, and said that they were simply doing what they were told to do. They did not deserve to be mistreated, and she would not allow it. Her words seemed to have effect, and the prisoners were left alone from then on. That night, Ahzri received word that her husband and all three sons were killed in the battle that the Evendarrian soldiers had been in. None of them resurrected. In a blind rage against them, she fed the prisoners a meal that was laced with poison, and killed them all. She also ate of the meal herself, as she had no desire to continue living with her entire family gone. Rather than passing out of existence, Ahzri found herself in a place she was told was the Graveyard of the Four Winds. She was told that it was a place where the most wicked of people were



sent upon their deaths. She has been in the Four Winds for well over 30 years. She has come to accept that her actions were very wrong. But she can do nothing to atone for those actions now. She too heard that Thorhiem had taken his place in the Heroes graveyard, and she was very pleased. She felt that Thorhiem had done all he could to help protect his people, and their ways of life. Even though they lost, Ahzri felt that Thorhiem was a true hero to the barbarian people. Now, she heard that there was an effort to expel him from the Heroes Graveyard. She petitioned to be one of the messengers from the Four Winds, and was chosen. She walked the roads of Ravenholt for those few short hours seeking someone who would cast a vote in October. Her vote. A vote to keep her liege where she felt he belonged – in the Heroes graveyard.

The ultimate end of these two spirits I do not know. They both moved along, knowing their time was short, and they had complete their task. If anyone would speak to me about their dealings with these spirits – and any others who show up – I would be most appreciative. I can be reached through the offices of the Raven's Herald.

Grand Bardic Challenge

Let it be known throughout all of the Kingdom of Evendarr and the many known Kingdoms!

In Ravenholt City, a competition to determine the most skillful musical performance shall be held on Saturday, June 26, at the seventh Hour.

Spread the word far and wide, for when this competition is complete, the best Bardic Performers throughout the land shall have had opportunity to prove their talents and claim their Legend as the Best of the Best. Whether you perform by voice, by instrument or some combination, you shall be judged by a panel of three Diverse Judges who shall be assembled to award worthy prizes. This Grand Challenge is offering Grand prizes to suit the scale of this Challenge. These prizes shall include a powerful item of magic, a purse of 20 Gold and other significant items, which shall be announced by the first day of June. Thus, competitors from all the Lands are urged to make their plans immediately to be a part of the First Annual Bardic Challenge. Competitors must list their intent to perform no later than Friday of the gather, at the stroke of midnight. All intents or questions may be sent to Alaric Malinruin at Ironvale, Westmarch.

The very nature of this challenge is believed to provide a significant magical enhancement to our lands and, as such, shall be granted a secure and assured performance and completion. Those traveling from distant lands may request the Hospitality of the Land and be granted every reasonable courtesy to aid their stay in our lands. All such requests may similarly be sent to Lord Malinruin at his Capitol in Ironvale, Westmarch. While those who master the arts of Harmony are especially encouraged to attend, it is not a requirement for participation in the competition. The only requirement is a willingness to provide a musical performance to be appreciated amongst a collection of the Lands' Best Talents for such.

OBITUARY

On the 25th day of April in the King's year, the Noble Commoner, Good Dwarf Sylus of the Noble Court of the Barony of Westmarch, Duchy of Ravenholt, Kingdom of Evendarr suffered his final death. Good Dwarf Sylus died in the service to the Kingdom accepting the King's Justice. All who knew him know that he stood by those of his Court, the people, and that which is right in this world. He will be sorely missed and always remembered as a friend. It was a Ducal Decree not long after his death that he be know as a Hero of Ravenholt.

Chester Kapel
Barony of Westmarch

Ducal Decree for Donations

The Guild of Mages and Guild of Healing have long stood in service to our Duchy. They consistently provide the vast majority of their meager resources and are generally poorly thanked both verbally and through donations to replace their lending of aid. Throughout this most recent magical challenge they have been especially strong in service and donations and it is time we as a Duchy made efforts to resupply these essential Guilds. There are those who have in the past made considerably generous donations, and the Guilds as well as the Duchy is thankful for these people and these donations. Ultimately we as a Duchy have not been sufficient in these efforts and as such:

By Ducal plea, all who are able are requested to make donations of components and supplies to each of the two Guilds. Donations will be recorded to ensure we may properly thank those tending this duty and well understand the full value of their donations. While some have taken the path of donations just prior to the expiring of magic within such donations, we urge all be aware of the full measure of donation, for it aids us little to make only a token gesture. The Guilds continue to give aid of all form and it is right and proper we ensure they are possessed of sufficient resource to answer all urgent need of the Duchy. Should stronger Ducal Decree be necessitated, it shall occur, and with full appreciation for those who have given already.

