

GUIDEBOOK : MINDOTH'S TOWER & ARCHANAYA

WRITING: DARREN PEARCE

RULES: HOWARD BRANDON

ADDITIONAL RULES: SEAN PATRICK FANNON

EDITOR IN CHIEF: CARINN SEABOLT

EDITING: GAYLE REICK, CARINN SEABOLT

ILLUSTRATION: BIEN FLORES, ALIDA SAXON

DESIGN: AARON ACEVEDO, JASON ENGLE & ALIDA SAXON

LAYOUT: ALIDA SAXON

LINE MANAGER: GAYLE REICK

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MINDOTH'S TOWER & ARCHANAYA

"Only the druids would make their center of influence in a dormant volcano. Well, I'll grant you that it's a dormant volcano that they used their power to calm. So I suppose, in all honesty, if you can do such a thing then perhaps you're able to lay claim to a place as your own." ~ The Scribe.

SO, WHAT'S THIS BOOK ABOUT?

Hey, we're nearing the end of this massive Shaintar Kickstarter, and since I've taken over from Sean I've been writing almost constantly since September 2015. I hope you've enjoyed what I've done so far, and I promise you that I'll always strive to keep Shaintar AS Shaintar no matter what the future may bring, and that future, as Sean said last year, is bright!

I've been doing the guidebooks in one particular way barring Wildlands and Freelands, because we felt they needed to be more of a toolbox of cool stuff, something special for GMs and players to dive into.

Here's another exception to the rule because this is a dual focus book, packed with information on Mindoth's Tower so you can explore it, bring it to life, and do the same with the Church of Light in Archanaya. I won't say it's not a challenging project to write, because as you're reading this, this is all the text I have so far. What you'll find is pretty much what the update promised on the KS.

"This Guidebook will have a dual focus, delving into both Mindoth's Tower (the legendary center of druidic life) and Archanaya (the home of the new Church of Light). The centers of each faith are detailed extensively, and Edges and other rules material for playing characters tied to these places are given. Access to special Gear and mystical studies is also a part of this book."

So without further ado, with the help of The Scribe, let's get started on this journey!

MINDOTH'S TOWER

"To the south of Galea, nestled in a former volcano on the very eastern coastline, close to Peace Wood and mere stone's throw away from Alavar is the city-state of Mindoth's Tower. This is the power base for the enigmatic, Life preserving druids that roam Shaintar. I was lucky enough to be allowed into the tower and explore its vast lands both inside, and outside the volcano crater. The tower itself is a testament to the power of being one with Nature, and meshes perfectly with the landscape they have cultivated inside the volcano proper." ~ The Scribe, from: **Mindoth's Tower - Druids and Life: vol I.**

OF THE TOWER'S HISTORY

1132 A.C: ERUPTION

To understand Mindoth's Tower now, it's necessary to roll back the scroll of history to a particular date. We're talking about 1132 A.C. when a massive volcano erupted in the southeastern region of Shaintar, causing great destruction, and took hundreds of lives. It was the first time this many druids had gathered in one place. The Quorum was mostly made up of elves and dwarves with a few humans, aevakar, and dregordians, who used their considerable mastery of their gifts and quelled the raging fire of the volcano. Having so many druids in one place led to an unprecedented event. They spent several weeks in discussion, partly because they were meeting like-minded members of a select group, and partly because they were also keeping a firm eye on the volcano.

These discussions were long, laborious, and full of much debate. It's a known fact that once you get a group of druids together, different philosophies and approaches can make for a very interesting time. Later in the year the Druidic Council forms, with core members drawn from the druids of all races present who led the talks.

The oldest and most powerful of them, the extremely wise and talented fae druid Mindoth becomes the Druid's First Speaker.



1135 A.C.: MINDOTH'S TOWER RISES

From 1132 A.C. to 1135 A.C. the druids turned their gifts toward making a new home. They claimed the volcano, and transformed the outside of the volcano one way, and the internal part into something quite impressive. It was not as impressive as the tower has become today, but breathtaking to behold. The Scribe writes about it in some length, speaking of the gardens, the tower, and the agricultural center that makes up nearly 80% of the interior.

