



‘Things That Go By The Board’

By Jon Riches

(“An affectionate tribute to all those who volunteer to serve on behalf of others in Residential Communities.”)



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‘Things That Go By The Board!’

Basic Storyline: An end-of-season ‘Special Board Meeting’ of the **‘Twilight Acres’** Home Owners Association (HOA) Board – to deal with some issues that have suddenly arisen before the ‘Snowbird’ Residents scatter to their main homes across the globe for the Summer.

Location: **‘Twilight Acres’** is a comparatively small residential community (some 60 units around a lake). It is a constituent part of the **‘GOD’s PLEASURE’** Gated Development (**‘GOD’** i.e. **‘Golf-On-Demand’**). Situated to the north of the Florida Gulf city of **‘Paradise Landing’**, it is roughly halfway between Naples and Heaven in Trump County!

Characters:

Board Members

- **Walter Goodenough – President**
- **Dennis Marshall – Vice President**
- **Pinkie Patterson – Secretary**
- **Irma Finkelstein – Treasurer**
- **Bill Bizzly – Director**

Home Owners

- **Fifi La Roux – (Artist, long term Full Time resident)**
- **Theodore Edward Dumbrowski (Ted) - (Retired Academic - a.k.a. ‘the Professor’)**
- **Alfie Higgins – (UK Citizen - Newly-arrived ‘Snowbird’)**

Stage Set: Simple set showing a Board Table with 5 Name Plates and 5 Chairs facing an audience of 4/5 rows. Some props required, e.g. Cell Phone for **Walter**; Binoculars for **Dennis**; Laptop for **Irma**; Manicure Set and Cell Phone for **Pinkie**.

Character Profiles:-

- **Walter:** Retired Bank Manager; Gentlemanly; Perhaps rather 'Old-Fashioned'; Serious and Respectful in dealing with both people and issues; Very forceful Wife (Mildred)!
- **Dennis:** Retired from running his own Small Business; Long-time 'Twilight Acres' resident – who cares deeply about the community and will always volunteer for office; A natural cynic!
- **Pinkie:** Uncertain age – anywhere between 45- 55; Much married – and much divorced; Enjoys her current life-style and her 'Good Time Gal' image; Golf Club stalwart.
- **Irma:** Youngest Board Member – late 30's, maybe 40; Married but no children; Clever, but socially very shy, nervous and unsure of herself.
- **Bill:** Construction Industry professional; Late 40's/Early 50's; Travels constantly, works on Large Scale Projects; Dedicated and technically knowledgeable – but availability difficult to predict.
- **Fifi:** Another long-time resident; Financially independent; Locally-renowned Artist; Very creative, but somewhat eccentric; Avid supporter of the wine and spirit industries!
- **Ted:** Retired College Principal; Intellectually rather superior and slightly condescending in dealings with lesser mortals; But 'Loves' the Community – and has 'hidden depths', one suspects!
- **Alfie:** A newcomer into, what for him is, an 'Alien Culture'; An uncomplicated, self-made Londoner, a true 'Cockney'; Outwardly, very gregarious and friendly – but very protective of his set of values, with a short fuse if threatened.



‘Cockney Rhyming Slang’ is a humorous language variation that dates from the 1840’s in the East End of London. It was invented by street traders as a way of communicating with each other, but disguising what was being said from passers-by.

The slang phrases themselves are derived from taking an ‘expression’ that rhymes with a ‘word’ – and then using the expression ***instead*** of that word. Classic examples are **‘Apples and Pears’** meaning **‘Stairs’**; **‘Uncle Ned’** meaning **‘Bed’**; **‘Jam Jar’** meaning **‘Car’** etc. Many of these phrases are used today right across the UK.

