

Minutes of the 1262nd meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 16th March, 2022

The 1262nd meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club was unusual in a number of respects; firstly, the regular minute writer was unavoidably absent and the notes for the meeting had to be taken by Tom Roker, one of the few Pickwickians able to do joined up writing, but more of that later. Secondly, it was noted that the top table inhabitants were drinking tea rather than their usual intake but no reason for that has appeared.

The meeting started exactly on time at 8.00p.m. with the toast to Mr Pickwick, after which it was necessary to appoint a vice chairman for the evening and the person chosen was Solomon Pell after his excellent performance at the last meeting.

For no apparent reason the subject turned to knees and the failure of them, Allen, Pell and Jingle all suffering from knee problems (although Jingle claimed he was O.K. following medical treatment in the form of an injection). Pell claimed his problem resulted from a fall off a dwarf whilst waiting for his daughter. On being questioned further revealed that the dwarf was a small wall and not what the other Pickwickians had assumed. Dodson claimed he had injured his knee whilst washing his car but Grummer and Mivins both know that the car is washed by Mrs Dodson with Dodson himself being a mere water carrier. It appeared that whilst carrying a bucket of water Dodson fell, did the splits, spilt the water and trapped his foot in the gate and had to be rescued by a neighbour.

In addition to falling off dwarves it was reported that Pell and Jingle were looking at the possibility of going on a Mediterranean cruise together and sharing a room but at that point Pickwick decided further explanations were not necessary and diverted attention to Dodson's discovery of a bottle of vinegar amongst the raffle prizes. Whilst Pickwickians are known for their drinking habits, it was considered that this was taking things a bit too far!

There being no guests present it was decided that members should introduce their own characters and it was surprising how well most of them did, one exception was Stiggins who had meticulously prepared a written summary of his character but had forgotten his reading glasses; Grummer's attempt to assist was rebuffed.

The minutes of the last meeting were read by Tom Roker who was also preparing the notes for the 1262nd meeting in the previously reported absence of Mivins and here it is necessary to explain that Roker sent a copy of his notes to Mivins so these minutes could be prepared. Unfortunately, in printing Roker's notes a computing problem meant that the right hand third of each page didn't print, however, in true Pickwickian fashion that didn't interfere with the production of these minutes which are, of course, a true reflection of the meeting despite suggestions to the contrary.

The meeting then discussed the future introduction of a new member by Roker and explained to Roker that it was up to him to suggest a Pickwickian name for his guest.

It was noted that there had never been any female members and there was some discussion about whether gender fluidity meant that such a possibility could or should be considered but there was no positive outcome to the discussion.

The minutes had referred to a possible late Christmas excursion to Manchester, wrongly referred to as a pub crawl and Stiggins sought exemption from this on mobility grounds; experience suggests that the knee problems referred to earlier might mean others would not be able to seriously partake in the excursion unless some form of transport could be arranged.

The buffet prepared by Jingle was excellent, as usual, and there followed confusion concerning the raffle. It appeared likely that Grummer's raffle ticket money had mistakenly been credited to the fines box which, after much auditing was opened and a refund given to Grummer who was reminded that this meant he still owed the fine box for his earlier offence. There were obviously serious failings with the raffle itself because the organiser, Dodson, came last.

Dodson was again in action to propose the vote of thanks to Pickwick and the vice-chairman and commenced by suggesting that Pickwick could have done better in the subject of fines but was being too nice and should "fine 'em all". The vote of thanks was seconded by Grummer who said although it had been a good night this did not reflect on the contributions of Pickwick and the vice-chairman, the latter being particularly poor.

Good neet owd friends was sung as badly as usual and was followed by an equally unmusical rendition of the National Anthem.

The raffle raised £3.50 whilst the fines box contained £5.50.