

Minutes of the 1206th meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 16th February, 2011

Before the meeting was officially opened, Grummer asked Pickwick to instruct Snodgrass not to send any more E-mails to Dodson. The reason for this unusual request was that Grummer had recently called at Dodson's house on his way to the local chipshop and was invited in 'for a minute' to view some E-mails Dodson had received; unfortunately, Dodson's computer was not functioning very efficiently and the waiting time for the appropriate words to appear dragged on and on until eventually Grummer got to the chipshop only to find it closed!

How much of this problem was the fault of the computer and how much the responsibility of the user remains unclear; suffice it to say that the 'spellcheck' on Dodson's computer is in French and when Dodson tried to tune in Mivins' new television some months ago it finished up speaking Turkish rather than English. Perhaps there is an opportunity for the club to appoint Dodson as our Foreign Correspondent as well as Treasurer.

The meeting officially opened at 8.02 with acting as vice-chairman in the absence through sickness of Rev. Stiggins; Dodson, as usual, was collecting cash and ignored Grummer's complaint (although it must have had some effect because a new computer has recently been delivered to the Dodson household - the nationality of the spellcheck isn't known yet).

Smangle told members he had recently played a round of golf with an acquaintance whose trade was unknown and Smangle had tried to wind him up by claiming to be involved in various 'bent' activities. It was only later that his opponent admitted to being a serving police officer so Smangle pretended he already knew that and wouldn't have tried to wind him up had he not known.

The story was then told of the mechanic who was discussing the similarity of employment between himself and a cardiologist; he suggested that both were concerned with repairing something which was broken and, therefore, should be considered as equals. The cardiologist thought about this for some time but then asked whether the mechanic could carry out his job whilst the engine was still working.

By this time the meeting had dissolved into an orgy of storytelling rather than following the agenda and the matters were only brought back on line when Tupman was asked to introduce the members even though there were no guests present. The presentation was excellent, as usual, and by the time Tupman had finished it was time for the meal.

The first half of the meeting had been unusual in that whenever Pickwick gavelled, the response from the vice-chairman was immediate - in fact, Pickwick suggested that it sounded like an echo. However, after the meal when Pickwick gavelled to commence the second half of the meeting there was no response and an oral query from Pickwick revealed that the vice-chairman hadn't got his gavel. The vice-chairman claimed that the gavel had been stolen and suggested that Peter Magnus

who had been a policeman in a former existence should investigate the robbery. Magnus said that it was simply a case of carelessness on the part of the vice-chairman and didn't merit a full police search. Eventually the gavel was found in the possession of Winkle who was fined for theft, although Weller claimed that the gavel had obviously been abandoned and couldn't be the subject of theft; he suggested that the vice-chairman should be fined for failing to look after club property entrusted to his care.

The minutes having been read, Snodgrass asked what Dodson had against him because the minutes made it quite clear that whenever a free evening was announced, Snodgrass was absent; he wouldn't have complained had this only occurred once but it seemed that every time he left the country, Dodson announced a free evening. Dr Slammer sympathised with Snodgrass claiming that he had also missed the free drinks due to a bout of double pneumonia (which his wife claimed was a slight cold) but would have arranged to be brought to the meeting on a stretcher had he known it was a free evening. Both were told that free drinks couldn't be retrospective so Dr. Slammer got his own back by performing a P.O.R & I from Chapter XVIII about the Eatonswill election which resulted in all members being fined for failing to answer their question correctly.

The Secretary reported that he had received a communication from the Chairman of the Dickens Pickwick Club outlining their programme for 2012.

The raffle resulted in a prize of a box of 'After 8 Mints' for Smangle who toured the members sharing his good fortune.

The vote of thanks to Pickwick and the vice-chairman was performed by Nat Winkle who said he was very impressed by the meeting which had been both informative and educational. He admitted it had nothing to do with the format for the meeting and accepted that Pickwick had failed to control the meeting from the start. The meeting had been so poorly controlled that he had wanted to jump in on a number of occasions to tell Pickwick to get a grip but felt that as a junior member, that duty rested with more senior members and in particular the vice-chairman who had done nothing to support his chairman. He felt that with a lot of assistance and guidance from all members, Pickwick might succeed in becoming an efficient chairman.

Seconding the vote of thanks, Jack Hopkins agreed with everything Winkle had said but felt that the fault should be laid at the feet of the vice-chairman. Pickwick was known to be weak and inefficient and members had taken advantage of this. The vice-chairman should have supported his chairman by peaching on offenders with the aim of filling the Fines Box.

Pickwick thanked both the proposer and seconder for their kind words which he felt showed how well he had controlled the meeting without being too severe.

Good Neet Owd Friends was sung by all and followed by the National Anthem. The Fines box contained £6.40 whilst the raffle raised £7.00.