In this play, the following phrases are used by the character, **Alfie Higgins**:-

- **‘Brahms and Liszt’** meaning **‘Pissed’ (Drunk)**
- **‘Barney Rubble’** meaning **‘Trouble’**
- **‘Adam and Eve’** meaning **‘Believe’**
- **‘Butcher’s Hook’** meaning **‘Look’**
- **‘Babe Ruth’** meaning **‘Truth’**
- **‘Frog and Toad’** meaning **‘Road’**
- **‘Trouble and Strife’** meaning **‘Wife’**
- **‘Banana Rama’** meaning **‘Drama’**
- **‘Dog and Bone’** meaning **‘Phone’**



TWILIGHT ACRES

Special H.O.A Board Meeting – Monday, April 1st 2019

Agenda

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Establishment of Quorum**
- 3. Minutes of Last Meeting**
- 4. Reports from Officers**
- 5. Reports from Committees**
- 6. New Business:-**
 - (a) Request to construct a 'Chickee Hut, Bar and Boardwalk' on lakeside Lot 23 – (Fifi La Roux)**
 - (b) Report of the use of a 'Rotary Clothes Line' for laundry purposes on Lot 54 - contrary to our 'By Laws'.**
 - (c) Complaint about the behaviour of new owners of Lot 16 – the Feigenbaum family, 'Snowbirds' from Germany.**
- 7. Date of Next Meeting**
- 8. Adjournment**

SCRIPT

Walter: “Well, I guess I should ‘Call the Meeting to Order’ and make a start (**PAUSE**).....Yes, well, first of all ‘Thank You’ all for making the effort to attend this ‘Special Meeting’.....I must say this really is a splendid turn out – there are more people here this morning than we ever get for our monthly meetings!..... Sorry that we couldn’t give you more notice of it, but we felt the most important thing was to **HAVE** another meeting before we all take off for the summer.....

Ted: (***From the audience***) “May I suggest Mr President that the reason for this apparent upsurge in interest is that the Agenda Items for this morning are much more appetising than the fare you usually offer at your monthly sessions? Perhaps there is a lesson there for the Board to consider going forward?

Walter: “Yes, well, thank you for that, **Ted** (**PAUSE**) Now, as I was saying, some important issues have recently come to light and I, sorry, ‘*We the Board*’ decided that they could not be left to fester until we all come back together again in the fall..... (***Becomes aware of Pinkie tugging at his arm***).....What is it, **Pinkie** – do you wish to say something at this stage?

Pinkie: (***In a loud ‘stage whisper’***) “Is this going to take long – only my tee time is in 45 minutes.....It’s the annual ‘*Win the Gin*’ competition and I’m the defending champion?

Dennis: “Wouldn’t you just bet your life on that!”

Pinkie: “Shut up, **Dennis**.....What I mean is, are we really going to go through the whole dreary ritual of Officer and Committee Reports before we get to the three new items – which everybody is interested in?.....If we are, it will take hours – and I will need to make a phone call to the Club to see if they can give me a later tee time.....They are not going to like it, I can tell you.....there is quite a lot of theatre involved with this event and it is the tradition for the defending champion to officially accept the prizes for the day from the Sponsors, ‘*London Sapphire Gin*’, before striking the first ball in the competition.....”

Dennis: “Whoa, let me get this straight....So you, as the defending champion, not only are supposed to take the first **SWING** off the tee, but you also get to take the first **SWIG** of the sponsor’s nectar..... (***To the audience***) I don’t know about you, but that sounds a much better deal than an ill-fitting Green Jacket – which, incidentally, you can never wear elsewhere – from that place up in Georgia!

Pinkie: “No, no, **Dennis** – you’ve got it all wrong! I just.....”

Walter: “Now, that’s enough you two.....if we carry on like this, we will never get through this meeting.....Oh, Dear – now let me think.....how CAN we speed things up?..... (***Thinking Aloud***) Now this is NOT a regular ‘Monthly Board Meeting’ - it is a ‘*Special*’ or an ‘*Emergency*’ meeting..... So do ‘*Robert’s Rules*’ still apply, I wonder? (**PAUSE**).....Hell, I just don’t know!