The Druidic Council took up residence in the tower, along with the First Speaker and officially name their new home: Mindoth's Tower. Mindoth refuses initially and then sees sense and deigns to become a leader to the druids, and many more druids come to make their permanent homes there, though many still live in the wild most of the time.

2045 A.C.: NATION BUILDING

In 2045, the Druid's Council of Mindoth's Tower joined the Fae Nations in backing the rise of Vol Al'Daya, "the King of the East", in uniting many of the warring factions under the Clan of the Silver Unicorn's banner. This alliance would soon evolve into the Kingdom of Galea. Mindoth's Tower's support cemented an alliance which thrust the druids

to the political fore and guaranteed their continued voice in the path of the Southern Kingdom's even as they emerged from the chaos and blood of darker times.

2726 A.C.: SOUTHERN KINGDOMS RISE

Whilst not directly related to the location of Mindoth's Tower, the druids' influence in the rise of the Southern Kingdoms cannot be ignored. It was the First Speaker of Mindoth's Tower who stood alongside Evan Argorn, the Dukes of many provinces, the Overlord of Lanthor, and even the Quo-Unias in this historic moment and joined the Council of Rulers. Many historians agree that this marks the beginning of the alliance which became the Southern Kingdoms.

3020 A.C.: ARCHANON REVEALED

At the height of the Betrayal War as the armies gathered for the final battle at Og m'Drakar, a powerful being calling himself Archnon representing Light, allies himself with the Ascended and leads Vainar's defeat. Individuals blessed by the power of Light grow in number and strength, joining the Druids of Life in checking the powers of Flame and Darkness.

3024 A.C.: LIFE AND LIGHT

When Chrysalia Nollan and Sir Rohan Doyle found the Reformed Church of Light in the coastal region near Mindoth's Tower, they drew the ire of the Prelacy. With the aid of the druids, Light and Life combine forces to drive back attacks by enraged Prelacy warriors and priests. Later they help the Church of Light break ground upon Archanaya.

3121 A.C.: THE FLAME COMES

The first the druids knew of this event, according to records revealed by the Scribe, is when they felt a disturbance in their dormant-volcano home. Fearing that the volcano might become active again they turned their power to calm it. A visiting Priest of Light had a vision which showed the rise of Ceynara once more and the devastation that would follow. The druids moved to send their warriors, servants, and heroes to aid any who would oppose the servants of Flame. Shaintar plunges once more into war, and the tireless defenders of the land follow to protect all Life, with the aid of the Church of Light.

3122 A.C.: COMES THE TEMPEST AND CHOSEN OF THE HORN

Without warning, the coastal town of White Bay is destroyed by a massive tidal wave. Druids and Priests soon begin to sense an emergent power, unlike any they have faced before. In time, twisted druids and mages calling themselves Storm Magi unleash terrible cyclones against the Southern Kingdoms and their enemies with powers so alien and perverse that the greatest minds in Mindoth's Tower theorize they must come from beyond the Veil.

At the same time, many of those "chosen by the Unicorn" begin to establish shrines and temples in her honor to give hope and protection to those lost in dark times. Mindoth's Tower takes no position, but members of the Church of Light question whether such "adulation" is appropriate for Celesia. Regardless, veneration of the Silver Unicorn grows with a few even calling themselves paladins.

3123 A.C.: CRIMSON CRUSADE

Even as the War of Flame grinds to a bloody standstill, the Church of Archanon threatens war. At first, their efforts focus on conquering the unaligned

Northern Gathers, enslaving or eliminating the native Goblinessh. By autumn, however, Prelacy forces launch a surprise attack at the Olaran city of Thuls wielding powerful arcfire weapons and, if rumors are true, some bizarre fusion of arcfire and necromancy. For the second time in two years, the druids of Mindoth's Tower and the priests of Archanaya are faced with powers and magics they little understand. Some begin to theorize as to why?