It is further encouraged that we ensure wise use of our resources. When conducting a use of those that have more longevity, attempt to work with the Guilds to trade for their more limited duration resources.

Many challenges await us and we need be as unified as possible in our preparations. A review of supplies and donations will occur at June's end and shall occur each gather thereafter.

By Ducal Proclamation,
Alaric Malinruin
Lord Seneschal for Duke Maximillian Greystone

Children Returned to Worried Westmarch Parents

The Herald has learned that through the heroic efforts of the Court of Westmarch, three captured children reported missing during attacks on Malinruin have reportedly been returned safe and unharmed to their families. While few details are available to us, as to whether or not the perpetrators have been caught, vanquished, or punished, it is good to see that the Court of Westmarch will pursue to all ends any who risk harm to our Duchy's children.



History of the War with the Northmen

By Hezekiah Wright, Raven's Herald Staff

In conjunction with the stories I have written, I have done some research into the history of the War with the Northmen, in the 560's. Here is a very brief synopsis.

The lands now known as Volta and Ravenholt were once ruled by roaming bands of Northmen, or Barbarians. The Northmen were mostly from the areas of Kragen Moore and the hills of the Northern Downs. In the Year 517, forces under Cecil Swordhand move north into the wilderness area beyond Lake Ardynn. He defeats the goblins tribes living there, and is given the lands to rule. He chooses the name Eastwyck – and so in 518, the Barony of Eastwyck is formed

During the years from 517 to 521, the Northmen raided out of the wilderness as far down as Ashbury. Boran Westmarch was ordered to stop these raids, and by 522 the Northmen raids were all but stopped. In return, the King gave Boran Westmarch title to some of the land he had conquered, and such was founded the Barony of Westmarch..

But, in the Year 532, Boran Westmarch is killed in a Northmen ambush. His heir is a daughter, and when she marries Willifred Northridge, he becomes Baron. There began the line of the Northridge into nobility.

For some 40 years, the Northmen skirmish with the forces of Evendarr. They are unorganized, and although they outnumber the individual forces opposing them they can never make use of their superior numbers. Then, in the Year 564 a man known as Thorhiem, also known as Theodorick Vardik, gets all but one of the Northmen tribes to follow him. United, he feels they will be able to defend themselves against the invaders from Evendarr. Some say that Thorhiem was a Biata, and that his mind powers were the key to negotiating and aligning all of the tribes. The attacks by the Northmen begin to have more effect under Thorhiem's leadership

In April of 566, Evendarr declares war against the Northmen. The early fighting was heavily in favor of the Northmen. They made use of mounted warriors to harass and to out flank their enemies. Initial attacks by the Northmen are very successful. In the Spring of 567, Baron Northridge is killed in heavy fighting against the Northmen. The year of 567 and early into 568 see the war going very badly for Evendarr. Much of the Northern Marches falls under Northmen forces.

Then, in 569, during a bold nighttime attack the Northmen sack the city of Aradia. Cecil Swordhand and his entire family are killed within the walls of the city, and none survive resurrection. The line of Swordhand ends in one bloody night. This is the height of the Northmen's power.

During the summer of 569, the Evendarrian counter attack. The loss of Aradia, and the murder of the Swordhand family seemed to galvanize the troops. They fight with a sense of urgency not seen before.

In August of 569, the well-known Battle of Blood River

takes place. The Northmen refer to it as the Battle of White Sands Ford. Thorheim is killed, and the tide forever turns against the Northmen at that point. No leader can take the place of Thorhiem, and the Northmen tribes begin to splinter. Old tribal bickering begins to come back, and the unified force they were ceases to exist.

By the end of the year 570, the Northmen are broken. They retreat into the hills of the northern reaches, and scatter through the Plains of Hadran. Their power is broken, and those who remain try to live amongst the new host of the lands.

The Northmen, whom we now in current day refer to as barbarians, still exist in the far Northern reaches of the hills to the North and West of the settled lands.

Heroes' Graveyard, or Eternal Prison?

By Hezekiah Wright, Raven's Herald Staff

With the chance meetings I have had of late, with the spirits from the Heroes Graveyard and the Graveyard of the Four Winds, I have come to question the true nature of these places. I pose the following questions to you:

When we die our final death, and depart Tyrra's fond embrace, what happens to us?

We can contact a departed spirit via a Spirit Farewell formal, but only once. Then the spirit is beyond our reach. Does it go to someplace beyond our reach? Or is it just – gone?

