

# The origins of the high hearthkeeper

The office of High Hearthkeeper did not exist prior to the Shakeoff. Once Neoshamanism and Atavism emerged, it became necessary to create a tangible sign of unity within the Bright Way that could be used to precisely define what a Wayfarer is. The office is likely more than just a figurehead or "prima inter pares" but I haven't cemented what exactly she does.

I said before that the High Hearthkeeper is chosen by lot from a pool of qualified hearthkeepers. Membership in this pool is not optional provided you meet the requirements. These include adherence to Claravian orthodoxy, being of sound mind, having been ordained for a certain amount of time to ensure a minimum level of experience while not being too old. Power is sought by the power hungry, and these measures are taken so that the position is imposed rather than sought out.

Originally, the hearthkeeper to be elevated would have to reject the position three times to demonstrate her humility, but this was eventually dropped in favor of post-selection screening. If the original selectee was deemed unfit, another lottery would be held, repeat until a new High Hearthkeeper is crowned.

During the Age of Decadence the rules of who was included in the pool of candidates were tweaked to all but guarantee the corporate status quo would continue.

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