

Minutes of the 1191st meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 16th October, 2008

The 1191st meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club commenced at 8 p.m. precisely with Tracy Tupman occupying the vice-chairman's position in the absence of the appointed vice-chairman. Ben Allen pointed out that the President wasn't wearing a Pickwickian tie and suggested that a fine might be appropriate; he was immediately taken to task by Pickwick who advised that the President's tie was a tie from the Pickwick Cycling Club based in London which the President had exchanged for one of our club ties at a meeting in the George and Dragon. Ben Allen should have recognised that the President was a senior officer of the club and would never flout a club rule and for this reason he must pay a fine.

Sam Weller had been given a used agenda sheet which bore a number of financial calculations in Dodson's writing - he suggested that this proved that Dodson did nothing during the meetings but think about money (several members thought this was a good thing for a treasurer to do!).

Tupman referred to discussions at the last meeting about the Christmas Dinner and misgivings about the new catering arrangements at the Breightmet Golf Club. He said he had met the caterer at the golf club and agreed a menu for the dinner comprising soup, Christmas Dinner, sweet, coffee and mince pies. The caterer had agreed that there would be no repetition of the problems occurring at a recent meeting of another group and the bar, which would normally close at 11.30 p.m. would remain open until midnight at Christmas. However, he was concerned that this extension would not apply during the summer and suggested that we reconsider the Dingley Dell outing after Christmas when the standard of catering would be clearer. There was considerable discussion about possible alternative venues should the golf club prove to be unacceptable; Smangle, supported by Pickwick suggested that an increased number of outings might bring in guests who wanted to become members.

Whilst this discussion was taking place, Weller was busy composing a text message to send to Dodson and Grummer who were both in Spain and from whom he expected a text message at 9.00 p.m. for the 9.00 o'clock toast. Pickwick felt that the response to Dodson and Grummer should have waited for them to initiate the correspondence and fined Weller for failing to take part in the meeting. Weller paid the fine with an I.O.U. and it was subsequently discovered that Jingle had endorsed the I.O.U with Snodgrass's name! It is of interest to note that the anticipated call from Dodson and Grummer was received at the exact time but Pickwick ruled that this did not negate the fine even though at this time he was unaware that his name was on the I.O.U.

Weller was obviously in a whining mood and then complained to Pickwick that the tie he had purchased on the occasion of the centenary was 6 inches too short; Mivins pointed out that at the last meeting he had complained that it was 7 inches too short so it was obviously growing and would probably be of standard size by the time of the summer outing.

Magnus reported that he had received a number of communications during the past month including the minutes of the rearranged meeting in London on 8th April 2008 which this club was unable to attend; there was also a note from I.D.C. Dickens outlining special events, festivals and exhibitions to be held in 2012 and asking whether anything was happening in the Greater Manchester area. Pickwick agreed to consider this and put recommendations forward at the next meeting. Finally, he had received 2 letters from Rick Bravo in America, the second of which outlined the reversion of the U.S.A. to the British monarchy.

The P.O.R. & I. was read by Jack Hopkins and despite several members answering their questions correctly, all were fined the reason being that nobody likes a smart aleck. Jack Hopkins himself decided to make a donation to the fines box.

Tupman complained that excessive fines were being levied on members below the nick, for example, if two members were talking whilst a third member was on his feet, only that member below the nick was fined. He then suggested that the club try to attend at least one of the functions being planned for 2012. Smangle agreed but said much work would be needed to complete the necessary arrangements and it might be more appropriate to ensure that the club was represented at the 6 monthly meetings in London to ensure contact with other Pickwick Clubs.

The vote of thanks to Pickwick and the vice chairman was proposed by Weller who said that he thought Pickwick needed to suffer some pain - at the moment he seemed to suffer from delusions of grandeur and it might be advisable for him to take notice from the military in minor nations where the promotion of any soldier automatically turned that soldier into a tyrant prepared to cause his former colleagues much grief. This was the only way to increase the contents of the fines box and was justified even though it might lead to the assassination of the post holder! He thought Pickwick had done his best but had struggled and was obviously out of his depth; he had been a good vice chairman but had been promoted beyond his ability. As far as the acting vice chairman was concerned, the difficulty with which he had tried to open his raffle prize showed he wasn't up to the job.

Seconding the vote of thanks, Jingle said he thought Weller had been too kind to Pickwick and the vice chairman; There had only been 10 members present and he dreaded to think how they would have coped if 40 had turned up. Pickwick had received no help from the President and the vice chairman might just as well stayed at home. All in all, a very poor meeting.

Pickwick said the comments from Weller and Jingle were so far removed from the true state of the meeting that they didn't merit a response but the vice chairman thanked everybody for ensuring such a good meeting which reflected the excellent control exercised by Pickwick and himself.

Good neet owd friends was sung by all and was followed by the National Anthem The raffle raised £5.00 whilst the Fines Box contained £5.98.