Ted: “If I may offer the Chair, my experiences in such matters elsewhere.....”

Walter: “**No**, Ted! This is my responsibility, and I will work it out.....(**PAUSE**) (***Thinking aloud again***) This is a formally constituted

‘Meeting of the Board’, although not one of our scheduled meetings....Right.....So to give it credibility we need to establish a ‘Quorum’ and, I guess, because we **WILL** produce minutes for our Bulletin Board and our website, we should formally approve the Minutes of our last meeting.....Good.....Then, I will propose that we move immediately to the ‘New Business’ items, after which I will suggest we waive the rest of the standard agenda and motion to adjourn the meeting.....That’s it, I’ve cracked it!

Right, so first off I need to establish that we have a Quorum of Directors present (***Looking left and right***).....And indeed we do, with 4 out of the 5 being present immediately – and the fifth, **Bill Bizzly**, hoping to join us later..... (***Aside to the other directors***) I really hope he makes it, as we need his Architectural Review Committee (ARC) input for one of these new items.....(**PAUSE**) So that’s ‘Item One’ dealt with!

Now on to ‘Item Two’ – Minutes of the last meeting.....You have all seen and read the minutes circulated for the March 3rd Meeting.....May I have a motion to ‘approve’ and then ‘second’ these minutes, please?”

Dennis: “So approved.”

Walter: “Thank you, **Dennis**..... May I have a ‘seconder’, please?”

Pinkie: “Well, I wrote them.....Nobody disapproved - they never do - so I guess I can ‘second’ them!”

Irma: (***Timidly, nervous cough***) “Oh, oh, Excuse me, **Walter** – I hate to say this, but I don’t think **Pinkie** can do that!”

Pinkie: “What do you mean?.....Why can’t I ‘second’ my own minutes – I always do at every other meeting?”

Walter: “Yes, **Irma** – please explain why you think **Pinkie** can’t second these minutes?”

Irma: (*Even more nervous*) “Oh well, if you remember, **Pinkie** was not able to ATTEND the March Meeting!”

Pinkie: “Rubbish – of course, I was there..... I never miss a meeting!”

Walter: “No, hold on, **Pinkie**.....**Irma** is right – you did NOT attend the last meeting, and neither did she.....I remember now, we had to work around **Bill**’s availability to ensure we actually had a quorum of directors..... That’s why we met in the evening - at 9.00 pm.....In the end, I made some notes and gave them to you the next day, **Pinkie** – and you converted them into the Minutes we eventually posted.”

Dennis: “Yes and only 2 other residents showed up to that meeting – I think they were basically suspicious as to what might be going on in the Club House at that time of night! Still, not to worry – the ‘3 Wise Men’ rode to the rescue of the community once again!”

(Pinkie is speechless; she can’t take it all in. Irma puts an arm round her and tries to comfort her)

Irma: “I’m so sorry, **Pinkie**.....I thought you would remember that day – it was a kinda ‘morning after the night before’.....You know, that heavy date you had with that Rick guy – wasn’t he some kind of cop?.....You were hung over and called to ask me to take the minutes for you – but I couldn’t because I was travelling to the other coast that day for my nephew’s Bar Mitzvah.”

Pinkie: “Oh God, don’t remind me! What a night! I never want to hear about that S.O.B. again.....’Cop’ – more like ‘Robocop’, if you ask

me.....He told me he was in 'Highway Patrol' – but I think that meant he just liked to 'patrol the highway' looking for women to impress with his uniform, his holster and his nightstick. Ugh!"

Walter: "Now then, Ladies – please stop discussing personal issues....I'm sure the good folks here just want us to get to the main business on our agenda."

Dennis: "Oh, I don't know, **Walter** – I think '*The Amorous Adventures of Pinkie Patterson*' would be a welcome addition to any meeting's Agenda! (*Gestures to the meeting for agreement*)

But being serious for minute, we do now have a couple of real problems in getting these old minutes approved."

