

Minutes of the 1272nd Meeting of the Manchester
Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on
21st February, 2024

Bearing in mind the number of members who were not in a fit state to attend, the 1272nd meeting of the club was reasonably attended when Pickwick announced the opening of the meeting only 2 minutes late. That was the high point of the meeting and from then on it was all downhill.

There were no guests on this occasion but Pickwick decided that each member present should describe his own character for the benefit of the new members. This went reasonably well and proved that most members had a smattering of knowledge of their character, although it was suspected a number of crib sheets were surreptitiously brought into use!

In view of the speedy progress through the agenda Pickwick decided to call a Rule 8 interruption to the proceedings and Mivins reported he had recently visited the GMP museum to inspect the various forged items there. Unfortunately, he had forgotten it was half term and the museum was heaving with children of all ages complete with Mums, Dads, Aunts and Uncles so that a timed entrance was in use and there was little opportunity to study the subject in depth. Pickwick announced that in a previous existence he had served there when it was an operating police station and Dodson added that several of the items on display were the result of an arrest he carried out.

The reading of the minutes followed and in matters arising Dodson advised members that some miscreant had deliberately put a Canadian 25 cent coin in the Fines Box instead of a 10p coin. He noted that although this coin was the same shape and almost the same size as a 10p sterling coin, its presence should have been noted by the temporary Fines Master, on this occasion Tom Roker standing in for Rev. Stiggins. Roker accepted that he had been Fines Master on the night in question but said the accusation was unfair because the problem had not been noted immediately after the meeting and the coin could have been introduced at any time prior to the current meeting, possibly by Dodson himself. Dodson was unhappy at this suggestion and threatened to report Roker's comments to Mrs Dodson, with whom Roker had worked prior to becoming a member of this club.

Dodson's threat obviously put the fear of God into Roker who immediately changed the subject to inform members that the club's website had recently been extended by former member Horatio Fiskin. Fiskin had undertaken this task for many years and it was suggested by a number of the older club members who had been around in Fiskin's time that efforts should be made to try and persuade him to return, Dodson pointing out that one of Fiskin's other interests, like some of the current members, was motor cycling.

Following the break for refreshments, as usual, anything left was passed to other members of the social club, one of whom claimed that the food was always excellent, "better than a restaurant", so the usual gratitude of the members for the "chefs" has been confirmed by outsiders!

At this point Pickwick decided to propose the 9.00 toast, it being 9.45; this might have confused some of the newer members until they realised that the 9.00 was Pickwick and not Greenwich time.

The P.O.R & I was adequately performed by Fogg in the absence of Dr Slammer but he must learn that when performing this task emphasis must be spent losing one's place, coughing, complaining about the lighting and wearing the wrong glasses, all of which help to confuse the members answering the questions and thus feed the Fines Box.

The raffle, or Dodson's fiddle as it is known in the club then took place and Fogg was invited to select the first ticket and guess who's ticket he chose! Dodson then chose the next ticket and, surprise, surprise, he chose Fogg's. Members have long known Dodson to be a bent solicitor and it seems his character is rubbing off on his work colleague. Watch this space!

Mivins reported that he had been in regular communication with Mrs Stiggins Junior concerning Rev Stiggins and had been advised that a stair lift was being installed at Rev Stiggins house and that on completion, consideration would be given to his return home with assistance from several carers.

Members were becoming fed up with the Dodson and Fogg mutual admiration group so Captain Boldwig was asked to perform the Vote of Thanks to Mr Pickwick and the Vice-Chairman and being a new member and thus unwilling to cause an upheaval said what pleasure he had been chosen to propose this toast after such an excellent meeting. Seconding the motion Roker, still smouldering from the Canadian coin incident, claimed the meeting had been dreadful and that he had received little support from Pickwick when being criticised by Dodson.

The rendering of Good Neet Owd Friends was as bad as ever but the National anthem was more musical which suggested the members had been practising!

The Raffle raised £3.50 and a contribution was made to the Fines box by a member who had forgotten his raffle prize, whilst the fines box contained £7.05.