3124 A.C.: RISE OF THE FALLEN

War leads to war, death to death. Even as the Prelacy of Camon is pushed back to its borders and the Crimson Crusade also grinds to an uneasy standoff, new rumors and portents arrive of growing belligerence to the north. While the Southern Kingdoms allowed themselves to be distracted with successive conflicts, Shaya'Nor quietly amassed an army which they unleash upon the unsuspecting Northern Gathers, driving ever south toward a weakened Camon. Worse, dark whispers herald the return of Vainar. On Dark Moons 33rd, 3124, the Dark Lord indeed returns as his shadow covers across the lands. Mindoth's Tower and Archanaya marshal their forces in preparation for the impending confrontation.

THE TOWER

"I was struck by its sheer size; the maps are wrong when they depict it as a town. The druids have transformed it over the years, with hard work, impressive tenacity, and the coin brought in by supporting local trade and economy. It is definitely worthy of the title of city-state, and is now a vast complex with the impressive tree tower growing out of the volcano. It is not uncommon to see wandering members of Archanon's Reformed Church of Light here too, with druid and paladin engaging in spirited, but for the most part friendly debate between the aspects of Life and Light." ~ The Scribe, from: **Mindoth's Tower: Not Built in a Day.**

THE FARMLAND (OUTER TOWER)

Mindoth's Tower is separated into three distinct regions within the city-state itself. The first is a sprawling area of land, which surrounds the village that's grown around the region now known as the

Outer Tower. Here you'll find farmland, buildings, crops, and herd animals being tended by the farmers, druids, and druidic students of the tower. The farmland has no strict defense to speak of either, only the pitchforks, staves, and strength of the dwellers there stand between them and danger.

Of course if a foolish raider or other such enemy does attempt to cross into the farmland, they might also find the druids' magic turned against them, as well as the surrounding nature, including animals.

Of late a few enterprising souls have begun to use mechanical means to irrigate the fields, constructing systems that use ceramic pipes to filter water to crops under the surface. A dwarf artificer by the name of Gebren Swiftstone first proposed the idea to the druids, who agreed to it on the proviso that the dwarf could find a way to integrate the machines responsible for pumping the water through the pipes, with a delivery method that forces the liquid up through the small holes in each pipe.

As the farmland increases in size, and the decent treatment the farmers receive gains popularity with some looking to change their fortunes, it's highly likely that a good-sized town with a defensive palisade wall will come into being. That the wall in question will likely be covered in thorn-bearing plants should come as no surprise. One of the frontrunners for a proposed name for the future town is Fieldway.

With such a sizable settlement in the offing, a few notable leaders have stepped forth from the community, including Shaela Greystone, a dwarf from Galea. Her mastery of druidic power is impressive and, though she's never really wanted to be a formal part of Mindoth's Tower proper, she's not averse to helping lead a small place like this into something bigger. She has a small farm on the outer edge of the big field, called Greystone Havens.

THE WOODWAY (IRONWOOD WAY)

This second area is a defensive settlement.

At the base of the volcano there's a large area where trees have been encouraged to form a natural defense that runs around the whole area, splitting at the mouth of the tunnel that was formed (by magic) in the southern region of the outer crater. Affectionately known as the Woodway, this wall is made up of trees that are as strong as iron, volcanic rock, and even

thick briars with sharp thorns. The wall is topped by stone towers which might have a contingent of archers, or even a couple of Soulguard manning them day and night. These towers were made through the combined efforts of druids and dwarven stonemasons who used the natural stone as a base and wove it through the wood to create the towers.

A large, thick, ironwood gate provides a way to seal off the entry, and the druids can call upon their magic to open a huge pit that runs from the outer mouth of the tunnel, right into the inner mouth that opens up into the inner crater of Mindoth's Tower. Some of the younger druids have taken to calling the passage the Ironwood Way. It's possible that over time the name may stick and everyone will come to refer to it as such.

The Soulguard and regular druids who reside here live in homes built into the inner part of the wall, where they use natural fissures and mirrors to provide light to their dwellings. Inside you can also find glowing plants and luminous fungi which provide adequate illumination to the interiors.

INNER CRATER

The third is the Inner Crater.