Walter: "What do you mean, **Dennis**?"

Dennis: "Well, if neither of the ladies can vote on the issue, the only person who can vote is **Bill** – and he is not here!..... You will note that in reaching this conclusion, I have taken into account the fact that you, our President, NEVER VOTE on anything!.....Whether you are disqualified from voting because of your illustrious position on the Board – or if it's just a personal thing, I don't honestly know.....But what I DO KNOW is that I have never seen you vote in all the years I have sat with you on this Board!

Walter: (*Clearly shaken by these remarks*) "**Dennis**, I take that statement as a direct slur on both my integrity and my character.....I, I pride myself on running a harmonious team who, through my thoughtful guidance, can always reach a sensible consensus on any

issue.....Mine is the 'Casting Vote' in the event of a 2-2 split among other Board Members – but I hope I will NEVER have to use it!

Dennis: “Well that’s a very interesting response, and I’m sure the residents here today will be glad to get that clarification direct from ‘Our Leader’ himself..... But we do have another problem with this particular issue.”

Walter: “And what is that, pray?”

Dennis: “Can anybody tell me how you can write the minutes of a meeting you did **NOT** attend – and, in turn, offer and get those minutes approved as the true record of what actually took place?.....What does ‘Robert’s Rules’ have to say on that.....I’m sure a clever attorney would cry ‘foul’, if not ‘fraud’, in any dispute that might subsequently arise!”

(A stunned silence covers the 3 other Board Members – who look to each other for guidance or rescue. Eventually first Pinkie and then the President speaks)

Pinkie: “But.....but that must be B.S., **Walter**.....You know ‘**Nothing**’ often happens at these meetings, the Agenda is always the same and you don’t really have to be here to write the minutes.....You just copy what was said last timeWhy, I must have done it quite a few times over the.....”

Walter: ***(Speaking very slowly and deliberately)*** “That’s enough, **Pinkie**.....I think you should leave it there.....Personally, I’m not sure I have ever come across an issue like this before.....**(PAUSE)**I wonder if any of our residents can offer words of wisdom.....From their experiences elsewhere, I mean.....What about you, **Ted**?”

Ted: (*Caught temporarily 'off guard'*) "What!.....Oh, yes, well, er, of course, Mr. President, of course.....I have had many, many years of Committee experience – right through my academic career, my working with Government Agencies, my membership of various church, educational, social service, country clubs and golfing establishments.....Even, dare I say it, right through to the management currently of the local 'Paradise Landing Barber Shop & Line Dancing Ensemble'....."

(Stunned silence – Pinkie recovers first)

Pinkie: "Well, well **Ted** – you're a bit of a dark horse....I would never ever have had you down as a singer....."

Irma: (*Breathlessly*) "Or as a Dancer – a Line Dancer too.....Oh, I would just love to do that, but I'm so self-conscious that I would need a good friend and at least a couple of glasses of wine, I think, before I could ever get the courage to go out on the floor....."

Pinkie: (*Thoughtfully*) "Tell you what, **Irms**....Let you and me talk to **Ted** later.....Maybe, we can persuade him to take us **BOTH** to his club.....You know, to show us the ropes and to see him perform....."

Irma: "Ooh, ooh, could we, **Pinks** – I would really, really love that.....And I'm sure Donald wouldn't mind baby-sitting the new puppy for just one evening.....That is, if **YOU** asked him....You will, won't you, please, please, pretty please **Pinks?**"

Pinkie: "Sure, don't worry about Donald, **Irms**.....He's just a puppy himself, as far as I'm concerned.....Now **Ted**, what about you?.....Would

you be up for this?.....Do you think you can handle two attractive, **YOUNGER** women for a whole evening?

