

Minutes of the 1228th meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 21st January, 2015

It is becoming rather repetitive to report that once again at the official start time for the meeting there were few members present although, again, the numbers increased shortly afterwards so that the meeting was able to commence by 8.04p.m. Pickwick decided before he gavelled to commence the meeting to telephone some of the absent members but unfortunately the first number he rang was the wrong number and the person who answered declined to attend; other members admitted they had forgotten the meeting and were not in a position to attend.

Due to the small number of members present (although he would deny it claiming general largesse) Dodson announced a free evening to everybody's delight. Jingle volunteered to act as P.O.C. and proceeded to take orders for drinks.

At this stage it was obvious that a stranger was in our midst and as Pickwick members are known not to have any friends, it was left to Jingle to announce that the interloper, one John Chester, was his friend and had been invited as a guest for the evening. John was warmly welcomed to the club.

The drinks having been distributed, members sang the toast to Mr Pickwick who claimed it was the best rendering he had ever heard - Tupman suggested he must be going deaf and a visit to the clinic might be beneficial pointing out that many of the other Pickwick members were wearing hearing aids and Pickwick ought to be setting an example.

Tupman then performed the introduction of members to the guest in his usual excellent manner, but was interrupted by Dodson who claimed he didn't get his money's worth at the last meeting when Pickwick decided that each member should pay £2.00 to the fines box in lieu of the Reading and Inquisition. Stiggins said he didn't remember paying the £2.00 fine until Pickwick suggested he could pay at this meeting when his memory suddenly returned.

Dodson claimed that the guest would think that Hopkins was running the meeting because he was constantly advising Pickwick (which was his job as President) but Tupman said the guest was more likely to think Dodson was in charge because he hadn't shut up since the meeting started!

Citing rule 8, Pickwick told the tale of Mivins' cane fly fishing rod which he showed to Dodson who then demonstrated how flexible these cane rods were by bending it into a semi circle - unfortunately it wasn't as flexible as reported and promptly snapped. Mivins then had further problems with Dodson who offered to adjust a new TV Mivins had just bought. Everything went fine until it was realised that all the speech etc. was in Turkish! Dodson responded by telling members about Pickwick's kleptomania where drinking glasses was concerned and noted that on occasions Pickwick had tried to persuade Dodson to steal glasses for him.

In the minutes, Mivins reported that he had been told that the raffle at the previous meeting had resulted in £8.00 for club funds but because only 8 members took part and tickets were only 50p

each he had altered the figure to £4.00. It was immediately suggested that Dodson and Mivins were involved in a plot to deprive the club of money, but although both members denied any such plan and claimed this was a slur on their character, both were ignored.

Pickwick then reported that when a former Mr Pott was being buried, as various Pickwick members stood round the grave Dodson was heard to say in an annoyed sort of voice that Pott had passed away without paying his subscription for the year.

Jingle reported that following the discussions at the last meeting about the possibility of members having a day at the races he had made enquiries and found that the most favourable date at Haydock would be 25th April, 2015. Members agreed to consider this at a meeting when more members were present.

Tupman had been on holiday and had returned with chocolate for Mrs Jingle which he considered to be a better present than Miau whose qualities were now questionable.

Dodson then told the tale about returning a set of barbells to St James RC church. The door was answered by a rather large priest who reported that Father was in Ireland but would be delighted at the return of the barbells. He then offered them a brandy as a reward for returning the barbells and calmly announced that in Ireland when they opened a bottle of brandy they threw the cork into the fire; Dodson wasn't quite sure how he got home that evening.

The guest was invited to comment on his visit and said he thought the meeting seemed to be all about having a good laugh and would like to become part of it.

In proposing the vote of thanks to Pickwick and the vice-chairman, Jingle said the meeting had been held in an orderly fashion and his guest had been very impressed by the way members had ensured continuity until the meal had been presented. Seconding the motion, Mivins said he had obviously been at a different meeting because the one he attended was absolute rubbish with neither Pickwick or his vice-chairman having any idea about what was going on; it was a good job a free evening had been offered because members would have considered poor value for money had they had to pay for the meeting.

Replying to the vote of thanks, Pickwick said how nice the compliments had been because he hadn't realised how good his control and the support of the vice-chairman had been.

'Good Neet Owd Friends' was sung by all and followed by the National Anthem after which Pickwick suggested that a few rehearsals might be advantageous because the rendering hadn't matched the quality of the earlier 'toast to Mr Pickwick'.

The raffle raised £4.00 whilst the Fines Box contained £6.50.