

Minutes of the 1246th meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 21st February, 2018

Although only 6 members were present, Mr Pickwick decided that the meeting should go ahead because a guest was present. He referred to the previous meeting in January where once again only 6 members were present and although that meeting was numbered 1245, no minutes were taken, the meeting being taken up by members reminiscing about former members they had known and the incidents surrounding those members. One notable incident at that meeting was the round of drinks provided by Hopkins who had recently celebrated his 80th birthday.

The guest present on this occasion was Paul Campbell, a motor cycle enthusiast and friend of Mr Pickwick.

Having opened the meeting at 8.00 p.m., Mr Pickwick appointed Grummer as vice-chairman and suggested to Dodson that he act as P.O.C and obtain drinks for those present. Whilst this event was being dealt with, he went briefly through the reasons for the absence of so many members; in the majority of cases sickness was the cause but it was noted that 2 members were on holiday and would therefore have to pay a fine on their return for absenting themselves without a reasonable excuse. It was also noted that one of the aforementioned holidaying members had previously paid a fine with foreign currency and would need to be carefully watched by the Fines Master!

In addition to his acting role as vice-chairman, Grummer had to act as D.C due to Tupman being absent through sickness and his presentation of members to the guest was excellent, as usual.

The reading of the minutes revealed that once again a foreign coin had been found in the fines box, being of the same denomination as the previous occasion and suggestions were that it had once again been introduced by a holidaying member; Pickwick decreed that an inquest be held at the next meeting to identify the offender.

Stiggins said he couldn't recall being at the previous meeting and was fined; Dodson told members that Mivins had reminded Stiggins about the meeting but when he called to collect him was greeted at the door by Stiggins in his shirt sleeves who was in the process of having his dinner.

Shortly afterwards members each contributed 50p to the fines box because the P.O.R & I master, Slammer, was another sickness absentee; Stiggins put £1 in the box and advised Pickwick he had also paid for 'Bill', thus incurring his third fine in as many minutes for failing to refer to a member by his Pickwickian name.

Pickwick invoked rule 8, inviting members to entertain the guest whilst the meal was being readied and Grummer told of the occasion many years ago when he attended a police function as a guest of Dodson who was a senior police officer at that time. Later

in the evening he was asked by Dodson to take home a very senior police officer who was very drunk. When he suggested that he himself had been drinking, Dodson explained that if he was stopped by the police, the presence of the very senior police officer would prevent any further action being taken against him. Grummer agreed and took the very senior police officer home, but on his way back to the function started to panic as he realised that he no longer had the insurance of a very senior police officer in the back of the car; not only that, but he was 'in drink' and driving a vehicle which didn't belong to him. When he got back to the function he told Dodson not to put him in that position again only for Dodson to claim that he was on Dodson's 'patch' and even if he had been stopped, nothing further would have happened!

Dodson then told members about a summer outing some years ago when the members coach left without the former Alfred Jingle who appeared to those members waiting for private transport complaining he had been left behind. All went well, however, because he was offered a lift home and was then able to continue drinking until the lift appeared and in the following days received many free drinks from members who wanted to apologise for leaving him behind.

Another of the many tales of the former Mr Jingle was recounted by Grummer who decided to call on him in Salford Royal Hospital. Unfortunately, none of the nurses knew where he was assuming he was undergoing treatment somewhere, but nobody could find him so Grummer decided to call at the Black Horse opposite the hospital for a drink on his way home. Who should be at the bar in pyjamas and dressing gown but Jingle!

The guest thanked members for their hospitality and after telling members about some of his motor cycles said he hoped to become part of the club in the near future.

Proposing the vote of thanks Stiggins said the general discussions had been good but on the whole that meeting had been a shambles due mainly to the failure of Pickwick to control the members and the constant interruptions from the vice-chairman. Seconding the vote of thanks, Hopkins said he felt the meeting had been a huge success with lots of fines for him to collect.

The singing of 'Good neet owd friends' was worse than ever but the National Anthem was much better, Pickwick commenting that members obviously knew the words to the latter.

The raffle raised £3.56 whilst the fines box contained £5.60.