Ted: “Well, dear ladies.....’Your wish shall be my command!’ – although I must warn you that these days, I’m more of an ‘organizer’ rather than a ‘performer’.....Not that I haven’t had my moments, back in the day.....(***Pause for reflection***) Did I ever tell you about the time our College’s ‘Mixed Glee Club’ was invited to provide entertainment at a big Washington Education Convention?.....No? Well, it was just so exciting.....It was rumoured that the President himself had promised to attend – and then suddenly, right after our performance, there he was, striding towards the stage through the cheering crowd, shaking hands here and squeezing arms there – and heading straight towards me as I made my way from the Conductor’s Rostrum back to the College Principals table.....I honestly think that my heart stopped for a moment.....I can remember thinking, ‘OH-MY-GOD’ - I am going to meet the President of the United States’.....Wouldn’t my mother be proud if only she could witness this moment.....I put down my baton, instinctively wiped my hand on my tux – to make sure it wasn’t sweaty, you understand – and stood poised to greet the ‘Leader of the Free World’(**BIG PAUSE**).....What happened next is still a bit of a blur.....A fleeting moment of eye contact, I think, and then his minders had swept him by our table and up onto the stage – where he proceeded to engage our lead female singer in an extended public display of mutual admiration.....So alas a personal disappointment for me – no handshake, but definitely a nod, I think - but still a memorable day for the College.....(**PAUSE**) (***Wistfully***) Yes, I often wonder what happened to that girl.....Dark Hair, not a great voice, but she obviously had other

talents.....Whatever was her name?.....Began with an 'M', I think.....Was it Marilyn? – No; was it Mary Lou? – No; or Moira perhaps? – No; Wait a minute, what about Monica? – Yes.....That was it, MONICA – how could I ever forget that name!”

Dennis: “Walter, Walter – for goodness sake use your authority.....I’m losing the will to live here.....I’ve even forgotten the reason we called this meeting, and I’m sure a lot of the people here will agree with me.....And I’ve got other things I need to do today (***Gestures with his binoculars***)”

Walter: “Yes, thank you, **Dennis**....I must agree that we seem to be in danger of losing the plot here....Such a shame.....Now **Ted**, are you really telling me that you can offer no precedent from your vast experience of committee workings to help us out of our dilemma with these wretched minutes?”

Ted: (***With a sigh***) “Regrettably, Mr President, that would appear to be the case!”

Walter: “Very well, then – I am left with no alternative other than to declare that “the Minutes of the March Board Meeting remain UNAPPROVED”.....A sad day for our HOA, and on my watch too.....**Irma**, how is our ‘Legal Fees’ Budget looking – as I may need to take our Attorney’s opinion on this?”

Irma: “Oh, oh I’m not too certain off the top of my head, **Walter**.....If you can give me a couple of minutes, I’ll try to access the file from our Management Company on my laptop.....But that may mean I have to leave the room and go over to Audrey’s yard, as the Wi-Fi signal is much stronger there than in the Clubhouse.....Will that be ‘OK’?”

Walter: “Don’t remind me again, about the Clubhouse Wi-Fi, please!.....I’ve lost count of the number of times I’ve asked for it to be fixed.....Sorry, I’m not getting at you personally, **Irma** – but you know my frustrations about this subject.....So, yes – do whatever you have to do, to get that information for me.

(Irma gathers her laptop and exits the meeting)

Now then, where does that leave us? Ah, yes – I think we can at last move on to items of ‘New Business’, with the first of those being a request - which is already being considered by the ARC - to construct, and I quote, “a Chickee Hut, Bar and Boardwalk on lakeside Lot 23”. The Home Owner making this request, our much-loved ‘Artist-in-Residence’, **Fifi La Roux**, has asked to be allowed to address this meeting.....So without further ado, the floor is yours, Fifi!.....Thank you for being so patient.”

Dennis: “Now **THIS** should be real fun!”

