

Minutes of the 1089<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club  
held at the Black Horse Hotel on 17th October, 1991

The 1089<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club commenced at 8.15 p.m. with what is now becoming part of the Club ceremonial – the monthly search for agendas. Perhaps we could have a new set printed with a new item 1 "Pickwick and Secretary discuss which agenda to use for meeting". Agenda item 2 could require members to guess which agenda had been selected with fines being levied against those who guess incorrectly.

Having opened the meeting, Pickwick called for volunteers but then couldn't remember what the volunteers were for. He was reminded by Jinks that they were to be P.O.C's and Boldwig and Roker were duly appointed. The meanness of Winkle was acknowledged by his appointment as Fines Officer, and his first duty was to fine Grummer for smoking. Grummer pointed out that he wasn't smoking but Pickwick said he was when the meeting commenced and levied a further fine because Grummer's guest was also smoking and should have been advised by Grummer that he was committing an offence.

Tadger rose to propose the toast to Mr Pickwick and was promptly criticised for proceeding without Pickwick's permission. Pickwick claimed that only Tadger had noticed the imperceptible nod with which Pickwick had indicated that he should proceed with that item and fined Pell for failing to notice that nod. Winkle was told that he had only escaped a fine for supporting Pell because he was Fines Officer.

Grummer was then asked by Winkle why he had missed the last meeting and replied that he had been overseas at the time but had carried out the 9.00 toast with Mivins in mid-channel. Tupman said he had done likewise in the North Sea. Jinks said Grummer had evaded the question which didn't ask where he was, but why he wasn't at the meeting.

Before Grummer could reply, the meeting was interrupted by the return of the P.O.C's who, after reporting a lack of brown ale and inducing several members to change their orders, produced several brown ales and thus caused utter confusion about who had ordered what.

As Grummer was about to commence the introduction of members to guests, Mivins asked whether something nice could be said about Dodson who had taken the minutes at the last meeting. Members disagreed and said that the person's true character had to be given, but they acknowledged that Dodson was absent from the meeting and felt that his absence was something good which could be said about him.

The introduction of members to guests was excellent but was marred by constant interruptions by Pell who was selling raffle tickets whilst the introduction was in progress. Members felt that the fine imposed by Pickwick for this

offence was insufficient, so in addition Pell paid for the raffle ticket issued to Grummer.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read by Mivins who paid tribute to Dodson for preparing them. Members expressed their appreciation of Dodson's efforts and asked that the minutes excuse the unnecessary self-praise included by Dodson on the grounds that he was only an amateur minute writer and bound to make some errors of judgement.

The meal was taken at this point, after which Tadger gavelled and instructed Pickwick to reconvene the meeting; Pickwick was too surprised by this demand to levy the fine it merited.

Pell reported that Peter Magnus was ill and requested that a bottle be provided to aid recovery; Jingle said Magnus wasn't ill, it was Nupkins to whom the bottle should be sent!

Tadger said he didn't receive a bottle when he was in hospital last year, whilst Stiggins reported that he was shortly due to go into hospital for tests and that members should be advised of his ability to drink anything.

Winkle, who had insisted before the meal that a vote be taken on the veracity of Dodson's minutes, reminded members that the vote hadn't been taken but added that the minutes were so long-winded that he had forgotten what they said and didn't feel that a new reading was warranted. He then produced a set of minutes from the meeting held on 12th November, 1940 which were read by the minute writer, There was some discussion about which "Nags Head" the meeting was held at, which eventually agreed on the one in Jacksons Row being the most likely.

After the usual excellent P.O.R & I by Bob Sawyer, Stiggins was fined for prompting whilst Jingle claimed he knew the answer to his question but was put off by Winkle hovering with the fines box.

Pell gave details of the Christmas Dinner arrangements and costs, requesting members to have their firm bookings by the next meeting.

The meeting somehow started discussing group photographs or the lack thereof and Tadger agreed to bring along his camera and video so the membership could be recorded for posterity.

The 9.00 toast was finally taken at 10.15 p.m., the main reason for the delay being the lack of liquids with which to carry out the toast, a failure for which the P.O.C's were suitably chastised.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Stiggins who said it was the first time he had performed that task and that he found it impossible to levy any criticism against Pickwick who was doing a far better job than anybody thought him capable of.

Seconding the vote of thanks, Winkle agreed this was a time to try and find something nice to say about Pickwick and his vice chairman – unfortunately Pickwick's performance had been way below par despite a certain amount of promise at his last meeting. However, both Pickwick and his vice chairman had done their best and in view of the chaos which was likely next year when Tadger occupies the chair, he thought the evening had been as pleasant as could be reasonably expected.

Pell then interrupted to say he had just remembered that on a recent visit to Torquay he had found a menu prepared by Charles Dickens which he had tried to photograph, unfortunately without success. Grummer claimed that this merely followed the pattern of Pickwickian photographic achievement.

"Good Neet Owd Friends" was led by Pell and Tupman and was followed by the National Anthem.

The fines box contained £4.12 whilst the raffle raised £3.00