

Minutes #1267 – 15 March 2023

After the last two meetings had suffered from delayed starts due to a variety of problems it was refreshing to find that then 1267th meeting of the club was able to commence at 8.04p.m. only 4 minutes late.

Pickwick seemed to recall that at the vote of thanks at the last meeting he had been criticised for being too lenient when levying fines and immediately stamped his authority on the meeting by fining the vice chairman for referring to Jingle as John.

To delay payment of the fine and probably in the hope that it would be forgotten the vice chairman then complained that he couldn't see through his glasses so he discarded them and spent the rest of the evening peering myopically at the agenda with little awareness of what was going on! There was to be no remittance of the fine but sadly from Dodson's point of view Pickwick's good intentions regarding an increase in fines petered out.

Pickwick then announced that he could hear the meal bubbling and asked that somebody turn the cooker down only to be told that the noise he could hear was the Moorside Club's glass washer in use and that the meal was simmering nicely.

Dodson complained about frequent suggestions that the Raffle was bent and suggested that everything was perfectly legal, although he admitted that occasionally the wrong numbers may have been called.

A rule 8 intermission was then called and newer members were then told about Angelo Sirus Bantam, an existing member who lived some distance away from Salford and whose attendance was irregular, generally being limited to the Christmas Dinner. Angelo, who is an excellent after dinner speaker, had been a senior Police Officer prior to retirement and had written a couple of books about some of his service experiences. Most of the older members had read his books which were recommended to the other members. Mivins said his favourite was an investigation into a fatal fire on the Manchester Ship Canal in 1970 which resulted from poor supervision whilst a tanker was being loaded at Carrington. Dodson said his favourite was an investigation carried out privately by Angelo which was able to prove what the American's had identified as an accidental death was, in fact, a double murder.

Members then discussed the possibility of a summer canal boat trip instead of the usual outing and a number of possible dates were identified with Pickwick and Ben Allen to make enquiries.

Dodson's earlier intervention to suggest that the Raffle was above board was called into question when it was found that on this occasion there was a spare ticket left over after the raffle had taken place and Dodson couldn't explain where it had come from but suggested it might have been placed there with malicious intent by an unscrupulous member.

After an excellent meal, the POR&I was read by Mr Pott with the result that everybody was fined for failing to answer their question correctly. One effect of this was that the fines officer announced that the vice chairman was now 35p in debt due to having no change — an offer to leave an IOU was rejected.

It was suggested and agreed that in future members would be allowed to bring guests to the AGM. The earlier rule excluding guests was established in the days when the club had many members and there was insufficient room should they all decide to bring a guest — some of the members reminiscing about the Christmas Dinners or Summer outings when a coach wasn't sufficient to carry all those attending and some unlucky members had to use their own vehicles to convey the surplus!

Mr Pott was invited to propose the vote of thanks to the chairman and his vice chairman and admitted that it was a long time since he had been called upon to perform such an onerous task. He thanked members for their good wishes and gifts during the dark time he and Mrs Potts had suffered over a long period and had expected that things would have improved during his absence. Unfortunately that wasn't to be and it was a long time since he had experienced such an absolute shambles. Pickwick had let the membership down by his utter failure to control the meeting although the non-existent support from the vice chairman who was heading for a spell in the Fleet Prison for debt didn't help. Seconding the vote of thanks, Roker said the highlight of the evening was the meal, closely followed by the POR&I both of which were presented by Pott, but on the whole the meeting had been splendid and he felt sure that the vice chairman would pay his debts at the next meeting.

Once again, the rendering of Good Neet Owd Friends was as bad as ever and was followed by an equally unmusical rendition of the National Anthem which must have had King Charles III wondering whether abdication might be a good idea. The Raffle raised £4.50 whilst the fines box contained £8.65.