

Minutes of the 1269th and 1270th Meetings of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 18th October and 15th November, 2023

Because of a number of absences these two meetings were very small, so much so that Dodson decided he could afford to authorise a free evening in October; unfortunately, the Minute Writer was one of the absentees at the October meeting and the free evening was not extended to the November meeting.

Turning first of all to the October meeting, Mivins, Roker, Slammer, Stiggins and Trotter were unavoidably absent so the meeting was reduced to 6 members and there was no point in trying to follow the usual agenda. Instead, members simply invoked rule 8 and reminisced about past meetings and members. One exception was a communication from Sam Weller who had been handed a CD about Pickwick stories together with notes about the various characters in the book.

The November meeting commenced with Jingle reporting that Mrs Pott had again been taken ill so Mr Pott couldn't attend. Members decided to send their best wishes for a speedy recovery and that Mrs Pott should receive flowers from the club. Jingle agreed to make the necessary arrangements.

We then introduced a new member, Fred Brookes, who was given the name Captain Boldwig, and after all members had described their characters for his benefit, he was handed the book and presented the P.O.R & I which is generally recognised as an item to benefit the club fines box.

There followed the usual difficulties with the raffle with Dodson refuting claims of unfairness or cheating but everybody eventually received a prize, most of which would reappear at the next meeting — some of these raffle prizes must have been circulating for years.

The recurrence of Mrs Potts illness meant that Mr Pott had been unable to prepare the usual meal but at short notice, Jingle had prepared a wide selection of sandwiches so members could avoid malnutrition.

The meeting continued in its normal vein with members discussing possible arrangements for a Christmas meal. It was agreed that Jingle and Ben Allen should investigate the possibilities for any arrangements, bearing in mind the lateness for such. If any arrangements could be made members would be informed by 'WhatsApp', but failing that a possible afternoon at the Moorside Club might be an alternative at a date early in the New Year.

Proposing the Vote of Thanks to Pickwick and the Vice-Chairman, Job Trotter said it had been a good evening although the absence of minutes had made things difficult.

The inability of the Vice Chairman to control the gavel at the start of the meeting had caused some confusion but he had eventually managed to get the hang of it and the sandwiches provided by Jingle had been excellent. Seconding the proposal, Tom Roker welcomed the new member and expressed the hope that he had not been too confused by the meeting. As a newcomer he had performed the P.O.R & I much better than some of the older members although he must make his voice less clear in future

lest some members could understand his reading and questions. The raffle was questionable as usual but members had come to expect this and were not surprised but that apart, the meeting had been very pleasant.

Once again the rendering of Good Neet Owd Friends was as bad as ever but the rendition of the National anthem was excellent, which showed that practising, whilst not being perfect had certainly led to improvement.

The raffle raised £3.50 whilst the fines box contained £6.95.