That being considered, are the spirits in the Heroes and the Four Winds really better off?

Better to be in a form of limbo for years into eternity? Or better to be allowed to slip away entirely? Nathan Williams seems like an honorable man / spirit. Is it right that he not be allowed to rest? And what about Azhri, the barbarian woman. She seems to have learned her lesson – and yet she continues to languish in the Four Winds. Does she not have the right to a final rest, and an end to her penance?

I submit to you, good readers, that perhaps the Heroes and the Four Winds Graveyards are not so different in the end ...

Public Notices

The tribunal has judged and those it found guilty have been punished. Of all one has fallen never to arise again, Sylus of Westmarch whose last death in battle was to help kill the Arch Villain Karvecki of Avendale. I, for my part, have faced my music and I still live to defend what is good and right. I carry on now, let others say what they must.

- Algorian

Sir Antro Ascipiter of Westmarch has gone missing. I am eager to receive any report of his location or travel as soon as possible. Please contact me in Ironvale, Westmarch.

Alaric Malinruin - Baron Regent of Westmarch



Ladies' Tea Tradition Reestablished

With the return of Lady Samara to our region (now fully cured of her elemental woes, by all reports, and her banishment lifted), the pleasantries of Ladies' Tea is seemingly returning to our region. A statement issued by Lady Samara to the Herald said: "It is my intention to bring about the necessities and pleasantries of informal teas and discussion amongst the women of Ravenholt. There are traditions of protocol within Evendarr City that Ravenholt citizens have not had the pleasure of enjoying, being so far distant from the capital city and King Mykel's courts." It is her hope that through these informal teas and discussions, that traditions and customs, which have been set aside in our near-frontier duchy, can be reestablished, and that new ones can be set forth, providing a cultured and refined atmosphere for all. She welcomes communication from any wishing to aid her in coordinating these efforts, beginning with the gathering in Ravenholt City in June. She is also seeking confectioners who wish to provide baked goods for these functions and, while she will pay for such services, she recommends that instead, donations for the confections be given to the local orphanages, if the chefs are willing. Extra foodstuffs remaining upon conclusion of tea can, of course, be auctioned to travelers to further benefit such good causes.

In Preparation for a Bardic Challenge

At the gather in Longhope Castle, in Cumberland, I will be hosting a Bardic Challenge on a practice basis for the Grand multi-Kingdom competition planned for Ravenholt in June. The purpose is to enjoy the musical talents of our citizens, as well as a means of using such to bring benefit to us directly. This benefit will be explained to those who contact me directly. The benefit and the competition have received the full sanction of His Grace Duke Maximillian Greystone. Whether you be a Bard or novice, all with musical talent of voice, instrument or both are urged to share their skills that this benefit may be fully tested. It will begin promptly at the eighth hour on Sunday evening of the gather. All wishing to compete must be placed on the list for such prior to the Seventh Hour of that evening. You may begin to register immediately by contacting myself, Alaric Malinruin, or by approaching me at the Gather in Longhope. Prizes for this event will be awarded to those judged as top three performers. The prizes of eight, five, and three gold respectively represents a smaller measure of the grand prizes anticipated for the full Bardic Challenge the following gather [Ed. Note: See *Grand Bardic Challenge* article this issue]. This is your chance to present and practice for the Grand Challenge ahead in June.

Declaration from Hollym

Unto the People of the Duchy of Ravenholt,

At the most recent Gathering of Nobility on or around April Twenty-Three, Six-Hundred Four Evendarr Reckoning, an official investigation was conducted by the Royal Academy of Arcane Arts and Sciences and the Royal Guild of Mages into the fitness of Keylandra Dirath to continue as Guildmistress within the Duchy of Ravenholt. Sent to your Duchy was Mathias Raveloch, Archwizard of the Eldritch Forge, Professor Emeritus of the Royal Academy and High Guildmaster of Avendale. There, over the course of several days, he questioned many of the nobility and commoners of your land about the actions and demeanor of Guildmistress Keylandra and her running of the Mages Guild.

Based on his recommendations as well as discussions with other ranking members of the Royal Guild of Mages, the Royal Academy of Arcane Arts and Sciences as well as the Royal Guild of Mages do hereby see fit to pronounce Keylandra Dirath as fit, ready and capable to continue in her duties as Guildmistress of Mages for the Duchy of Ravenholt. We fully trust in her ability and integrity and are proud of her service to her guild, her duchy, and her kingdom.