Fifi: “Thank you, so much, **Walter** – you are such a ‘Darling’ in these matters.....And you too, **Dennis**.....I know how you love to tease me!

I must say I’m finding this all so terribly exciting.....I mean, I had no idea that these meetings were so, so ‘*technically difficult*’.....I thought that everyone just sat around, said nice things to each other about how wonderful our little corner of paradise really is – and then simply got on to the wine tasting to celebrate and.....”

Dennis: (Interrupting) “I think, **Fifi**, you might be getting this meeting mixed up with the ‘Book Club’.....Now **THEIR** ‘Monthly Meetings’ are

quite notorious for that sort of thing.....Trust me, I know - because I've had to empty the trash bins after some of their meetings!"

Fifi: "Oh dear – I do seem to be a bit out of touch.....Mind you I did attend the 'Book Club' in the early days, but back then all they wanted to do was to, you know, '*Discuss Books*' and things.....They had too many retired, 'English Teachers' running things.....And after 20 minutes or so, I just lost interest and drifted off into my own little world
(PAUSE) But hey, perhaps I **SHOULD** give it another try.....there are different people involved now, I think – and I have recently discovered some very interesting red wines from Argentina and **OREGON**, of all places.....I'm sure....."

Walter: "Yes, yes, **Fifi** – this is all very interesting, but we really must get back to the Agenda, my dear.....Perhaps you would like to tell us all about your latest proposal – which, I know, has got **Bill** and the ARC in a little bit of a tizzy?"

Fifi: "Oh, oh, yes.....Of course, Darling.....I mustn't take up too much of your valuable time, cos' **Pinkie** has a golf game to get to – I do **LOVE** the colour of your outfit, by the way, **Pinkie** – and there are others who want to speak at this meeting....."

Pinkie: "Oh, **Fifi** – 'Thank you', that is **SO** sweet of you!.....I'm not too sure if it clashes with my nail colour or not.....What do you think?"

Walter: "Ladies, ladies **THAT'S ENOUGH** – **Fifi**, I'm sorry – but I must now insist that you have just 5 minutes more to address the meeting.....Or else we will never get through this Agenda!"

(Irma suddenly bursts through the door and re-joins the meeting)

Irma: “Ooh, sorry I’ve taken so long, **Walter** – but I met the ‘Feigenbaums’ on my way back.....Did you know they have the sweetest little dachshund puppy?.....I, I just couldn’t resist making a fuss of it.....”

Dennis: (*Leaping to his feet, brandishing his binoculars*) “What I want to know is ‘were they properly dressed for walking round the community in broad daylight ‘ – no Speedos or those skimpy bikini things that Germans think they have to wear at the Pool, I hope?”

Irma: “Oh, I don’t know, **Dennis**.....I don’t think so – but I didn’t really pay much attention to them, I was more interested in ‘Rommel’.....”

Walter: “Rommel, Rommel – who the devil is ‘Rommel’?”

Irma: “Oh, oh, sorry, **Walter** – I should have said.....‘Rommel’ is the dog.....And he is just so cute.....”

Walter: “Oh, I see the dog.....Well, thank goodness for that.....I thought for a minute they had someone living there that we did not know about.....And that **WOULD** have upset **Dennis**, our wonderfully diligent ‘Neighbourhood Watch’ co-ordinator!”

Dennis: (*Brandishing his binoculars*) “Too ***** true!”

Walter: “Anyway, **Irma**, were you able to get that ‘Legal Costs’ information for me?”

Irma: “Oh, yes, yes **Walter** – sorry.....The Wi-Fi in Audrey’s yard was very good and I was able to dodge the sprinklers – which I don’t think are supposed to be on at this time of the day, are they – and access the file pretty quickly.....And, ‘Yes’, we should be able to bear another consultation with the Attorney, if necessary.....It will put us only slightly ‘over budget’ for the next month or two.....”

