

# Seer's Hall Village

While the small size of this settlement might class it as no more than a hamlet elsewhere, the underpopulated nature of this part of Ezrute raises its effective presence to village status. Part of this elevation in significance is because its main purpose is to support the underground Hall of the Seer complex, hidden away inside the large Seer's Hill, behind the steep Great Ice Cliff (about 50 feet high, 15 metres), that together dominate the settlement. This Hill is simply a more impressive ice hill among many to be found scattered over the Kristol Tundra of these parts, making it a distinctive local landmark along the Urksgard Trail that runs east-west through the Village, south of the Ice Cliff. East along the Trail, it joins the north-south Skorra Road less than two miles away (three kilometres), as shown on the separate Seer's Hall Plain map.

The map's base layout was determined using the design from Cities dice-face 6R in the Inkwel Ideas Dungeonmorph Dice range. Part of the contents were derived from tables and details in the Shadowdark RPG main rules, and its supplementary zine "Cursed Scroll #3 - Midnight Sun", both by The Arcane Library. In the notes here, "SD", sometimes with page numbers, refers to elements in the main Shadowdark rules, where items have been reused, suggested by, or adapted from them. In SD terms, the Village is Neutral, is composed of an artisan and a low district, with a standard shop and tavern (the Inn).

Much of the ground hereabouts is snow- and ice-covered year-round, and the surrounding tundra is generally permafrozen as well. The settlement though is in the southwestern fringes of the Redwoods forest that extends a couple of miles or so to the northeast, a woodland of giant redwoods that helps ameliorate the climate nearby, allowing some agriculture. Roads and pathways at the Village are clearly marked, with stone-lined edges, and a gravelly or cinder coating. Much of the stone involved is a bluish-grey granite, found locally. These road lines become less clear further from the settlement, although a general hollowing of the more used trackways often helps indicate their overall line, even when under fresh snow cover.

Buildings here are mostly single-storey, again made of the local blue-grey granite, and are of relatively small scale, as the inhabitants are primarily hardy Ice Dwarfs, a stocky Dwarfen folk with rosy cheeks, sparkling blue eyes, and often especially long, bushy beards. Possibly thanks to the magical presence of the Ice Kraken Ley Line, or more likely the long-term effects of living beneath the midline of Nibirum's Polar Auroral Circle, which often enhances magics below it on the surface, all seem to be immune to the cold, and they can change shape at will into that of a small animal and back. In addition, they all have at least one or two Alpine Mastiff hounds as their constant, loyal companions. These dogs too seem to thrive in the cold of the region. (SD: The Ice Dwarfs draw on aspects of the Dverg in Cursed Scroll #3, p. 45. **Ice Dwarf.** *A stocky, hardy, cold-loving Dwarf with rosy cheeks, sparkling blue eyes and impressive bushy beards.* **AC** 13 (mail), **HP** 15, **ATK** 1 greataxe +2 (1d10), **MV** near, **S** +2, **D** +0, **C** +2, **I** +1, **W** +1, **Ch** +0, **AL** N, **LV** 3. **Impervious.** Cold immune. **Shapeshift.** Instead of attacking, change into a small animal, or back to original form. The Alpine Mastiffs have the usual Mastiff stats (p. 232), with the addition of an identical cold-immune Impervious ability to the Ice Dwarfs.)

Labelled places needing more description are detailed below, in alphabetical order.

## Labelled Locations

**Ceremony Hall:** Essentially a modest hut, used when preparing for ceremonies atop the Great Ice Cliff of Seer's Hill. These events happen several times a year, including at midsummer, midwinter, first sunrise in spring, last sunset in autumn, and when a particularly active aurora is present at other times. The community gathers on the larger open roadway space at the northern end of Pylon Way, while the Hall contains regalia and collapsible tables used outside for food and drinks to be served after the hilltop celebrations. Visitors are welcome to share in the festivities, and local custom dictates that everyone present must contribute something to the feast.

**Ice Cliff Stairs:** A broad stairway cut into the face of the Great Ice Cliff, with an added scatter of small stones across its flatter surfaces, as on the local roadways, for a firmer footing. Blue-grey granite railings line either side, helping define and maintain the stability of the Stairs between Ice Pylon Platform on top of the Hill and the northern end of Pylon Way by Ceremony Hall at the Hill's base. Used both at times of celebration and by those looking after the hilltop Platform area between times.

