

Minutes of the 1093<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club  
held at the Black Horse Hotel on 19th March, 1992

At the scheduled time for commencement of the 1093<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club, there were so few members present that Pickwick deemed it necessary to delay the start until 8.10 p.m. Unfortunately, most members being fully aware that meetings rarely start on time, when the Toast to Mr Pickwick was called that also had to be delayed in order that the sextet present could be augmented by the P.O.C's who were seeking liquid refreshment for the members.

That task having been completed to the satisfaction of Mr Pickwick, members were next asked to introduce their visitors, and there followed a litany of excuses for the complete absence of guests which covered such things as Domino tournaments and a rambling discourse from Dodson about the Spanish Inquisition which was rewarded by a well-deserved fine.

Sam Weller and Tracy Tupman who arrived late were exonerated by Pickwick who claimed that advance notice of their late arrival had been communicated to him. This led to accusations of favouritism from Tadger and Dodson, and a speech from Tupman about the shortcomings of police service with asides from Weller about working for the Queen.

In response to Weller's claim, Jinks said that Weller had never worked in his life and Jingle, who for some reason believed he had been called upon to adjudicate in the matter pleaded the 6th Commandment, later explaining that he meant the 5th Amendment. To try and resolve the matter, Grummer suggested a vote by members, but this was rejected by Pickwick. Dodson asked Pickwick to refer to rule 5 which states that latecomers will be fined, but Pickwick, in turn, quoted rule 11 – the chairman's rule is final.

Having resolved the matter to his own satisfaction, Pickwick then asked why the latecomers had no guests with them. Tupman claimed that he had invited 6 guests; unfortunately, his eldest brother had got to play bowls, his younger brother had gone to Spain, the youngest brother was in Fleetwood, and even the brothers-in-law had other activities which prevented their attendance. Pickwick accepted this explanation despite suggestions from Dodson that he was being "conned" and went on to accept Weller's bald statement that his guest was going to come but hadn't.

Members seemed to think that confession time had arrived and a series of further explanations for non-attendance of guests, some more plausible than others, enlivened the meeting for some minutes. Amongst the more acceptable was Roker's comment that after 36 years of marriage his wife had driven away all his friends.

The fact that members were paying full attention to the proceedings was evidenced by Jinks deciding to set the table in anticipation of the meal and Mivins suddenly remembering that the contents of the fines box from the last meeting (which he had been asked to hand to the treasurer) were still in a paper bag on his sideboard at home.

After the minutes of the last meeting had been read, Dodson claimed that the references to his success at the gaming tables (or at least the slot machines) were incorrect because the second win was £84, not the £85 recorded in the minutes.

Dodson then volunteered to read the P.O.R & I to the dismay of other members who were vociferous in their objections. Weller claimed that there was more chance of seeing a giraffe walking down the Crescent playing a banjo than answering Dodson's inquisition. A delay followed these objections whilst Dodson attempted to find a favourable passage about himself – Bob Sawyer claimed he was wasting his time because that page had been torn out.

After Pell had given details about the summer outing and the possibility of organising a dance in autumn, Dodson said that he had brought back from Spain his usual gift designed to bring a positive glow to Mrs Jingle. Unfortunately, the box had been damaged in transit but the contents should be satisfactory. He was experimenting with a new variety called PoPo this time but expected the response would be the same. Accepting the gift on behalf of himself and Mrs Jingle, Jingle promised to report to the next meeting about the efficacy of the new variety.

As expected, the P.O.R & I resulted in fines for everybody except Tupman who was accused of listening, and there were suggestions that Dodson had deliberately read the passage in Spanish in order to boost the fines box.

After the 9.00 p.m. toast had been taken at 10.40 p.m., the raffle resulted in a win for Jingle which turned out to be a packet of clothes pegs. It was suggested that these were a cheap form of contraceptive in case the new variety brought by Dodson proved to be too powerful.

In proposing the vote of thanks to Pickwick, Dodson said he hadn't wanted to propose this toast because although the vice chairman had tried to keep the meeting going, all Pickwick had done was ignore the wishes of members. He looked forward to the A.G.M. when we could appoint a more effective Chairman than the present incumbent who had tried to run the club for 12 months without succeeding once. This led to an altercation between Pickwick and Dodson which resulted in Dodson being fined but refusing to pay.

The vote of thanks was seconded by Weller who suggested that Dodson had been in a more cranky mood than usual because he had missed his lunch, and that in his own mean, underhanded manner he was trying to congratulate Pickwick for doing a

good job during his year of office. He hoped the next Mr Pickwick would reach the same high standard.

"Good neet owd Friends" was led by Dodson and Weller and followed by the National Anthem.

The fines box contained £6.40 and the raffle raised £2.40.