

BOWLING WIDOWS

by Harry Dunn

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An ageing Melbourne couple retired from daily work
Moved down here to Inverloch,
To get to know each other better,
Enjoy our stimulating weather,
And spend more time together:
The husband's name was Jock
And his wife's name - it was Heather.

Jock joined the local bowling club,
But his wife declared, with no regret,
That she was too young to take up bowling
She said that bowls was meant for oldies
And *she* wasn't ready yet.

Jock became a dedicated bowler,
Always handy, sometimes good but never great,
And he never missed a game,
Old Jock was everybody's mate,
He volunteered for duties large and small
In the bowling club's affairs, Jock was much enmeshed
And he didn't mind at all,
He arrived home late most nights,
Often tired and emotional, and abundantly-refreshed.

Now, Jock's poor bowling widow, the forgotten lady - Heather
Heard, in tiresome detail and at endless length
How he'd spent time with a little tart called Kitty,
An elusive little bitch,
And how so often he had missed her,
But occasionally he'd kissed her
Then followed her into some grubby little ditch.

Heather cut sandwiches and cake for Jock
On Saturdays when he played away ,
Tuesday pennant, and other games *ad hoc*
Then Mid-week Turkey Triples,
Social bowls on Thursday, if you please
On Fridays she'd wash his bowling pants,
Always fairly grubby and green around the knees ,
Dutifully, she'd listen to his endless raves and rants
About how they lost a game they would have won with ease
If their hopeless skip had had the guts to take a chance,
And she never did complain when Jock came home late
Somewhat the worse for his ingestion
Of strong intoxi-cants

And then, one day, it happened;
Jock had a little accident and lost one precious leg,
The accident report said that alcohol was present,
So Jock retired from the management committee
And his lawn bowling days were over,
He refused to wear a wooden leg
So he suffered bowls-deprivation syndrome and morbid self-pity.

He retired to the family home
Demanding ever more attention,
Like "bring me another slab or two of beer
Then massage my back and wash the car,
And please forgive my condescension,
But I notice that you're beginning to show your age, dear,
A matter I observe with apprehension ,
So do you think that you could smarten yourself up a bit
And your wardrobe needs attention
Surely that's not too much to ask
By a generous and loving married co-extension.

So, I'm showing my age now, am I? Heather pondered ...
Well - perhaps I'm now old enough to join that bowling club
Located on the Esplanade, all dolled up and bold as brass,
Well, join she did, and in no time at all
Her natural ability, her inherent sporting class
Had that woman standing tall
Over bowlers twice her size and half her age:
She was bowling royalty,
A reinvented bowling widder
With her services out there on the green
Now going to the highest bidder..

This Heather was now bowling up to four times every week
As poor old Jock, in his heyday, used to do
Back in the days when he'd arrive home *legless*
Even though he still had two;
But nowadays, she might say - as she went out the door
"Your dinner's in the oven, dear,
And I'll be home at eight, in case you need some more,
Now, don't fall over, dear, if you can help it,
But if you do, don't try to get back up on your remaining foot -
Just stay down there on the kitchen floor
Until I get home 'round eight, might be later - not before
So 'bye now, dear, I have to scoot.
Its such a shame we can't *both* be out there playing as a pair,
It really is a pity
But right now I'm heading out to do with Jack
What you used to do most days with Kitty."