

RealPlayMedia in association with National Seniors Australia

*present*



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# codgers

the movie

by don reid  
adapted for the screen  
by wayne harrison

**Five Aussie codgers meet at the gym each week to exercise, chew the fat, sling off, sing and have a bloody good laugh! Among the jokes and the secrets, the back strain and biceps, they learn that 'difference' is more to do with your point of view and that no matter what, 'you wouldn't be dead for quids!'**



A heart-warming comedy about life, friendship and being a codger.

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REALPLAYMEDIA IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL SENIORS AUSTRALIA PRESENTS CODGERS - BY DON REID ADAPTED FOR THE SCREEN BY WAYNE HARRISON DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN BIGGINS EDITOR STUART MORLEY MUSIC BY JONATHAN DREYFUS  
PRODUCED BY GRANT DODWELL PETER HISCOCK RAJ SIDHU EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS GRANT DODWELL PETER HISCOCK RAJ SIDHU RON PORTER JAN SUNDELL RONALD FALK STEADY LADS CO-DIRECTOR GRANT DODWELL  
DIRECTED BY WAYNE HARRISON



STEADY LADS



SCREEN AUSTRALIA

TITAN VIEW



Five senior Aussie men, four of them mates since war service, meet one morning each week in a gymnasium...they exercise together, chew the fat together about their families, laugh, tease and sing. They solve the problems of the world, agreeing to disagree.

But some surprising and disturbing elements enter to test and challenge their comfortable relationships with each other and the world around them. Secrets, differences and loss of trust threaten to destroy the long-established friendships.

JIMMY, the jokester, worries about having something to leave his grand-daughter; old LES has to cope with losing his marbles; conservative PATRICK suspects his mate KEITH of having an affair; and good-natured ribbing about old political sores becomes tense when a newcomer's enthusiasm to join the group ruffles everyone's feathers and exposes long-held prejudices. ROD, the youngest of the troupe, struggles to manage the discord...

They begin to see that the vulnerability of one is the vulnerability of all - and commonality begins to re-assert itself. Seeing each other and themselves in a different light: they learn that 'difference' is more a matter of point of view; that you 'wouldn't be dead for quids'; and, no matter what, that you gotta laugh!



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

As a director, I had a stage play that had been touring Australia successfully for several years; and producers who felt, as I did, that we should build on this success. 'Codgers' could, should, reach a wider audience. 'Codgers the Film' was born. We simply wanted this tale of six senior citizens - mates who meet weekly in a gym and are part of a plausible conceit: that 'old folks' if they can change themselves, can change the nation - to touch more Australians, senior and not-so-senior.

With limited funds, we had to take advantage of our one (major) economic plus: we had a group of actors who had been inhabiting their characters on stage for a sizable chunk of the recent past. Among them were some of Australia's finest performers, veterans of all media and capable of quickly adapting their performances from one medium to another. If nothing else, the film serves as a performance record, a glimpse into the art of great male classical actors in the twilight of their careers.

So, the filming, done on the smell of an oily rag (i.e. a modest budget, the equivalent of a Hollywood blockbuster's daily catering allowance) traded off the existence of a stage show. It did, in fact, occur in the middle of a national theatre tour. But we decided to move out of the theatre and into a gym, with aim of being less archival, less theatrical, more real. The process was stimulating, good fun and fast. Very fast. There was no time to write, let alone rehearse, a regulation screenplay. The 'adaptation' was a daily exercise on the set, exchanging visuals for verbals and editing, through the selection of camera shots. Major adjustments in the narrative occurred through judicious pick-up shots and long hours in the editing suite, searching for a visual 'language' to replace theatre's tendency to rely on verbal exposition. The stage version runs to 110 minutes, the film is a trim 84.

And while we're all aware that the end result can never really deny its origins and source material, we hope it represents, at the very least, a hybrid form, and at its best, a film - one that preserves Don Reid's original intention: to pay homage to mature, sometimes grumpy Australians who may have lost their youth and their physical prowess, but not their ability to matter, surprise, provoke and inspire. They can also make us laugh, at them and at ourselves. Certainly for me, on stage and on film, 'Codgers' has been a thoroughly enjoyable experience. I hope that enjoyment shows.



## PRODUCTION COMPANY

### REALPLAYMEDIA

**RealPlayMedia** is a corporate video and mixed media and entertainment production company. We work in close contact with our clients to produce a high standard product.

RPM work in all areas of the market and uses cutting edge research and development strategies to design, write and deliver unique and sophisticated media resources.



