

FROZEN STIFF

by Harry Dunn

received 2/8/16

He was feeble, he was old,
He'd been through quite a lot
And now he felt the cold
Although he was well-padded,
Especially 'round the gut:
"I feels it more than most," he said,
"Because I has a blockage of the artery
And the trickles of blood what does get through
Is pale and thin and watery."

Each and every winter, he solemnly declared,
As he was growing older,
"This winter seems much longer,
And it's infinitely colder."
So why did he reside in Inverloch
When Queensland's so much warmer,
And the sun shines round the clock.
"Well, it's because I feels the heat, you see,
And I sweats a lot in summer,
So I couldn't live up north,
Where I'd be just another bummer,
No - I couldn't possibly go north,
It might be warmer in the winter,
But it's more trouble than it's worth."

When the millennium was sixteen years of age,
We had a winter worse than ever,
With single-digit temps for days and days on end,
So log fires and winter woollies were the rage,
And simply warming up was his primary endeavour,
But that poor bloke could not get warm
No matter how he tried,
What with rain and wind and hail-storm,
He was cold in rooms where others say they fried,
But he was freezing, fore and nether.
"Go out and get some exercise,"
Was his child-bride's stern advice,
So he sallied forth to the bowling green,
To indulge himself in a game of bowls -
His last remaining vice.

The wind blew cold across the green,
And it rained in fits and starts;
Some younger players hardly noticed -
Those with arteries wide open, and stronger beating hearts,
But this poor chap went comatose,
With icicles and stalactites
Descending from his nose,
And several other parts;
He was frozen stiff and frigid,
On the aluminium, seated,
Unblinking, unthinking, bolt upright and rigid.

Between the fourth and seventh end,
They took care to not disturb him,
Thinking he was tired, and rested,
And rather than delay the game, or even worse, suspend,
They bowled one man short for half an hour,
And no-one there protested,
But when they thought he'd rested long enough,
And needing every bowl,
They tried to stand him up,
But he refused to rock and roll,
And his pulse, it seemed, had ceased;
His temperature was zero,
So they called no doctor or no priest,
They decided that our hero
Had moved on - into the land of the deceased.

They called the undertaker,
Who took him to Wonthaggi,
And placed him in the freezer,
He said, "I'll turn the temp down extra low,
I don't like the look of this old geezer."
Then they placed him in a coffin, velvet-lined,
In colours black and white,
As befits a Collingwood supporter,
The stripes ran *horizontal*, but the old boy didn't mind,
Although it made him look a little wider
And at least six inches shorter.

He had a solemn funeral,
With all its sorrow and heart - ache,
Followed by a Bowls Club booze-up,
Which the mourners call a wake,

**Then he was toted off to Springvale -
That's Springvale Crematorium,
Where they dispose of bodies cold and pale,
And send them back as ashes to their rellies,
In little urns, marked - *In Memoriam*,
*Remnants only - not for sale.***

**The Springy crematologists -
Those chaps who stoke the fire -
Said, "He's been in there long enough,
It's time to stop the funeral pyre."
Expecting to find ashes, nothing more,
They turned off the flaming gas
And opened wide the furnace door.
From deep within, there came a ghostly cry,
An eerie sound like none they'd heard before.
"At last - I'm starting to thaw out,
But I'm still so cold, I fear that I could die
So turn the gas back on, please, mate,
And SHUT THAT BLOODY DOOR !"**