

Minutes of the 1239th meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 18th January, 2017

Once again, the meeting started exactly on time at 8.00 p.m. with Dodson announcing a free evening but confirming that this was not due to the absence of Snodgrass. He also told members that he would be buying the first round of drinks to celebrate his 80th birthday. Members appreciated this gesture and toasted Dodson.

Ben Allen volunteered to act as P.O.C. with Stiggins in the role of Fines Officer; this appointment rebounded on Stiggins who was both the first and second person to contribute to the fines box. He had only just paid his second fine when the guest's mobile phone rang and the guest's host, Mivins, was invited to contribute to the fines box for this offence which was repeated seconds later when the phone rang a second time! Not to be outdone, Pickwick then referred to Grummer as Norman and added to the fines box with a donation.

Pickwick's mistake in referring to Norman was his intention to ask Grummer to perform the introduction of members to the guest, an introduction which was carried out in an exemplary manner, although after the event Tupman pointed out to Pickwick that even though Grummer had done an excellent job, as D.C. the introduction should have been his job and that as a relatively new chairman, his advisers should have pointed this out to him. Dodson supported Tupman, commenting that had he been nearer the top table he would have been able to save Pickwick's embarrassment and that Grummer should have helped Pickwick to avoid a mistake on this occasion. Pickwick said he realised that the job was normally Tupman's but he had noticed that Tupman was drinking port and lemon which suggested some medical problem so he had deliberately invited Grummer to do the presentation so that Tupman's infirmity was not too obvious to other members.

Ben Allen had been in the upstairs room searching for meeting agendas prior to the meeting and had found a book of photographs from a previous meeting which he handed round; he said he would spend some time searching the storage space and recover other club treasures.

Not only does Pickwick start meetings promptly, he follows this by taking the 9.00 p.m. toast exactly at 9.00 p.m. something which hasn't happened for years!

Tupman reported that he had again visited Rivington bowling green and it was still waterlogged and unplayable. Grummer suggested the club have a bowling event at Monton with a meal at the Waterside afterwards. Ben Allen and Jingle agreed to investigate the possibilities of such an event and members agreed that nothing should be done before March because of possible weather problems. The members felt that an afternoon event followed by a meal and meeting would be appropriate.

During a rule 8 break, Tupman commented that he was at Cardington during his R.A.F. service and was asked whether the R.A.F. was still using airships at that time or whether aeroplanes had been invented!

Grummer then told a story about the time when he was on call and had to attend a breakdown near Frederick Road on Broad Street involving a wagon holding a load of cattle. An on-site repair was not possible so he raised the vehicle with his breakdown wagon but as he tried to drive away the front of the breakdown wagon raised off the road. A second attempt led to the same problem when it was discovered that the cattle moved up the slope when he tried to drive away and their added weight lifted the vehicle. It was obvious that the cattle needed to transfer to another vehicle before he could deal with the breakdown but some hours passed before the new vehicle arrived and when the two vehicles were parked back to back the transfer didn't work because the cattle spilled out of the gap between the two vehicles and ran amuck on Broad Street; Grummer absented himself whilst the two vehicle drivers rounded the cattle up and sorted the problem out leaving Grummer to take the suspended vehicle, empty apart from a load of manure, back to the garage for repair.

Ben Allen said that, as requested, he had obtained information about the dog racing which was either on Wednesday afternoons or Sunday mornings, the latter being free entry. No further action was taken at this time.

Magnus reported he had seen an advert for two bottles of Dark Rum for £20 and had bought six bottles; two days later he went back and bought another 6 bottles, only to meet Smangle who was in the area for work purposes.

Tupman led the P.O.R & I which was taken from Chapter 14 of the book and resulted in fines for everyone whether answered correctly or otherwise. Tupman himself made a donation to the fines box.

At 10.10 p.m. Nat Winkle appeared at the meeting.

The vote of thanks to the chairman and vice-chairman was proposed by Stiggins who said that there had been plenty of chat during the evening but the performance by the chairman and his vice had been appalling and if there were no improvements soon, we would have to get rid of them. He then complained about interruptions by Grummer adding that if the chairman was doing his job properly Grummer would have been fined severely. Seconding the vote of thanks, Dodson said that Grummer was like a parrot sitting on Pickwick's shoulder rabbiting all the time so that Pickwick doesn't seem to have any will of his own. Despite their failings both Pickwick and the vice-chairman had tried so members shouldn't be too hard on them.

In reply, the vice-chairman said the meeting had been difficult to control because members had been very unruly and didn't take kindly to being admonished.

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

The raffle raised £5.00 whilst the Fines Box contained £6.61; nobody would admit to being the odd 1p contributor.