

# Send three and fourpence

We are honoured to have **Chapter Master Conradicus von Kinchslayer** report on the joys of Oldhammer revival.

I am mainly grateful to Rick Priestley at dinner parties. This may seem like an odd thing to say, but I always feel a pang of gratitude towards him when the subject of hobbies comes up. "So what do you do for fun?" comes the question. Mrs. Kinch's eyes are usually rolling skywards at this stage. I usually answer, "I play games with toy soldiers". "Like *Warhammer 40K*?" "Exactly like that."

And that's usually an end of it, which is reason alone for sending a silent prayer of thanks heavenwards for the continued good health and welfare of one Master Richard Alphonsus Escobar Cordwainer Hummingbird Priestley – may he prosper for evermore.

Like it or not, *Warhammer* has permeated the public consciousness in a way that no other wargame has before or since. Folk see the high street shops, the ruined-cathedral-on-a-golf-course-terrain and the very beautiful figures and they have some notion of what wargaming is about and for that I am very grateful. But there is a constituency that like *Warhammer*, but don't care for the direction for it has taken in the last twenty years. These are a strange secretive body of men, identifiable only by their magnificent beards, collections of early eighties metal T-shirts and their carefully curated collections of old Citadel figures.

They are the *Oldhammer*-ers.

*Oldhammer* is an interesting subset of *Warhammer* wargamers and one that appears to be growing. For the most part, they are chaps who took an interest in the hobby in the 'eighties and then either lost interest because of work and family or were put off by the increased codification of *Warhammer Fantasy Battle* and *Rogue Trader* that took place in the early to mid 1990s. The result has been a lively and increasingly interesting wargaming subculture, that describes itself as "The *Oldhammer* Movement."

What exactly *Oldhammer* is has been a matter of some debate, ironically leading to several attempts to classify what exactly is and is not *Oldhammer*. There are some broad rules of thumb. These, curiously enough, seem to have quite a

bit in common with the Old School Wargaming movement that was all the rage some years ago.

All *Oldhammer*ers are drawn to the older styles of Citadel figures, particularly the sculpts of Jes Godwin, Bob Olley and the early Perrys. This actually appears to be the main qualification for *Oldhammer*ers, a deep and abiding affection for the sculpting style in vogue in the 1980s.

Secondly, *Oldhammer*ers seem to prefer a looser sort of game, more a kind of roleplaying with miniatures than the average wargamer. The old Games Workshop scenario packs like *McDeath* or *The Magnificent Sven* are fondly remembered and enthusiastically imitated. A GM or Umpire is virtually a requirement for an *Oldhammer* game, not only to adjudicate what can often be somewhat woolly rules, but also to come up with the scenario and adapt it to the often eclectic armies fielded by *Oldhammer*ers. (Amazons versus Pygmies? Orcs versus Halfling Circus clowns? Not a problem.)

And those things, so far as I can tell, are about the only characteristics the *Oldhammer* lads have in common. Most of them have settled on *Warhammer Fantasy Battle* 3rd Edition and *Warhammer 40,000 Rogue Trader* as their rules of choice, but even that isn't a given. What they do share is a boundless enthusiasm for the hobby, old miniatures and a refreshingly free-wheeling and anarchic approach to things. I have never encountered a more diverse group of wargamers.

But don't take my word for it, see what they have to say for themselves. This is a collection, eclectic and almost certainly unrepresentative, of the *Oldhammer* blogs that I've found intriguing over the last few months.

• [forum.oldhammer.org.uk](http://forum.oldhammer.org.uk)

This is the one stop shop for all things *Oldhammer*. A lively and active community. There is apparently a Facebook page for those as hold with that sort of thing, but this is generally the best place to go for your fix of old lead.

• [leadplague.blogspot.ie](http://leadplague.blogspot.ie)

A painting blog written by the ever inventive Jean Baptiste. Definitely check out his beautifully sculpted Chicken Knight. A man who manages to combine *Highlander* and *Warhammer 40K* is alright in my book.

• [talesfromthemaelfstrom.blogspot.com](http://talesfromthemaelfstrom.blogspot.com)

A blog featuring a lot of beautifully painted figures and managed by a conglomerate of *40K* gamers whose interests include the latest plastic kits to getting that 'just right' paint job on some old Citadel lead.

• [sho3box.wordpress.com](http://sho3box.wordpress.com)

As I get older, I have realised that I hate talented people. Cheetor (by name, though not I hope by nature) regularly turns out absolutely beautiful figures and game boards, using a wide variety of figures from different manufacturers and not just old Citadel lead. It should also be noted that while Cheetor uses the background from *Rogue Trader 40,000*, most of his games seem to use *Pulp Alley* rules, proving that one does not necessarily have to be *Oldhammer* to play *Oldhammer*.

• [olleysarmies.co.uk](http://olleysarmies.co.uk)

Bob Olley is a firm favourite amongst *Oldhammer* aficionados and still sculpting away.

• [tabletopheroesandvillains.blogspot.ie](http://tabletopheroesandvillains.blogspot.ie)

Just John is a man who divides his time between evangelising for *Oldhammer* at games conventions and building beautiful terrain, sometimes with internal lighting. Lovely stuff.

• [wargamesfoundry.com](http://wargamesfoundry.com)

The lads at Foundry have been firm supporters of the *Oldhammer* movement since it began, not only hosting "Bring out your Lead" (the *Oldhammer* get-together) at their premises, but also re-releasing some old Citadel sculpts for those whose wallets cannot quite stand the pressures of eBay.

• [realmofzhu.blogspot.ie](http://realmofzhu.blogspot.ie)

More fantasy focused than most of the other blogs on this list. Mr. Zhu spends his time writing about British industrial relations of the early 1980s as depicted in *Warhammer Fantasy Battle* scenario packs as well as the 2nd edition Amazon army list, feminism and Diana Rigg. Normally that sort of stuff I would run a mile from – it is a credit to Mr. Zhu that he manages to make this material interesting. Recommended.

• [oldschoolworkshop.blogspot.ie](http://oldschoolworkshop.blogspot.ie)

Written by Suber the Spaniard. What always bowls me over about this blog is the fizzing enthusiasm for the hobby that boils out of every entry. *Warhammer 40,000 Rogue Trader*, *Heroquest*, sculpting, painting – the author's *joie de vivre* sort of carries you along, just the thing to get one through basing another 20 Napoleonic skirmishers.

And if, after reading this little lot – you don't find yourself thinking idle thoughts of what might be done with those few 'beaky' Space Marines that have been lurking at the back of the lead pile untouched these many long years, you're made of sterner stuff than I am.

Conrad's blog is at <http://joyandforgetfulness.blogspot.ie>