

Minutes of the 1230th Meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 18th March, 2015.

The official start time for the meeting couldn't be met because there were few members present but shortly afterwards numbers had increased to 9 so Pickwick declared the meeting open at 8.08 p.m. and promptly fined the vice chairman for failing to sing the toast to Mr Pickwick and not even miming the words.

There had been a request from Tupman for permission to remain seated during the meeting due to injuries received when falling downstairs at Sam's Chop House after imbibing 7 pints; if permission was granted, he offered to make a donation to the fines box of 50p. Weller said that if permission was granted, he would make a similar request and donation as he was suffering from severe dandruff. Tupman received permission, Weller was fined.

Ben Allen reported that a barman of his acquaintance had been sacked after it was found that he had replaced the beer in 7 barrels with water so the landlord was unaware of the theft of the contents. Pickwick then commented on the occasion when he visited Salford Royal Hospital to visit Jingle who was an inpatient; Jingle wasn't in the ward or in the patients lounge so after wasting some time looking for him, Pickwick decided to call at the Black Horse public house for a drink before returning home, only to find Jingle, in his dressing gown, propping up the bar.

These stories summoned up further memories concerning other members who had made a name for themselves in club history, particularly Jinks who regularly commuted from his home in Leicester to attend club meetings at the Black Horse where on one occasion due to a double booking of the meeting room, the meeting was held in Jink's bedroom with members seated on the bed, bedside table, dressing table and any other place they could find. On another occasion, Jinks was in the chair when he tilted over and somersaulted backwards when the back legs of the chair disappeared through a hole which had appeared in the floor.

Dodson then explained how he came to be Treasurer of the club, a post occupied by the former Mr. Pott. The said Mr Pott was as honest as the day was long but his administration left much to be desired. Having asked Dodson for assistance in preparing a balance sheet for the club, Pott produced a shoe box full of receipts for money spent which was impossible to sort out so the club's first balance sheet following Dodson's appointment was more fiction than fact which is probably why the former Nat Winkle used to examine the balance sheet very carefully each year.

Pickwick decided that the 9 o'clock toast should be taken at the appropriate time instead of the usual habit of fitting it in anywhere, and Dodson suggested that the introduction of members should simply be an introduction of members as there were no visitors present. Each member was invited to describe their own character and Stiggins was congratulated on his reading of his character: he

produced a tatty piece of paper on which his character was written and Ben Allen said it was so old it was parchment not paper, Mivins adding that the print was in Gothic script and there was a wax seal at the bottom.

Pickwick then told the tale of his recent trip to Whitby and a discussion about the benefits of tumble dryers compared with clothes lines which had eventually caused havoc on a bus with various passengers quoting their own preferences; Pickwick subsequently had to apologise to the bus driver for causing the confusion which had left the bus in an uproar.

He and Stiggins had then taken a trip to Durham where Stiggins had visited a gents toilet where the end of his scarf had dangled in the urinal; Stiggins had denied the scarf was wet but accepted that his zip had jammed and the delays caused by this problem had almost caused them to miss the bus. He added that there had been no toilet paper available but claimed he had a reserve!

In proposing the vote of thanks to Pickwick and the vice chairman, Hopkins said that unfortunately Pickwick hadn't done a very good job and his lax attitude had resulted in many missed opportunities for fines. The vice chairman had added to the confusion which had ensued by failing to gavel on a number of occasions and in general had been completely useless. Seconding the proposal, Tupman said Hopkin's comments reminded him of the occasion when he had applied for promotion and heard similar comments from the person reading his application. He was struggling to find something good to say about their performance and would have to rely on the comment that both the chairman and his vice had done their best which, unfortunately, wasn't good enough.

Pickwick responded that being in charge of this meeting was like being the manager of a graveyard; there were plenty of people under him but none of them took any notice of what he said.

'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 £4.50 whilst the Fines Box contained £7.56.