By my Hand and Seal,
Lady Chandria a'Vaughn
Royal Guild Mistress of Mages
Royal Academy of Arcane Arts and Sciences

Tests of Arch Wizardry

The Royal Academy of Arcane Arts and Sciences will be pleased to hold the Tests of Arch Wizardry at Longhope Castle, Barony of Cumberland, Duchy of Evendarr on Sunday, May Thirty at the gathering of Nobility. Applicants for the Tests must be capable of casting nine investitures per day of a single school without tiring or straying into the danger of dark territory. Both Earth and Celestial Wizards will be tested and are equally welcome. A word of warning, the Tests of Arch Wizardry are dangerous and often lethal and are not to be undertaken lightly. Prospective Wizards and those who are curious are welcome to speak with Derros Scrivener Starstone when he arrives on Sunday to administer the Tests.

news from around tyrra

Ashbury

On May 8, 604, Lilaiethyn Raenilindor took oaths of fealty and swore service to the people of Ashbury, Baroness Kelsea Varik, and all whom the Baroness serve and have given fealty to. Huzzah to Squire Lilaiethyn!

Let it be known that on the evening of May 8th, Year 604 by the Reckoning of Evendarr the following individuals of character entered into oath to the Duchy of Ashbury and King-

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Magic from page 1

magical items bearing as many as five formal powers embedded within them. Travelers have found they can carry numerous items with them, but despite all efforts, upon attempting to manipulate a third item within the duchy, they fail to control it without releasing control of one of their other attuned items. It should be noted that “attuned” in this case does not appear to require the crystals and formal magic expenditure previously required in the region, but rather a brief period of concentration to either acknowledge or release an item within one’s collection. Experienced adventurers report that similar difficulties have occurred to lesser or greater degrees in most of the lands of Tyrra in recent years.

Cities and towns throughout the duchy are actively working to restore their circles, creating a high need for components, Copy scrolls, and Circle scrolls, raising prices considerably on those items, at least in the short term. Many towns that had not previously had resurrection circles are taking up collections to try to ensure that they are safe in the future.

Scholars report that the magics seem to have stabilized at the expected evening reset, and no one has reported that their abilities are restored at the morning hour any longer, as was for a time true for celestialists. Several spells that had for a time worked within the duchy have not been made to function again as of yet, including Elemental Fury and Purify (and presumably the counterpart, Putrefy). The one region still reporting fluctuations is that of Longhope Castle, in Cumberland, which has had strange duplication of magicks and flows of energy that had scholars describing a “sudden burst of energy and power” when casting. No magic seems lost there, per se, and all items brought forth seem to function at least as well as expected, but all in all, the area is unsettled.

The restoration of magic and seeming pacification of the Barrier comes after a phase of overwhelming control over all things magical, believed to be caused by the intervention of a group calling themselves the “Iron Circle.” These zealots have been in Ravenholt for many years, and were known to citizens for the past several, but until now had seemed relatively harmless. They consider themselves protectors of Ravenholt and of the Barrier in particular, and have in some cases given up all “earthly” connection to their prior lives (primarily as skilled mages) in favor of studying and caretaking of the barrier nodes.

The barrier itself is believed to be either in whole or in part related to the Primus machine (Ed. Note: See Herald Articles from mid-590’s for more details). Some theorize that while it may have been instigated by the use of the Primus machine, it has in fact become one with Tyrra and is a composite of natural and machine components. In recent years, it had become apparent that various “nodes” of magical energy that were focal points for the barrier had been corrupted or were failing to varying degrees. One of the earliest known incidents of this was several years ago in a town just outside of Ironvale,

where what was later determined to be a Celestial node was found with numerous locking mechanisms and a sign that said “Out of Order.” Subsequent nodes have proven to relate to specific formal magicks, the use of attunement crystals, and other, less obvious changes.

According to reports from the last gather, an internal struggle in the echelon of the Iron Circle began several months ago, when a disagreement arose as to how best to handle a series of troublesome changes. Apparently, some one or some thing has been making its way through the barrier, greatly disrupting various nodes and “eating” the magical powers therein. The somewhat haphazard disturbances to the nodes put them severely out of balance. The Iron Circle’s initial reaction seems to have been to try to lock the barrier down and try to reset it, thereby removing at least temporarily, all energies of magic from the barrier, in the hopes that the being would “starve” without magical food. The horrific tragedy that followed in the wake of initial shut down procedures appeared to include the side effect of removing most, if not all, magic from within the Duchy, leaving us with little to no healing powers, among other things. This is believed to be what caused the internal strife, as several Iron Circle members risked life and limb to escape the barrier and get information out to the citizens gathered in the City.

