

Minutes of the 1222nd meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 15th January, 2014

For a variety of reasons, the 1222nd meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club was very sparsely attended, only 8 members being present when the meeting was opened at 8.15 p.m. The chair was occupied by Jack Hopkins with Ben Allen in the vice-chairman's seat and Sam Weller acting as P.O.C.

There being very few members and no guests present, the minutes of the last meeting were read at an early stage of the meeting and brought criticism from some members who felt that Dodson's apology for failing to bring any Miao or calamari for Mrs Jingle on the grounds that Lowton's fall had caused almost insurmountable problems on his recent trip to Spain. Weller said that the time spent having a couple of brandies to calm him down after the shock of the accident could have been more usefully spent looking for the Miao. Weller suggested the accident was merely an excuse to avoid spending money and that a recent report that Miao was no longer readily available was to justify replacing the item with calamari which was cheaper.

The absence of the proper chairman was explained when Grummer reported that Dr. Slammer had indicated his intention to resign and had returned his tie and other Pickwickian items to Grummer. Grummer had told Dr. Slammer that he should offer his resignation in writing to the Secretary and this was confirmed by the members present.

There being no correspondence, Pickwick asked for rule 8 to be invoked with the result that Grummer told a few amusing stories about his brother-in-law who is suffering from alzheimer's disease. Grummer had been taking Maurice out on occasions and one day had gone to a shoe shop to buy a new pair of shoes. He had removed his own shoes so he could try various styles for comfort and eventually chose the pair most suitable, returning the unwanted ones to the shelves; however, when he came to put his own shoes on they were nowhere to be seen and it transpired that Maurice had put them in a shoe box and returned them to the shelves, but couldn't remember where.

On another occasion he asked Maurice whether his son had enjoyed his family holiday but was told Maurice didn't know anything about the son being on holiday. A few days later Grummer met the son and asked about the holiday and was told Maurice had actually gone on holiday with them and had thoroughly enjoyed himself.

Ben Allen said that nursing staff at Salford Royal hospital were being encouraged to attend courses about dealing with dementia patients and he had recently attended such a course, only to turn up for the wrong shift on the following day.

Due to the absence on holiday of the steward at the Moorside Club, Grummer had arranged for a buffet to be provided by a local company; this was excellent and a useful replacement for occasions when the steward is absent in future although the price was more than we usually pay.

The toast to absent members was taken with the proviso that this toast shouldn't include those members who were attending football matches!

The raffle followed; in the absence of Dodson, Mivins was tasked with the job and distributed the tickets and collected the money like an expert. Unfortunately that was where the expertise ended because at the end of the raffle he finished up with one prize left over but no more tickets and a complaint from Grummer that he hadn't received a prize. The problem was quickly sorted out but the repercussions were endless. It was suggested that Mivins had been receiving tuition from Dodson on how to fiddle the raffle but didn't have the expertise to make it look as though everything was above board - obviously more tuition is needed.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Rev. Stiggins who said that most people would have said Pickwick had done a good job but Stiggins wasn't most people. With so few members present it should have been simple to control the meeting but there had been no sign of control at all. People had been allowed to discuss their health and the ailments of others and the agenda had been all but ignored. Until reminded, he had forgotten all about the vice chairman which showed how much the vice chairman had influenced the proceedings. All in all, the meeting had been a complete mess for which Pickwick and the vice chairman were responsible.

Seconding the vote of thanks, Weller said Pickwick had made a good job of nothing because nothing had happened and the vice chairman had done little to cause problems so it could be said that the meeting had been a success; in fact he suggested that the two 'volunteers' should be asked to do the job next time.

Pickwick had to be reminded to thank the proposer and seconder of the vote of thanks which he did with dubious grace, suggesting that Weller's proposal that they do the job next time wasn't appreciated.

'Good Neet Owd Friends was sung by all and followed by the National Anthem. The raffle raised £4.00 whilst the Fines Box contained £2.70.