

Minutes of the 1253rd meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on 20th March, 2019

The 1253rd meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club was quite well attended and was opened promptly at 20.00 hours with Ben Allen volunteering to act as P.O.C.

Noting that, once again, there were no guests, it was suggested that greater effort should be made to bring more people to the club, the main recruitment area for the club being former guests as witnessed by the recent influx of younger members. Jingle said the last guest he had brought was currently in prison but modified that comment by explaining that he worked there!

Roker suggested that the AGM could be held at Styal prison so that Jingle's guest could attend but on being told that Styal was a women's prison said that was his intention when he made the suggestion.

Comment was then made about the deficiencies in the ability of the P.O.C. to anticipate the liquid requirements of members, Grummer likening it to his time in the desert and rule 8 was invoked so that the appropriate refreshments could be obtained.

For some time there has been a movement to persuade members to learn their own characters and avoid dependence on the D.C. or his assistant, the former being ill and the latter having resigned from that post. On this occasion each member tried to introduce his own character with help from the D.C where necessary. The efforts generally went well and members agreed that at the next meeting half the members would present their characters without any assistance with the other half performing at the meeting after.

The Entertainments Officers advised members that the proposed Whiskey Trail would not be taking place because the cost was prohibitive but arrangements were in hand for this year's canal cruise from Worsley at a cost of approximately £20 plus food and drink. Two boats were required and the chosen date was 9th August. The boats would leave the Moorings at 10.00 hours and head towards Leigh, returning by 16.30.

The Summer Outing would be at Curley's on 14th June, with transport leaving the Red Lion in Swinton at 19.00 hours.

The P.O.R & I was performed by Dr Slammer in his usual deliberately confusing manner so that all were fined, even those who could answer the question; in those cases, Slammer would insist that his question had been wrongly interpreted by the member.

In another rule 8 intermission, Grummer told members about a trip by 3 members to the London Pickwick Club and the trials and tribulations surrounding that trip. They had assumed that the hotel where they were staying was outside the area where they had to pay a fee for entering but subsequently received a fine of £60 by entering a very short distance into that area without paying the fee! Having reached the hotel where the meeting was taking place, they were royally entertained by the London Club and eventually were served with a meal. They were ravenous by this time but received a couple of small chops together with a limited amount of vegetables and to add insult to injury, the MC advised that the cost to each member was exceptionally high compared with equivalent prices in Manchester.

They had visited a number of hostelries during their trip and were in a very cheerful state of mind as they boarded a tube train to go back to their hotel, only to find they were heading in the wrong direction. Eventually they reached the hotel only to find that the meal they anticipated was no longer available, the kitchen having closed but the host came to their relief with a cold but welcome ham meal.

The 9 o'clock toast was taken at 10.15 in good Pickwickian practise.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Jingle who said he had been looking forward to the meeting all week but was surprised when Pickwick had dealt so severely from the start of the meeting, indeed, Grummer had been fined before he even sat down. In future he would probably wake up on the morning of the meeting in horror at the thought of what might happen that evening and, in fact, this meeting had turned out to be the worst evening of his life.

Seconding the vote of thanks, Winkle said he couldn't agree with Jingle because he felt that the evening had been a huge success apart from the constant failure of the vice-chairman to gavel in response to Pickwick and to provide drinks so the various toasts could be held on time.

The vice-chairman said he refuted these comments and felt that his responses were not slow, and as far as the drinks were concerned, he was constantly ready to carry out his duties and the problem was those members who shielded their drinks so he couldn't see when refills were needed.

Once again 'Good neet owd friends' and the National Anthem were sung with gusto but Tupman said only he and Mivins displayed any musical ability.

The Raffle raised £5.50 whilst the fines box contained £5.50 plus 25 euro cents.