Ultimately, it was these clues, combined with the heroic efforts of too many citizens and visiting adventurers to name here, that led to the discovery of maps of both the region and a portion of the machine’s controls behind the barrier. A large force of those gathered moved into the depths of the machine some time after midnight on Saturday of the gather, and discovered that a rather insane woman had her hand on the power switch, but not without the loss of a feline adventurer, Kane, known to many as “Magikitty” for his ability to resist strong magics, which also, unfortunately, left him immune to life spells. He heroically gave himself to adjusting a dial that others could not touch without dying. Eventually, the machine was reset and order restored. It is unclear what has become of the being that first began the frightful downward spiral of tragedies, but Kane has been seen in some spirit form, wandering around without his tail, and without physical form, since then. The changes that have ravaged our land and which (hopefully) have been settled leave more questions than answers, unfortunately. Any with further information are strongly encouraged to contact the Herald.

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Trial from page 1

Guildmaster Andvar of Avendale, and several other King's Knights who had either borne witness or been otherwise involved with the people of Avendale or Ravenholt, or both.

Those who could not attend the trial in person were able to present written testimony into evidence, or to present themselves for testimony to the King's Knights in Avendale the month preceding. By all accounts, the process was a lengthy and grueling one, not only for those on trial, but for those putting forth judgment. While a mandate from His Majesty could have required all even suspected of being involved be put to death or even obliterated, rather than taking such care, it was obvious that both sides desired a more reasoned outcome. Since Avendale has been poised on the brink of joining the Kingdom of Evendarr for some time, and final negotiations were reportedly in process when this tragic killing occurred, the political ramifications of further acts of aggression were feared by all. None wished to see further harm come from it, and none wished to see Evendarr and Avendale come to full-scale conflict.

Noted one participant who sat on all discussions but the final meting out of penalties, "I would not wish such difficult choices on my worst enemy, but I have never seen such compassion and care given to each decision. No one there denied that lives were at stake, and each one, commoner and noble alike, was given full consideration. With Baron Regent Alaric overseeing the final assessment, we assembled a moment-by-moment enactment of what transpired. Without that enactment to catch each flaw and missing fact, several conflicting accounts would have left us baffled in our judgments. As it stands, though many might deem the punishments harsh, the laws as written were followed with precision and thought. Avendale and Evendarr have both suffered great losses, but with hope and fortitude, we shall become stronger and wiser for it."

The testimonies themselves took over six hours, but deliberations took nearly double that time. In the early hours of the morning, Duke Greystone and Sir Tivorak called forth the accused for the announcement of results. Tensions were high, and emotions ran strong. The results of the trial cleared many of the accused of charges, including Sir Bishop of Capulus, Sir Garth of Capulus, Sir Jasper Timmons of Westmarch, Sir Marcus Gunner of Therendry, Squire Amra of Cumberland, and Squire Kabaka, and commoners Adraya Alquillonde, Becket Von Nyeth, Cidney Timmons, Glaive, Hayden Von Nyeth, Jester, Lorelle of Southmarch, Serak of Capulus, and Tyler. Sasha d'Von Skya, per her own request, is expected to be put on trial in Ashbury at a later date.

Drake Tamarack of Southmarch, Volta, was found guilty of treason and two counts of assault. He was given an obliteration for the act of treason, and his assault sentence of an additional death was commuted because he stepped forward of his own accord, despite no testimony naming him. Many

have expressed that this says much for his character, that while having done wrong, he was honest and honorable in standing up to his crimes.

Shatter of Capulus was found guilty of treason and murder, calling for penalties of obliteration and death, respectively. He survived his obliteration, and the death was deemed taken per the death he took at then-Baron Algorian's hands at the Avendale gather. Lorien of Capulus was found guilty of treason and obliterated.

Videl Timmons was found guilty of treason and assault. His punishment was obliteration and he was stripped of his worldly possessions.

Then-Dame Saket Shabmah of Ravenholt was found guilty of failure to adhere to the Code of Chivalry and Conduct Unbecoming a Noble, and was subsequently stripped of her title by her only recently sworn Liege, Duke Greystone. As agonizing as the much-expected penalties of death or obliteration were for some of the accused, the removal of title seemed one of the most poignant and sorrowful moments for some, second only to Algorian's.

The gathered crowd, previously near silent and intent, gasped in amazement when Former Baron Algorian of Avendale was found to be guilty of two counts of treason, requiring not one, but two obliterations; one for abandoning his liege in time of need and one for not performing his noble duties in regards to his handling of the entire situation as then-highest ranking noble in Avendale. He was stripped of his noble title prior to the obliterations, both of which he survived.