Walter: (Groan) “Well that’s some good news – but that Audrey and her sprinkler system – when will she ever learn?.....**(PAUSE)** Now, where were we?.....Ah, yes.....**Fifi**, please, please, please tell us about your project!”

Fifi: “Oh Poor **Walter!**....Try not to get too excited or exasperated about things.....You remember what happened at the last Christmas Party when you got so carried away by the singing of ‘The 12 Days of Christmas’– and we had to borrow Bob’s wheelbarrow to get you home safely.....Mildred has still not forgiven me, but how did I know that you and ‘Jägermeister’ did not agree with each other?”

Walter: (Groaning) “Don’t remind me, **Fifi** – it was hardly my finest hour!”

Fifi: “Not to worry, Darling, I will be as quick as I can!”

So here goes! It is pretty dull round here during the long summer months – so I’ve been thinking about how we might liven things up in time for the next winter season when everyone is back in town.

Well my latest, favourite watering hole in town is ‘*The Pickled Pelican*’ off the Downtown Boardwalk, and, as I sat in their Chickee Hut one night watching the sunset through my ‘Raspberry Rhubarb Margarita’ glass, I suddenly thought, “Hey, we could do the same thing in our little community” – which, by the way, would save our lovely residents all the hassle of fighting the traffic, the parking problems and the crowds just to enjoy their cocktail hour.....I’ve got tons of space in my yard, between the swimming pool and the lake, so why not build it there?

And guess who then walked into the Chickee Hut bar? **(PAUSE)** Why none other than our new neighbour, **Alfie Higgins** – and his **gorgeous** wife, Lily.....**(PAUSE)** **(Addressing the general meeting)** Has everybody here met the wonderful **Alfie**? No!.....Well you should - because, not only is he from the UK, but he is also from London itself, which makes him a real live ‘Cockney’.....You know like someone straight out of ‘*My Fair Lady*’.....Why he even has the same name – ‘*Mr Higgins*’ – and he has a most delightful language all of his own, especially when he has had a couple of drinks!....You really must.....”

Walter: (Interrupting) “Yes, thank you, **Fifi**.....How very remiss of me – I should have welcomed and introduced **Alfie** at the start of the meeting.....My apologies, **Alfie**.....Perhaps you would like to say a few words to the meeting?”

Alfie: (Clearly embarrassed) “Oh, right you are..... If you think I should **Walter**, or Mr Chairman, or whatever.....I’m not too sure what I should call you!

Anyway, I’m **Alfie ‘Iggins** and I’m the new owner of Lot 54.....Oh, that’s with the missus, of course - Lily (or ‘Lil’ as I like to call her)..... As **Fifi** said, I’m a ‘Londoner’ – an East Ender born within the sound of Bow Bells, which makes me a true ‘Cockney’.....Somefing I’m very proud of!

I don’t know what **Fifi** means about ‘aving me own language.....But I suppose I do sometimes lapse into the old ‘Cockney Rhyming Slang’ when I get a bit excited about fings.....After all that is, or was, the language of me yoof – not this posh ‘BBC English’ malarkey that you hear on the telly.....

Anyway, me and Lil have met a few of you – and we ‘ope to get to know more once we’ve got the house set up the way Lil wants it.....Is that ‘OK’, **Walter?**”

Walter: “That’s perfect, **Alfie**, thank you.....We look forward to meeting your good lady wife, er Lily – or should I say ‘Lil’ – in due course.....Now back to you, **Fifi.**”

Fifi: “Right, Darling.....Now where was I.....Oh dear, I do seem to lose the train of thought so easily these days.....**(PAUSE)** Ah, yes – I was drinking with **Alfie**, in ‘*The Pickled Pelican*’, and telling him and his wife about my latest ideas.....And guess what, **Alfie** said he would be very happy to help with the construction.