## KEY CAST

**Ronald Falk**

**Keith Weston**

**Ron Haddrick**

**Jimmy McMurtrie**

**Edwin Hodgeman**

**Les**

**Jon Lam**

**Stanley Chang**

**Russell Newman**

**Patrick Guinness**

**Shane Porteous**

**Rod Dean**



## KEY CREW

<b>Director</b>	<b>Wayne Harrison</b>
<b>Co-director</b>	<b>Grant Dodwell</b>
<b>Producers</b>	<b>Grant Dodwell Peter Hiscock Raj Sidhu</b>
<b>Executive Producers</b>	<b>Grant Dodwell Peter Hiscock Raj Sidhu Ron Porter Jan Sundell Ronald Falk Steady Lads National Seniors Australia</b>
<b>Writer</b>	<b>Don Reid</b>
<b>Adapted for the screen</b>	<b>Wayne Harrison</b>
<b>Director of Photography</b>	<b>John Biggins</b>
<b>Editor</b>	<b>Stuart Morley</b>
<b>Composer</b>	<b>Jonathan Dreyfus</b>

**RONALD FALK**



Seyler in Wycherley's *The Gentleman Dancing Master*. His Australian credits are numerous. In 1992 he played Lloyd Rees in *Swimming in Light* for the Caracas IX International Festival and went on to London to play Clive in Michael Gow's *On Top of the World*. Most recently Ronald appeared in *Inheritance* for the STC/MTC, played Beckett in *Burnt Piano* for Belvoir Street and Weary Dunlop in *Weary*. On television he has been seen widely and he also broadcast for twenty years with ABC Radio's *The Science Show*. He has received awards for his performances in *Rough Crossing* (Gary Penny/STC of SA) and *Nicholas Nickleby* (STC) and has recently been seen in the feature *Red Hill*, set in Victoria's high country. He has just completed a season of Melbourne Theatre Company's acclaimed production of *Apologia*, opposite Robyn Nevin. Ronald reckons he has been playing old men since he was 21. Now, as a 'codger' he doesn't need make-up anymore!

**is KEITH WESTON**

**RON HADDRICK**



including *What if You Died Tomorrow?* which toured to London. Other stage work in the '70s and '80s included major roles for Sydney, Melbourne and Queensland Theatre Companies, State Theatre Company of South Australia, including the acclaimed *Nicholas Nickleby* and the new Australian plays *Macquarie*, *The Man from Mukinupin*, *Travelling North* and *Floating World* as well as extensive seasons of the Nimrod production of *The Club*. In 1987 Ron received two Sydney Critics Circle Awards for his performances in *Long Day's Journey Into Night* and *I'm Not Rappaport*. Ron first appeared on television in 1954 and has been in many Australian-made television series, from *Certain Women* to *Farscape*, and numerous feature films. Ron was awarded the M.B.E. for his services to the Arts in 1974. His most recent stage appearance was for Queensland Theatre Company in the new Australian play *Water Falling Down*. Ron's not sure when he first became a codger – maybe he's always been one as he is certainly very comfortable with this role in life!

**is JIMMY McMURTRIE**

Ron Haddrick made his first appearance on the stage at the Tivoli Theatre Adelaide in 1946 and in 1953 joined the Stratford Memorial Theatre (now the Royal Shakespeare Company) with whom he toured Shakespeare to Russia in 1958. Following his return to Sydney he worked with the Trust Players, notably in *The One Day of the Year* and, from 1963, played in over forty productions for the Old Tote Theatre Company, both classics and new Australian works,



**EDWIN HODGEMAN**

**is LES**



Edwin Hodgeman has been a constant presence over the last four decades with the State Theatre Company of South Australia, as well as with Melbourne, Sydney and Queensland Theatre Companies, Nimrod and Bell Shakespeare. He has played everything from Shakespeare, Chekhov and Bernard Shaw to Arthur Miller, David Williamson and Dorothy Hewitt, with musicals and Gilbert and Sullivan along the way and some of his notable performances include Iago in Othello, Koko in Mikado,

Shylock in The Merchant of Venice, Prospero in The Tempest, Cassius in Julius Caesar and leading roles in The Legend of King O'Malley, The School for Scandal, Annie Get Your Gun, A Man for All Seasons, The Three Sisters, Tartuffe, The Seagull, Big River, Cabaret, Under Milkwood, Me and My Girl, The Venetian Twins and The Wild Duck, The Crucible and Death of a Salesman. Edwin has recently completed a season of Moliere's The Hypochondriac with Brink Productions. Edwin has appeared in many films including Playing Beattie Bow, The Fourth Wish, Mad Max III and Shine and on television in such classics as Robbery Under Arms, True Believers and Rainshadow. Awards include the National Critics Circle Award for Drama, Best Actor in S.A. by the National Playwrights Convention and, in 2007, the National Critics Circle Lifetime Achievement Award. He is currently in rehearsal for 'three sisters' at SATC. What else can one say upon joining the cast of CODGERS other than, "I came. I saw. I wrinkled."