Once you make your way through the Woodway into the crater proper, you'll discover the true majesty of Mindoth's Tower as a settlement. Maps may call it a town, but it's grown far larger than anyone imagined it would. This is due in part to the successful cultivation (nay, transformation) of the interior land by the many druids who reside here. They have created an ideal synergy between the natural world and the people who work magic in it.

There are gardens, fields, farms, and much more residing inside the Inner Crater, and they're dominated by the massive wood and stone visage that's the roots of the tower itself. The Tower is separate, a huge tree that was encouraged to grow far larger than it would have without druidic assistance. After it grew into place on the volcano, Mindoth fused it with stone to create a living tower in which he, the council, and all higher ranked druids might live and work. It is the very focal point and home of the Druidic Council, and even the Halls of Life where future druids are trained are part of the tower proper.

The people live in beautifully constructed homes, which share a great deal in common with elvish architecture. This is likely due to the large number of fae who came together with their counterparts to stop the volcano from detonating deep in the past. A great portion of the buildings that are central to the crater are indeed those which were built when the tower was established in 1135 A.C.

Newer buildings of more contemporary design have begun to form around the older, these are still built to effective standards, and they remain in harmony with the current layout of the crater. The druids with the aid of the dwarves were able to employ methods to ensure that homes have adequate water, light, heating (via hypocaust methods), and sanitation.

NEW WARD

The druids don't actually call it this, because to them the whole city-state is really a synergistic construction that surrounds and supports the tower proper. However, they also understand to have a prosperous community you need to invite others in, allow them to grow, expand, and feel as though they're contributing to society as a whole. So they've given their haven names and split it into the kind of zones you might find in Galadrea or any other capital city in Shaintar.

There are farms in the New Ward, the pumping houses, and the irrigation channels also reside in wooden barns throughout the area. The pipes crafted by the dwarves with the aid of their stone shaping have helped immeasurably; they're used for a variety of tasks such as irrigating fields and delivering water to homes.

New Ward also boasts a thriving economy driven by the core farms' export of surplus, and the druids' love of natural craft. There are bakers, brewers, vintners, candle makers, dyers, and any conceivable nature oriented shop or stall packed into this area. Due to outsiders coming to the city-state at every chance, the New Ward also caters to those with a discerning palate.

It has a slew of taverns, inns, and even a theater where the populace can enjoy a little bit of entertainment. Here are just a few notable places that you may want to visit if you take a trip to the New Ward.

THE WILLOW

This is an inn, run by a quiet, well-spoken man called Salverin Merek. His food is good and his accommodation features many rooms that have been formed out of nature by his wife, Belina Merek, a very talented druid indeed. His prices are on the expensive side, but the food, drink, and good night's rest more than make up for this.

TOBIAS'S RUSTIC HOUSE

Tobias's Rustic House is a tavern run by Jessamyn Tress who was surprised when her recently deceased friend Tobias Rhul, gave her the tavern and asked her to look after it in a letter sent shortly before his death. To honor his memory, Jess has taken it on herself to hire new help, clean the place from top to bottom, and expand the gardens -- landscaping them with druidic magic to bring them closer to a natural state, whilst preventing them from becoming a wild place of thorns and beer. The building itself is clad in weathered ash panels and has a reputation for hearty fare, good music, and great ale. Jess's prices are realistic and she's known to trade food and drink for a few hours hard work in the kitchen, cleaning, or even helping chop wood. Don't think to take advantage of her through; she's tough as nails and her magic would pin you to a wall.

THE OAK

This is a small tavern formed inside the hollow of an oak tree. As you might expect, the tavern's taproom and other rooms were created with the aid of magic. The Oak is currently run by a couple of retired heroes, a brinchie called Whisperclaw, and her partner, a human mage called Diana Brant. Together they look after their customers and provide good, home-cooked food with lots of nutrition. The tavern is also known for Oak's Special Brew, a heady beer with a kick like a mule.

THE HALE INN

This is a lovely two-story building which resembles an old-fashioned farm house with a thatched roof, solid timber construction, and two-tone black/white detailing around the walls and windows. It has adequate stabling for several coaches and horses, and is run by a husband and wife duo. Herbert and Mary Bennet keep a great place, a clean one, and