Apparently he is a great enthusiast of handyman projects – I think the British call it ‘D-I-Y’ – *Do It Yourself*..... Doesn’t that sound just ‘glorious’.....Why, maybe we could involve lots of the men – supervised by **Alfie**, of course – and have a ‘Barn Raising’ day.....You know, just like in ‘*Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*’.....Oh, I can just picture them all now, muscles rippling, torsos gleaming as the building takes shape – with all the womenfolk proudly dancing around with jugs of beer, or water or whatever.....**IT COULD BE THE MOST SPECTACULAR SOCIAL EVENT WE HAVE EVER STAGED, DARLINGS!**”

Walter: “Yes, yes that’s all very well, **Fifi** – but I don’t think our By Laws allow you to construct **ANYTHING** on your back yard.....Now where did I read that.....**(Turning to the other Board Members)** Can anyone help me out here?”

(BIG PAUSE as Board Members all react differently: Dennis just sighs and folds his arms; Pinkie shrugs, sits back in her chair and inspects her fingernails; only Irma attempts to help, consulting her laptop)

Walter: *(Looking left and right)* “Anyone..... Anything?”

Dennis: “Not my responsibility, **Walter** – since you made me step down from the ARC last year.....Huh!”

Pinkie: “Don’t look at me.....I can’t remember the last time I read the By Laws.....If I ever did.....In fact, I’ve no idea where my copy is.....”

Irma: *(Timidly)* “I wonder if this is what you were thinking of, **Walter**..... It is on Page 15; it’s Article XI – ‘Use Restrictions’; Item 10; Sub-section 4; Paragraph 7; Point C iii); Sentence **(Counting)**” One, two, three, four - Sentence 5” which says “No storage unit, septic tank or any construction of a temporary nature shall be used on any Lot at any time.”

Fifi: “But **Walter** – Darling.....My proposal is none of those things.....It most certainly is not going to be a ‘storage unit, or a ‘septic tank’ (whatever that is – it sounds repulsive - Yuk) – and it is intended to be a **PERMANENT** feature on the lakeside.”

Dennis: “Seems to me she might have a point there, **Walter!**”

Pinkie: *(Suddenly very agitated and clutching her cell phone)* “Oh no! I can’t believe it!”

Walter: “Whatever’s the matter, **Pinkie?**”

Pinkie: “I just got a message from the Club Captain – “If you are not here in the next 15 minutes, I will have no alternative but to let Margo

take your place on the podium with the Sponsors, and on the First Tee”**(PAUSE)** Margo Snetterthwaite, that, that two-faced, that plastic-enhanced B-I-T-C-H.....She’s never forgiven me for winning the ‘Better Ball Foursomes’ last year – with HER WIMP OF A HUSBAND as my partner!..... I’ll, I’ll kill her, that’s what I’ll do!

I’m sorry, **Walter** – but this is much more important to me than this silly, sorry ‘Special’ meeting.....I’ve had enough, I’m off – I’ve got my, my - ‘REPUTATION’ - to think of!

Sorry too, **Fifi** – I love your idea, I’d vote for it any day.....If you can make it happen, count me in for ‘Opening Night’!”

Fifi: “Oh, Thank you, **Pinkie** – Darling!.....That means **SOO** much to me.....I hope you get there in time – and I hope your **BALLS** behave themselves today.....Or whatever it is you golfers wish for!”

(Pinkie gathers her things and exits the meeting)

Dennis: “Better and better – this meeting may well go down in history as a ‘CLASSIC’.....Now **Walter**, I don’t know if you realise what this means?.....But with no **Pinkie**, and **Bill** unlikely to get here at this late stage, we are struggling with our Quorum of Directors – which is now down to the bare minimum of 3.....So, if we DO need to take a ‘Vote’ on anything, I’m afraid **YOU** may have to change the habit of a lifetime – and actually **VOTE**!

Walter: (Clearly flustered) “Oh dear, oh dear.....What DO we do now.....First things first, I guess....**Irma** – would you be so kind as to take the minutes for the rest of the meeting?”