**JON LAM**

**is STANLEY CHANG**



Jon Lam was born in Australia to Chinese parents and spent most of his formative years in New Guinea, speaking neither formal Chinese nor proper English but mostly *tokpisin* and German – courtesy of a Lutheran missionary education. His interest in performing dates from discovering two left feet at Miss Marjorie Robinson's Tap Dancing School in Maroubra in 1949 but while in Port Moresby he appeared in *Cahoots Macbeth* and *The Players Not the Game* with the Moresby Theatre Group. On returning to Australia, he studied acting with Bryan Syron and also privately with various tutors. On stage he has appeared in the East Coast Theatre Company's *Empress of China* for B Sharp and in the independent production *In Sheila's Case*.

Jon has also appeared in the short films *Dear Grandfather* (Singapore) and *Troubled Waters*, as well as the features *Singapore Sling*, *Matrix Reloaded* and *Matrix Revolution* and numerous television commercials and corporate videos for the Asian market. In 2009, Jon was a NSW Seniors Week Ambassador. Jon enjoys \$2.50 train fares to Woy Woy for fish and chips with other like-minded codgers – and he identifies strongly with the role of STANLEY.

**RUSSELL NEWMAN**



**is PATRICK GUINNESS**

Russell Newman had extensive experience as a young actor in British repertory, West End theatre and in South Africa. Returning to Australia in the 70s, he became a stalwart of the Queensland Theatre Company playing classic and contemporary roles, and the 80s saw him in Sydney at Nimrod, Griffin Theatre, Marian Street, Sydney Theatre Company, Ensemble, Belvoir and Glen Street. But it's from decades of fine acting on television that Russell is most familiar to audiences, including the acclaimed ABC series

*1915, Edens Lost, Palace of Dreams, Brides of Christ and Joh's Jury*, as well as a regular role in *Fireflies* and popping up on *The Love Boat* and in *Mission Impossible* and *Underbelly II* among many, many other credits. Russell played the role of Wiliam Frawley in *Lucy*, the story of Lucille Ball, for Columbia Pictures. Prior to joining the cast of *Codgers*, he'd been treading the boards with Magda Szubanski and Garry McDonald as Arvide Abernathy in *Guys and Dolls*. Most recently, he appeared in the acclaimed ABC mini-series *Paper Giants*. Russell has come to understand "there's many a good tune played on an old fiddle"!

**SHANE PORTEOUS**



**is ROD DEAN**

Shane Porteous his career on stage, notably with a long stint at the Old Tote Theatre Company playing classics including *Oedipus* directed by Tyrone Guthrie and, with Ron Haddrick, the original production of Williamson's *What if You Died Tomorrow?* which toured to London. He has worked with the Q Theatre, Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company, Marian Street Theatre and Railway Street Theatre and in several films and documentaries but is best known for his 12 year stint

on *A Country Practice*, playing Dr Terence Elliot. Shane has also worked as an animation artist, providing storyboards and layouts for cartoon series such as *Popeye, Blinky Bill* and the animated feature *The Magic Pudding*. However, for the last 16 years his career has centred on writing for television, including scripts for *A Country Practice, Children's Hospital, All Saints, Home and Away* and *Neighbours*, for which he twice won AWGIES. Shane is involved with the Weatherboard Theatre Company and the Green Room group in the Blue Mountains of NSW, helping to encourage local writers. Shane claims he's been a trainee codger for years and is proud he's finally graduated.