Shoshoto of Westmarch was found guilty of murder and treason, given one death and one obliteration for those crimes. His death spell was determined to be the one that took the Viscount down. Sylus of Westmarch was found guilty of treason and two counts of assault. He was given an obliteration and he was stripped of his worldly possessions. He failed to survive his obliteration, and, for acts of heroism prior to and exclusive of his acts during the events in Avendale, was named a Hero of Ravenholt by His Grace. An observer to the trial, who wished to remain anonymous, said sorrowfully of Sylus: "He was a good man. I believe he thought he was doing what was right in all the confusion, but he got caught up in the moment. What was worse was his own nervousness and desire to see the truth brought forth made him a poor witness in his own defense. It almost seemed like he was looking to Shoshoto to see if he said the right things or not, and that



Continued on page 9

Greystone from page 1

intricacies to his formal training, it is hoped that one day he will return to govern these lands that he so loves.”

The majority of the Black Ravens are opting to attend the Prince when he departs our region, and to train as personal troops under him while he undergoes military training. The Herald has received rumors from the field that with the departure of the Black Ravens with Prince Ravenhurst, it is expected that Duke Greystone may expand a new Ducal army, as is evidenced by increasing encouragement at the baronial level to join local militia, presumably in support thereof. On a related note, craftsmen throughout the duchy have seen steady increases in demands for their given trade craft, ranging from cobblers to metalsmiths.

Duke Greystone has previously governed Ravenholt from a past and merged timeline “bubble.” There are, in fact, many people in current Ravenholt who consider themselves to be “from Greystone’s time,” while most others recall only Roderrick as Duke. (Ed. Note: See back issues of the Raven’s Herald for more details.) It is believed that his extensive military experience during the Sessuar war of his time is one of the primary reasons for His Highness to make this seemingly radical change. Further evidence suggests that Duke Greystone is also under orders by His Highness to establish a more proper noble protocol throughout the duchy. It is believed that more attention to respect for our nobles shall be mandated, in following with proper Evendarrian tradition.



Trial from page 8

probably didn’t help him in the long run.”

Friends and comrades of those who were to suffer obliteration were allowed to come forth to perform the dangerous formal. Drake and Videll’s were enacted in short order, with compatriots standing by respectfully, and moving to the guilds to receive them once resurrected. Shatter and Lorien’s were done in the privacy of Capulus Hall. Several women sat beside the circle as Algorian’s first resurrection was performed, talking to him up to and until his death, when they moved to the guilds as well. Shoshoto and Sylus were remanded to house arrest in Baron Alaric’s name after swearing to return for punishment come morning, which they did. All besides Sylus who were obliterated or killed were successfully resurrected. Duke Greystone himself sat in the Guild Circles until dawn’s light, awaiting the outcome of each resurrection. He was heard to mutter that it was a “sad day indeed, for Ravenholt, for Evendarr, and for Avendale.”

As is deemed just within Evendarr, all who have been tried, whether found guilty or not, are deemed to have paid for any crimes therein, and are considered free citizens once again.

News from page 6

dom of Evendarr by their own free will and desire. Sasha d’ Von Skya has taken oath and been accepted as Squire to His Grace Duke Luther Eindrake of Ashbury. Kellum Vanderhurst has taken oath and been accepted as Squire to Sir Yngvar Holindarn, Knight of Ashbury and Loyal Vassal of Duke Luther Eindrake. Ashe Blackfist has taken oath and been accepted as Squire to Sir Dooron Malfour von Capulus, Knight of Ashbury and Loyal Vassal of Duke Luther Eindrake. Please grant these individuals the respect they are due and know the dedication they hold for these lands and its peoples.

By My Hand, Sir Yngvar Holindarn
Knight of Ashbury, Loyal Vassal to His Grace,
Duke Luther Eindrake of Ashbury

Elysia

The following individuals are to be considered Outlaws of Elysia. As such, they have no protection under the laws of Elysia, and are to be executed until final death. Any who aid these individuals will share their fate.

The Outlaws of Elysia:
Zameon Evermore
Hiddukkel Chilox

Darkenwald

Per Jaerius Maxinus, Head to the Academy of Science and Magick of the Hinterlands, due to the nature surrounding improper investitures by a novice guild member the sanctity and purpose of Darkenwald Healer’s Guild has come into question, not only by the nobility, but the populace in general. Currently the guild status is held in stasis due to the nature surrounding these investitures and the resignation of the current Guildmaster, Divad Stardust. Resurrections and healing will continue to be performed by the members, however a temporary ban upon any formal casting within the circle is in place until such time that the investigation is completed.