**Ice Kraken Ley Line:** This is a line of magical energy that runs between Enchanted Tor a couple of miles (3 km) to the northwest, and Ice Kraken Hill, a similar distance to the southeast. It touches each of the two tall Ice Pylons on top of Seer's Hill. Its presence and effect can be increased when the aurora overhead is particularly active. Those without magical abilities may only rarely, if at all, perceive the Line, while those possessed of magical powers often find their use of magic enhanced by its proximity. The Line has an arcane

scent like fish and the salty tang of the sea that lifts the spirits of those that can sense it. Further ideas for using Ley Lines in RPGs can be found in various sources, although here, some concepts have been drawn and adapted from those in the Dolmenwood RPG by Necrotic Gnome.

**Ice Pylon Platform:** A deliberately cleared, smoothed and flattened area at the top of the Great Ice Cliff on Seer's Hill, reached by the Ice Cliff Stairs from the northern end of Pylon Way. A pair of cleverly-formed pylons of ice have been sculpted from its surface, each a four-sided obelisk in form, with their faces aligned to the cardinal directions, and a pyramidal top. Both Pylons are around 50 ft tall (15 m), about the same height as the Ice Cliff. A continuous low mound of cleared snow and ice surrounds and defines the Platform, right up to the Cliff's edge. This is where the various celebrations are held each year, as noted under the Ceremony Hall notes. Usually unoccupied and windswept at other times, except during its periods of regular maintenance.

**Seer's Hall West (A) & East (B) Entrances:** Two arched openings, each about 15 ft high (4.5 m) at their centre, have been carefully cut into the face of the Great Ice Cliff, providing access to the Hall of the Seer complex within the ice hill, which is detailed by a separate Atlas map. Each is regularly maintained and kept open. A narrow roadway leads from the Village to both Entrances. Those with lesser or more general questions for the Seer are advised by the villagers to use the West Entrance, along Seeker's Way, while those with more difficult requirements, including questions of greater significance, are guided to the East Entrance, off Pylon Way, instead. The Entrances are always watched and guarded from a short way inside the complex.

**Seer's Hill:** As noted already, this is simply an especially large and impressive ice hill, one of many that dot the tundra for miles around. Its southern end, shown on this map, is a steep cliff, beyond which its upper surface continues rising north of Ice Pylon Platform and the map's north edge, to its summit around 50 ft (15 m) north of the map's top border, with a height of roughly 200 ft (60 m) above the level tundra. The northern end of the Hill is approximately 700 ft north of this map's top edge (215 m), giving it a loosely north-south elongated oval shape, with a more flattened southern end, as seen from above. Its actual size and height vary during the year, depending on recent snowfall or snowmelt, or what the wind may have scoured away. The central ice core (which these values more or less represent) remains reasonably constant, however.

**The Singing Candle Inn:** Largest of the Village properties, and one of the few with an upper storey, this Inn offers cheer, warmth and comfort to locals and friendly visitors alike. It has rooms to rent for those from out of town, stables off its gated yard, and ready access to Seeker's Way for those needing advice from the Seer. Rare food and drink is available, together with more modest fare, and the place has a pleasant atmosphere about it ordinarily. Run by Brenna Westergard, a hearty, back-slapping, former adventurer, with a prominently large nose.

**Sunrise Sundries:** The settlement's primary shop, at the east end of the Village, from where a surprising range of goods is available, including foodstuffs, especially of the preserved sort, along with mundane household items, such as hard-wearing clothing, travel gear, tools, and many smaller items. Run by the extensive Westberg family, whose current patriarch Audun is short, even by Dwarf standards, although his beard is larger than he is tall. He is forever jotting notes into a book he always keeps on his person. He seems amazingly capable of sourcing even quite obscure or exotic small items in a matter of days sometimes.

**Watch House:** Home to the local road patrollers, who also keep order in the Village, should that be required. As most resident families are involved in running and maintaining the Hall of the Seer, there are few here who are not at least slightly involved in helping out with the Watch too, something the harsh climate and difficult living conditions this deep in the Antarctic Circle further promotes. It is also a useful place for first-time visitors to glean information about the Village and the Hall. The Watch's leader, and nominal Mayor of the Village, is Haldor Sigmond, known more colloquially hereabouts as "Iron Bones" from his physique and fighting prowess.