## DON REID

## PLAYWRIGHT

Don Reid left Sydney University with a B.A., Dip.Ed. to teach English and History. His first appointment was to Singleton High School. He became very involved in the Singleton Amateur Dramatic Club but returned to Sydney in the late 1950's on the invitation of Doris Fitton, and trained with her and John Alden at the Independent Theatre. Along with other young actors at the time, including Jon Ewing, Reg Livermore, Clarissa Kaye and Lorraine Bayly, he joined classes conducted by Hayes Gordon, learning principles of acting derived from the great Russian, Constantin Stanislavsky via the Actors Studio, New York, and with Hayes as their leader this group became the original Ensemble Theatre Company. Don was a permanent member of the Ensemble Company for 25 years, performing in, or directing, well over 30 productions including (as actor) *The Physicists*, *Enemy Of The People*, *Savages*, *Shadow Of A Gunman*; (as director) *The Night Thoreau Spent In Jail*, *Philadelphia Here I Come* and *The Ballad Of Billy Lane*. Since 1984 Don has performed for all the major theatre companies across Australia, and several commercial managements, including, for the Sydney Theatre Company, in *Shadowlands*, *Six Degrees Of Separation*, *The Crucible*, *Phédre*; for Company B in *The Seagull* and *The Birthday Party*; for Marian Street Theatre in *Duet For One* (with Helen Morse); for Western Australian Theatre Company in *Glengarry Glen Ross* and for Gordon Frost Organisation in *South Pacific* and *Hello Dolly*. He has enjoyed extensive work in television from *Skippy* to *All Saints*, in film from *Phar Lap* to *Moulin Rouge* and in radio, recording numerous plays for the ABC, and as presenter of the schools program *The World We Live In* for many years.

His latest feature film, *Men's Group*, in which he appeared with colleague Grant Dodwell, won the IF Award for Best Film and Best Script in 2008. His recent stage appearances include paying Samuel Beckett in Justin Fleming's *Burnt Piano* for the Ensemble, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* for B Sharp at Downstairs Belvoir, and *The Dapto Chaser* for Merrigong Theatre.

As a writer, he performed his own one-man play, *A Whimsical Fellow*, about the Australian poet, John Shaw Neilson, giving its premiere in Wollongong in 1991, and reprising it to much critical acclaim in Sydney in 1993. His *Navigating Flinders* premiered at the Ensemble Theatre in 2005. In 2008, Don's *Codgers* had its world premiere at Riverside Theatres before successful NSW and national regional tours. Its sister piece, *Biddies*, will tour nationally in 2012.



## **WAYNE HARRISON**

## **DIRECTOR**

Wayne Harrison was the director and co-producer of *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*, which enjoyed a sell-out season at the Sydney Opera House in January 2011. His Spiegelworld production of *Absinthe* opened at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas in March 2011 and is still running. His production of *Mom's Remixed*, for the Arts Club in Vancouver, is currently on tour in Canada and he recently directed the world premiere in Sydney of Ron Elisha's *Wikiplay*, *Stainless Steel Rat*.

Among Wayne's other recent directing credits are: the Australia Plays Broadway Concert at Carnegie Hall in New York, which was the subject of the Network 10/Ovation documentary *The Road to Carnegie*; Justin Fleming's *Origin*, the climax of the Courtauld Institute's Art of Evolution Conference at Somerset House in London and the UNSW Art and Evolution Conference at AGNSW in Sydney; the world premiere of *Mom's Remixed* for the Arts Club Theatre in Vancouver; and the Adelaide Cabaret Festival Galas in 2009-2011. He also recently directed David Campbell's concert tour: *The Broadway Show*, which toured Australia's capital cities.

Also in 2010, Wayne was the Artistic Director of ParraMac, the Western Sydney component of the Lachlan Macquarie Bicentenary celebrations, culminating with his production of Alex Buzo's *Macquarie* at the Riverside Theatres in July and *The Governor's Dinner*, a State function in Parramatta with Her Excellency Marie Bashir, Governor of NSW, as guest of honour. His stage production of Don Reid's award-winning comedy *Codgers* enjoyed three seasons and two national tours; and Andy Griffiths' *Just Macbeth*, a Bell Shakespeare production, which he directed initially in 2008, won a Scottish Herald Angel Award at the 2010 Edinburgh Fringe Festival following its successful Sydney Opera House revival.

Besides *Absinthe* in Las Vegas, Wayne has directed four other productions for Spiegelworld USA, three in New York: *Absinthe* (2007 & 2008) and *Desir* (2008), and one in Miami: (*Absinthe* 2008). From 2005-2007 Wayne was the Creative Director of the New Year's Eve celebrations on Sydney Harbour. In 2006 he directed the Closing Ceremony of the Melbourne Commonwealth Games. That year he also directed Peter Quilter's *End of the Rainbow*, starring Caroline O'Connor, in Sydney and for the Assembly Rooms at the Edinburgh Festival, *Two Weeks with the Queen* for Windmill Performing Arts in Adelaide (and Sydney tour), and the Helpmann Awards for Live Performance Australia (also 2006).

In 2005 he wrote and directed *The Return of Houdini* for the City Theatre in Reykjavik and directed *Sunset Boulevard* for The Production Company in Melbourne (Green Room Award, Best Director). From 1999-2002 Wayne was the Creative Director of SFX/Back Row and Clear Channel Entertainment (Europe). Based in London, he was part of the producing team behind the productions of *Gumboots*, *Tap Dogs*, *Slava's Snowshow*, *Mum's the Word* and *Fosse* (Europe). He was the director of *Mum's the Word* in Montreal, Vancouver, New York, London, Glasgow, Dublin and for three UK touring productions.