Lanalor’s Keep

By Royal Proclamation of Duke Sir Lanalor of Lanalor’s Keep, I hereby declare that Elijah Avlarin is hereby declared Outlaw and Traitor to the crown in the lands of Izendorn. Elijah Avlarin is charged with slander against a noble, threatening a member of the King’s house, abandoning his duties at Lanalor’s Keep and traitor for attempting to sell a treasure of Izendorn. Be it known that any who purchase or trade with Elijah Avlarin for the sword piece or any other merchandise will be charged with similar crimes.

Signed by my hand this 4th day of May in 604,
Duke Sir Lanalor

The Signpost

Messages to and from travelers lost at...The Crossroads

May, 604

Town Meeting Postponed

Due to the land-shifting, the town meeting scheduled for May did not occur. Many people could not find the town. A call is going out now to all the residents of the town under Bramble Hill to try for a town meeting in June. Please forward your intent to be at this meeting to Maddock, so that he can warm the forges up ahead of time. Reports indicate that one of Ruckus' minions is separated from the rest of these evil beings, and may be ripe for the plucking. The alchemical ghouls are fewer of late, though they are still a danger. The mysterious door has been appearing more often, and for longer periods of time. Perhaps this means something is coming to a head. Still no noise from the highlanders. Maybe they're still ashamed at the beating they received last fall. There have been echoes of gypsy music in the hills, and remains of campfires have been found by local hunters. Death's seekers have been seen talking to themselves or something invisible – very unusual behavior for them. Though the trees are green, and animals plentiful, there is still something a little bit "off" about nature this spring.

Screaming Spirits

The screaming spirits at the swamp have been killing more and more frequently as the weather has warmed up. I advise all travelers to be wary until such a method is found to put these things permanently to rest. Be aware, cutting them down will only give you about a minute's respite, and then they will come at you again. Fortunately for all travelers, they are only out at night, and may be struck by any weapon, but spells are best. If anyone has more information than I do, please share it with everyone at the town meeting. Leave a note in that town's library.

May your paths never double back on you,

- Lind-El

Public Notices

To the Pack:

The thing you have in a bottle will break out soon, unless it is taken care of. See me at your next town meeting.

- Kaz

Missing:

One forge apprentice. White in color, not very outspoken. Please send him home.

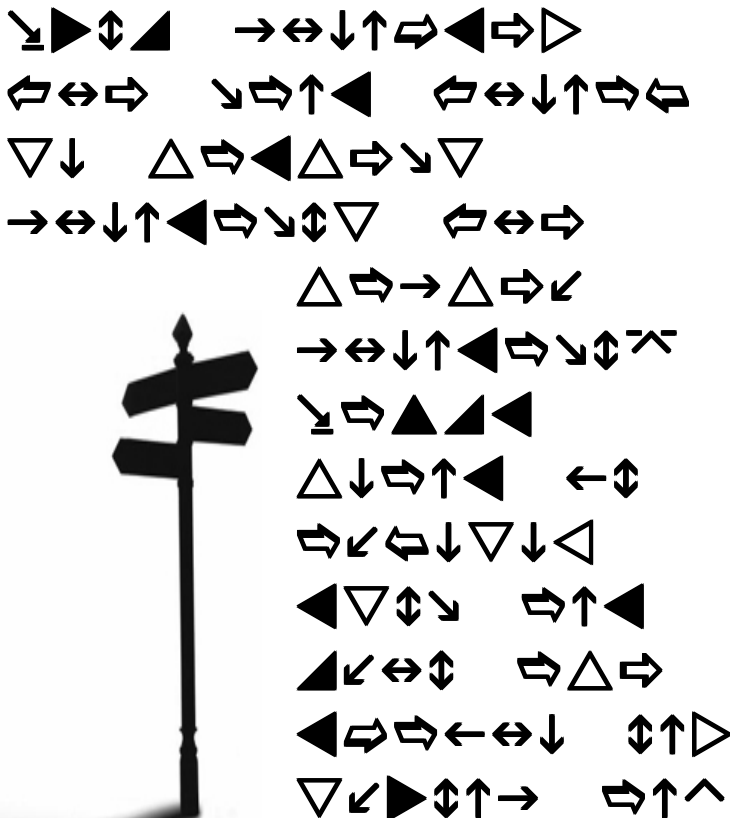
- Maddock

We gotz yer basskit an yer bunny. If yu wantz it back u gotta pai. Meat us on the path to bramble hill at midnite. Com alone and find the broken bone tribe.

