

Minutes of the 1218th meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 21st March, 2013

The 1218th meeting of the Club was opened at 8.04 p.m. with Mr Pickwick announcing, to the absolute distress of Dodson, that he was feeling lenient this evening and was unlikely to levy many fines; for this reason, when Tupman arrived late no fine was imposed and Dodson volunteered to act as P.O.C, probably to avoid the horror of seeing a fines-free evening in operation. However, this leniency didn't last long and Weller and Sawyer were immediately fined for the offence of arriving late, as was Slammer who suggested that Winkle ought to be classed as a visitor having not realised he was a member! Tupman, probably suffering from a guilty conscience, paid a fine for his late arrival saying he didn't want Pickwick to suffer for his tolerance.

Tupman then left the room claiming he was going to get a drink because Dodson was taking so long to produce the necessary refreshments to allow the appropriate toasts to be called. During his absence Dodson returned, in time to hear Pickwick announce that in the absence of any guests he had decided that there would be no introduction of members to guests or of members themselves, nor would there be a toast to guests. Dodson didn't agree with this decision, pointing out that many members didn't know their own characters and promptly proved this by referring to Stiggins as Dr. Slammer! To avoid any confrontation, Tupman agreed to introduce members very briefly and did so.

Referring to a reference in the minutes of the previous meeting concerning the transfer of wheels from a damaged vehicle, Grummer was at great pains to point out that the workshop manager wouldn't have given him the air out of the tyres so he was merely recycling them - to his advantage of course. He then spoke about a visit to Jingle who was a patient in the old Salford Royal Hospital at the time. After visiting the ward and finding Jingle absent, he was advised that Jingle was probably in the patients lounge, but that was also Jingle-free so he decided to call it a day and go for a drink to the Black Horse public house opposite, where he found Jingle wearing a top coat over his pyjamas and propping up the bar!

Various other stories were told, mainly about fishing; Mivins told about a member of his club for disabled anglers who had left his fishing pole in situ whilst he attended to a call of nature despite rules that equipment must not be left unattended. He returned just in time to see the pole disappearing into the depths. He called Mivins, the club secretary, who agreed to try and recover the pole (although pointing out that the chances were relatively nil) and went out in a rowing boat to try his luck. By sheer chance he hooked the pole at the first try and returned it to the angler who subsequently did the same thing on two other occasions and was told that in future no recovery attempts would be made.

Tupman told a similar tale about an angler who had hooked a fish only to be snapped when he tried to land it. Another angler snagged the broken trace and managed to land the fish and the broken line and Weller said he had lost his glasses and recovered them with a treble.

The Secretary reported two items of correspondence both of which left the members laughing; the

first was from a J. Astbury who is a fund raiser for St. Annes Hospice and who suggested club members should raise money for the hospice by seeking sponsors and running the Manchester 10 kilometre race - members suggested 10 metres might be more attainable. The other letter was from Smangle who wrote about life in Cornwall since he moved there.

There was some discussion about the Dingley Dell outing, mainly concerning travel arrangements and clarification of the date, then Grummer suggested the club could hire a coach for a trip to the George and Vulture next year but members decided this was probably a non-starter on cost grounds.

Peter Magnus proposed Dodson should be censured for refusing to pay a fine incurred two meetings ago following his absence from a meeting to attend a football match and this proposal was seconded by Snodgrass who claimed Dodson was pursuing a vendetta against him. In his defence Dodson claimed the fine was illegal because he had previously tendered formal apologies to the meeting and couldn't be fined in his absence. In the vote, 10 members voted in favour of censure whilst 4 voted against, so Dodson asked why hadn't Snodgrass been fined and censured for missing the last meeting, but no action was taken on this question.

For some reason the meeting had been a relatively short one and it came as a surprise when the time came for a vote of thanks to Pickwick and the vice-chairman. This was proposed by Weller who said that nobody could complain about Pickwick's performance this evening which had been excellent, in fact he felt that Pickwick should do a second 'tour of duty' because he had missed so many meetings by visiting Australia. Seconding the proposal, Grummer said both he and Weller had got new glasses recently and whilst Weller's were obviously rose tinted, his new glasses enabled him to see through Pickwick's performance which was absolute rubbish. It was quite clear that Pickwick's brain was still in Australia and he simply wasn't up to the job yet - perhaps Weller's suggestion of a second year might result in an improvement but not if this evening was anything to go by.

At this point Winkle interrupted to say he thought that the 'mob' had taken over the meeting tonight and had deliberately set out to give Pickwick a rough time. Pickwick fined him for interrupting the vote of thanks so Winkle said that was the last time he tried to give Pickwick a compliment.

For some reason the meeting didn't sing 'Good neet own Friends' but the National Anthem was sung, after which Pickwick reminded members that the AGM would be on 17th April, 2013.

The fines box contained £5.90 whilst the raffle raised £7.00.