From 1990 to 1999 Wayne was Artistic Director/CEO of Sydney Theatre Company. Among the forty STC productions he directed for the Company were: *The Normal Heart*, *A Little Night Music*, *Shadowlands*, *Into the Woods*, *The Gift of the Gorgon*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Two Weeks with the Queen*, *Dead White Males*, *Medea*, *Amy's View* and the Julie Anthony musical, *Lush*, which he also co-wrote. He was the original producer of Dein Perry's *Tap Dogs*.





## **GRANT DODWELL**

Grant Dodwell (RealPlayMedia) is a professional actor, writer and producer and director with over three decades of experience in theatre, film and television. He is best known as Dr Simon Bowen in *A Country Practice*. Recent film appearances include the ensemble feature *Men's Group* seen around the country from November 2008, which won Best Film, Best Script and, for Grant, Best Actor at the 2008 IF Awards. Grant has combined his experience in theatre and film, working in both corporate and community areas, by dramatising direct research into live and DVD scripts, written to target workplace and behavioural change. One of RealPlayMedia's latest production's, "Your Mob, My Mob, Our Mob" produced for the NSW Dept of Health is a finalist in the 2011 Deadly Awards.

## **PRODUCER/ CO-DIRECTOR**

## **RAJ SIDHU**

Raj studied Drama, at Flinders University in Adelaide. Raj acted in and directed plays by Pinter, Sewell and Hibberd for Local Riverland High schools and The Renmark Theatre Group, in South Australia. He also filmed a short documentary for the Riverland Regional Cultural Trust on the construction, design and painting of the largest community Mural in Australia, in Berri, SA. He was Technical Assistant with the Chaffey Theatre, Renmark, in 1985/6 and Production Manager for The Riverland Youth Theatre. He also directed, taught and acted with the company.

## **PRODUCER**

Throughout 1985/6 Raj also worked in conjunction with the Riverland Regional Cultural Trust and was involved as a co-ordinator and committee member of the Riverland Multicultural Festival in 1985. He Stage managed and co-ordinated the New Year's Eve Concert in Renmark S.A. Raj wrote, produced and co-presented local radio for the ABC's Riverland Radio 5MV. Raj co -wrote the play, The Little Farmer. He was accepted to N.I.D.A. in 1987. He graduated in 1989. He has worked extensively as an actor on stage and screen.

Raj has been working as an actor, writer, producer, trainer and facilitator in the corporate arena for the past 10 years. He has trained and facilitated extensively in presentation skills, communication training and media coaching, conflict resolution, leadership, diversity, sales development, strategic thinking and planning. He has also designed and produced corporate events and conferences.

Raj is a co-owner of RealPlay Media. He continues writing, producing and directing mixed media in the corporate and government sectors. RPM are continuing to develop digital theatre, television and mixed media entertainment and training projects.



## **PETER HISCOCK**

Peter Hiscock is one of Australia's foremost current affairs television producers. He began at the ABC in 1970 as an editor, researcher, reporter and producer with some of the country's most respected news and current affairs programs including, This Day Tonight, Nationwide, the 7.30 Report, Dateline and the science show, Quantum. In 1988, he joined Channel Nine's SUNDAY program producing many award winning documentary length current affairs reports. In 2000, he was appointed executive producer of the ABC's highly regarded Foreign Correspondent program. Since 2003, Peter has produced and staged a number of major documentaries, awards events and advertising campaigns. Clients include, ABC, the Asia Pacific Screen Awards, First Australians Business Awards, (FABS), Patinack Farms, Minerals Council of Australia and CNN International.

## **PRODUCER**

## **JONATHAN DREYFUS**

Jonathan Dreyfus was raised with music, born to George Dreyfus (renowned Australian film composer) and Kay Dreyfus (musicologist and pianist). His concerts with his dad performing film music live to picture gave him an intuitive feeling for the genre, and he has toured these shows around Australia and Europe. In late 2008 Jonathan first composed film music for his friend's student project. In what he can only describe as a freakish blur, he has subsequently written for dozens of ads, 2 TV shows and many awarded short films, and now Codgers, his first feature. In 2009 he won an MADC Best Original Music Award, and in 2010 was nominated for the APRA/AGSC Best Television Theme award. Jonathan also composes for concert audiences, and has performed with about a dozen different bands on violin, guitar and/or vocals.

## **COMPOSER**