Books Stolen, Reward Offered

My name is Maddock, and I run the workshops. Last fall a pair of books were stolen from a towns person. These books took a lot of time, effort, and pain to recover from where they were buried. These books contain all of the knowledge necessary to manufacture greater suits of armor. We are talking about suits of armor that can block four attacks from a Ruckus Bone and not be weakened, and some of the armor could last as long as two years of town meetings.

I will not say who had these books, as the thief already knows, but I will offer a reward for the return of these books. I will make armor for the person who brings them back. If I have to supply the materials, I will make 8 suits of leather armor as fast as I can, and if they provide the materials, I will make 8 suits of any armor I have the skill for at each of the next three town meetings that they attend.



Out-of-Game Information

Memorial Weekend Game On/Game End

Please be advised that due to the travel distance for many, the need for cleanup/packing, and the length of the event, we are working hard to stick to a game start time of 10 pm on Friday, and a game end of noon on Monday of the event. Please keep this in mind when planning arrival to site, and when you consider plans for sleeping and waking during the event. If you would like to arrive early to help with setup and to walk the new camp, please feel free to show up as early as 2 pm.

Parking will be on the left, just as you come into the camp, below the main dining hall area. Please park carefully, making room for as many cars as possible. Thanks, and see you there!

Things NERO Mass Needs

UPS Power Packs	1x3 boards
Staffs	Baby wipes
Polearms	Gatorade powder
PACKETS!!!	Cloaks
Heavy duty costume racks	Shirts
Coat hangers	Hoods
3/4" Plywood	Leather armor
2x4 boards	Masks (specific)

Latex Weapons Approved for Limited Use

NERO Mass has approved limited use of the one-handed swords, only, found at:

www.epic-armory.com, www.latex-weaponry.com,
www.medievalcollectibles.com, www.chivalrysupply.com
and www.by-the-sword.com

...for use in the NERO Mass campaigns. Other styles, including the axe as currently designed, have not been deemed safe enough for use. Other brands of latex weapons are not approved for use, either. None of these weapons are recommended for tip or sweep fighters, as the weapons will easily tip under heavy use and are not safely repairable should that happen. They may NOT be used for waylaying. If you have the waylay skill, you will need to carry either a suitable rock rep or dagger built per 8th Edition standards in addition to your latex weapon. In order to use the weapons, either as a PC or as an NPC, you must safety test on them for a few moments well before game on with a Mass Safety rep, Monster Camp rep, or the owner. These weapons must still be safety tagged by Safety before each event. Please remember to bring a standard boffer rep in case you damage your weapon irreparably, as monster camp cannot assure our ability to loan out weapons.

Staff Contact Info

Event Registration: register-online@neromass.com

Phone: (203) 426-7729

Mail: NERO Mass, 25 Aunt Park Lane, Newtown, CT 06470

<http://www.neromass.com/register.html>

For additional staff contact information, see:

www.neromass.com/staff.html

NERO® Magic Item Slots Play-test Version 2.0 122702

Objective: The Objective of this play-test is to limit the amount of magic items that can be active on a player at once.

Details: A chapter may specify how many active magic items a player may have at a given time. This number is to be between one and five and this number must be publicly posted at check-in, on the chapter's website and in newsletters. Only one to five magic items may be used at any one time. In order to switch between items one minute performing no other activity is required to make an item inactive and one minute performing no other activity is required to make an item active. The player must be conscious and have at least one hand free to do this. The player must have an active ring containing the active items and an inactive ring containing the inactive items and must actually switch the tags to switch items between active and inactive. This limitation on active magic items applies to both Unrestricted and Local Chapter Only Items only as a total (ex: 2 LCO and 3 Unrestricted "active" items in a 5 item slot campaign)

Please Note: Ravenholt s is using a 2-slot limit as of May 27, 2004

2004 Schedule

The Following event will be at Tolland

Ravenholt Long Weekend 5/28-31/04 5/1/04

The Following events will be at Brimfield

Crossroads Weekend 6/11-13/04 5/1/04

Ravenholt Weekend 6/25-27/04 TBD

Summer Break

Ravenholt Event 9/3-6/04 TBD

Noreascon (WorldCon) 9/2-6/04

Crossroads Event 9/17-19/04 TBD

Ravenholt Event 10/1-3/04 TBD

Crossroads event 10/15-17/04 TBD

Ravenholt Event 10/29-31/04 TBD



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the Back page

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www.neromass.com/ravenholt.html

Crossroads Campaign Web Page

www.neromass.com/crossroads.html



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Center Stage Costumes - Leather goods, leather garments, Minnetonka moccasins, clothing, games, jewelry, etc. <http://www.centerstagecostumes> 978-469-9728 (As seen at the Labor Day '03 Faire weekend)

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