

Minutes of the 1238th meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 16th November, 2016

The 1238th meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club was only 2 minutes late in starting due to the new Mr Pickwick's efforts to start on time. On this occasion there was a guest present, Bob Grice, who was introduced by Pickwick himself.

Dodson agreed to act as P.O.C whilst Magnus accepted the role of P.O.R & I.

Most members were surprised to find that agendas were in very short supply so the meeting promised to be rather hit and miss with Pickwick being the only one able to say which item was next; Ben Allen said he would be able to produce additional copies in time for the next meeting but in the meantime one or two members brought out personal copies they had stored away and the meeting was able to progress, albeit haltingly.

The introduction of members to the guest was performed with his usual excellence by Tupman and it was noted that the only member with a full glass when the next toast was called was Tupman; whether this was due to Dodson's care not to overspend the Club's finances or simply his failure to pay attention to the situation was immaterial, the fact remained that when the toast was called members were temporarily without the tools to finish the job.

The vice-chairman had been carrying out culinary activity whilst the introduction was taking place — in other words he was stirring the hotpot to make sure it didn't burn. This was probably the most important activity of the meeting up to this point.

After rule 8 had been invoked whilst the drinks were being obtained, Grummer told the members about a recent trip to Scarborough in Nat Winkle's car; Nat had been having problems with migraine as a result of which his left arm would suddenly become paralysed for a short time. As the party travelled towards Scarborough at 87 miles per hour Grummer asked the other passengers whether they were aware of Winkle's problem and the rest of the journey was quite quiet!

On arrival in Scarborough Winkle parked his car in a disabled parking spot and put his blue disabled parking card on the dashboard. Sometime later he found he had been issued with a parking ticket and was very vociferous with the parking attendant who had difficulty interrupting the flow of verbiage until he was able to point out to Winkle that his blue card was three months out of date! To cap it all, the batteries in Winkle's hearing aid ran out so he couldn't hear what was going on.

The drinks had still not arrived when Grummer mentioned a trip to Whitby by himself and Rev. Stiggins. Travelling on a local bus which was full of local ladies, Grummer and Stiggins started a discussion as to whether it was better to dry washing on a washing line or in a tumble dryer; by the time the two Pickwickians got off the bus, the discussion had become a full blown argument but the ladies hadn't actually started fighting at that point.

Dodson said that he would hold a free evening early in the new year.

Referring to discussions at the last meeting, Tupman said he had visited the bowling green at Rivington and had been told that it was open two days each week during the winter. However, when he visited the green was waterlogged and covered in leaves so probably unplayable. Jingle said he had contacted Monton but their green was only available at weekends. Pickwick suggested that a date be chosen for a get together and further ideas were bandied about. Greyhound racing at Belle Vue was put forward with Friday evening identified as the best option and further investigations on this idea were to be made.

The Secretary reported that he had contacted Smangle in Cornwall to tell him about recent moves in the Club, including Snodgrass' 'Ode to Mr Pickwick'.

The P.O.R & I was different at this meeting because Magnus decided that instead of a reading from the book, members would be asked questions about the Pickwick Rules and Pledge; this novelty made little difference, all members were fined whether or not they answered their questions correctly and Magnus himself made a contribution to the fines box.

The guest was asked whether he wished to say anything to the meeting and apart from thanking the members for making him welcome expressed a wish to join the club.

The vote of thanks to Pickwick and the vice-chairman was proposed by Dodson who said he had been very busy arranging the drinks as P.O.C. but he was aware that Pickwick, Grummer and Magnus had constantly been having private meetings at the top table leaving the vice-chairman trying to keep the members below the nick in order. This was bad enough for the members who were left without any leadership but was even worse for the guest who was being ignored and had probably thought he had to become a member to be included in the discussion!

Seconding the vote of thanks, Hopkins said he thought the meeting had gone very well considering the lack of agendas and he was looking forward to the next two meetings when he would be away in Australia! Unfortunately, all good things come to an end and he would be back in time for the February meeting.

Good Neet Owd Friends' was sung by all and followed by the National Anthem.

The raffle raised £5.50 whilst the Fines Box contained £9.20 most of which came from the P.O.R & I.