

PROJECT AON

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

This is a brief coverage of the activities of the collaborative volunteer group “The Aon Project” during the calendar year 2008.

Project Aon originally came into being towards the end of 1999. The first full calendar year of activity was from January 1 2000 – December 31 2000. Therefore, the 2008 calendar year was the ninth full year of activity for “The Aon Project”.

During the year, Book 18: *Dawn of the Dragons* was finally released, to much fanfare. In harmony with the wishes of its originator—Joe Dever—“The Aon Project” revised and re-released Books 6 and 7 of the *Lone Wolf* series, namely *The Kingdoms of Terror* and *Castle Death*. Each of these books contained numerous fixes over the previous editions—as a rough estimate, an average of about 50 fixes per book. We also released Book 1 of Joe Dever’s *Freeway Warrior* series called *Highway Holocaust*. This was our first release using UTF-8 encoding for the character set, which we intend to be standard for all future releases and re-releases.

At the request of *Le Grimoire*, publishers of the French edition of the *Lone Wolf RPG*, much time was spent scanning some of Brian Williams’ artwork in for inclusion in their next *Lone Wolf* release.

Work also progressed in a number of other areas, and these will be discussed in turn.

PDF

The *Joe Dever Tabletop Heroes* was released in April and was revised in June. This file brings together articles by Joe Dever originally published in *White Dwarf* between 1984 and 1986. Although not directly related to the *Lone Wolf* series, these articles cover one of Joe Dever’s main interests—metal miniatures—and as such, represent a large body of work, both reviews and helpful materials regarding miniature painting and macro photography.

Other than *Joe Dever’s Tabletop Heroes*, this year saw much less PDF work than previous years, with little in the way of new materials coming to light. The “LW_Software” file,

containing details and articles pertaining to the first three *Lone Wolf* computer games, was revised with some new material, including a scan of an official advertising flyer for the game from publishers *Audiogenic Software*.

SCANNING

We started the year with only Book 25: *Trail of the Wolf* requiring scanning and OCR. This was performed in fairly short order, and brings to an end the text acquisition stage of “The Aon Project”.

PROOFREADING

With all of the text acquired, volunteers began the mammoth task of proofreading Books 21–28. With some tremendous effort, this was finally completed to a high standard by June 2008. This is a testament to the volunteer spirit of fans of Joe Dever’s *Lone Wolf* series, and we would like to thank each and every volunteer who donated some of their time to proofreading this text.

With the proofreading for Books 21–28 completed, that brings to a satisfactory conclusion the Proofreading stage of “The Aon Project”.

XML

The task of converting the raw proofread text to standard XML-based source files fell to the Project Coordinator. Despite “real life” commitments and a hectic schedule, this was completed successfully, bringing to an end the “XMLise” stage of the project.

All 36 books that “The Aon Project” currently has the rights to release have now been fully scanned, proofread, and converted to XML. While this work has taken place very much “behind-the-scenes”, it has taken a tremendous amount of work and bodes well for future releases.

EDITING

The wiki **Errata** pages have continued to be a boon to the project, quickly and concisely displaying what issues have been reported and which are still outstanding. These pages helped

track the work of updating the existing books, as well as the 8 *Lone Wolf New Order* books.

The *Lone Wolf New Order* books have undergone a major overhaul, with thousands of issues fixed for accuracy, clarity, and consistency. The remaining issues have been “escalated” to the Project Coordinator.

RE-RELEASE SCHEDULE

A proposal for a more structured re-release schedule was proposed and generally accepted in October. In essence, this schedule aims to fully revise each book once per year to fix all reported issues. This should mean that it takes no longer than 12 months between a bug being reported to us and it being fixed in the online edition. We hope this will encourage fans to contribute any errors they spot in the books. It should also demonstrate “The Aon Project’s” commitment to releasing the books to the highest standard of quality.

We are uncertain whether this schedule will come into play this year (2009) or whether it will be postponed until January 2010. Irrespective of when the schedule begins, we will endeavour to fix reports of issues in books that have already been published in short order to prevent the lists of Errata getting out of control.

We currently have Books 1–8 standing at 0 outstanding issues, and we will be taking decisive action to reduce other books’ lists similarly. Now we can effectively work on all books at once, we are better placed to fix errors and inconsistencies faster and more efficiently.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Project Coordinator Jon Blake is busy scanning in all of Brian Williams’ artwork for the remaining *Lone Wolf* books. This will help reduce lead times when we actually come to seriously work on the books for release.

We have also begun to move from using GIF images to the better compression of PNG. The

same image can be considerably smaller and more efficient when compressed using PNG algorithms. As a brief example, the file 01fftd.zip is approximately 150kb smaller when using PNG images rather than GIF images. As we re-release the older books, we will be replacing the GIF files with PNG files, which should be a benefit to those with limited bandwidth.

SOFTWARE

During 2008, several individuals have come forward to offer their coding services to create software designed to play the *Lone Wolf* books as published by “The Aon Project”, with automatic bookkeeping. Chief among these is *Seventh Sense*, which currently covers Books 1–3, and *Lone Wolf DS* for the Nintendo DS.

PROJECTS FOR 2009

We are hoping for the following projects to be completed during 2009:

- Revise as many of Books 1–17, and *Grey Star* Books 1–4, as we are able.
- Publication of Book 19: *Wolf’s Bane* as soon as possible.
- Foreign Language Translations. With Joe Dever’s permission, we will continue to help fans translate the Project Aon editions into foreign languages. Joe Dever has recently given the go-ahead for a Russian translation of “The Aon Project”.
- Source images of the *Alternative Armies* and *Matchlock Miniatures* 25mm miniatures ranges. If anyone can help us with this, please **contact** “The Aon Project”.
- Contact **Trevor Newton**, illustrator of *Voyage of the Moonstone*.
- Source a copy of the second *Lone Wolf* Audiobook: *The Dark Door Opens*.

Both as a group and as individuals, “The Aon Project” look forward to 2009. Completing *three* whole levels of work—Scanning, Proofreading, and XMLisation—is a real milestone in the history of the project. We hope to use this as a springboard to continue to work on new releases, as well as high quality re-releases, throughout the coming 12 months. We encourage all *Lone Wolf* fans to join us in volunteering.

For Sommerlund and the Kai!

THE AON PROJECT TEAM
JANUARY 1st 2009