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Cheeky comedy

Tim Gregory, who won the national Irene Ryan Acting Award during his Otterbein College years, returns to his alma mater in the Otterbein Summer Theatre production of *Charley's Aunt*. Gregory, disguised as "Charley's aunt," plays Lord Fancourt Babberley opposite Susan Zimmerman, left, and Emily Cotton in the cross-dressing comedy, which opened last night and will have performances at 8 tonight through Saturday night and 2 p.m. Sunday — and through July 28 — in the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St., Westerville. Tickets cost \$9.50 to \$15; call 823-1109.

Tom Dodge / Dispatch

'Toad: The Musical' features Westerville cast member

"Toad: The Musical" is the latest offering of A Premiere Playhouse.

Artistic Director Darryl Bojanowski's adaptation of the "Toad" chapters of Kenneth Grahame's classic book "The Wind In The Willows" will be presented at 10 and 11:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday, and at 1:30, 3 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday at the Playhouse theater at the New Market Mall.

Several area children will be appearing in the production as Weasels and Stoats. They are Lauren Sabatka of Worthington; Kelli Searfoss of Westerville; Hilary Nelson of Powell; and Allison Principe of Dublin. All but Principe, in her first performance, have appeared in many productions at the Playhouse. Also featured is Angela Arnett of Columbus in the role of the jailer's daughter. Arnett recently appeared in the Playhouse production of "Snow White."

Tickets are \$4.50 per person and available only at the door. For further information, call the Playhouse box office, 798-8537.

OST presents classical farce

Otterbein Summer Theatre will present "Charley's Aunt," one of the most popular comedies in the English language.

First presented in 1892, "Charley's Aunt" has been performed almost continuously since then. This summer marks the third time Otterbein Summer Theatre has staged this popular farce.

The revival puts Otterbein alumnus and Equity guest actor Tim Gregory in the lead role of the Oxford undergrad impersonating an aunt from Brazil in order to provide the proper chaperone for a young lady visitor. The action grows fast, furious and hilarious as the real aunt unexpectedly arrives.

Gregory was the first Otterbein student to ever win the prestigious Irene Ryan National Scholarship. His career

has included work at Chicago's Shakespeare Repertory and Apple Tree Theatre as well as Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., and the Contemporary American Theatre. He has appeared in the films "The Prodigy" and "Small Talk," as well as on television programs and in commercials.

Otterbein Summer Theatre founder Charles Dodrill will return to direct the farce.

Since his retirement from Otterbein in 1991, Dodrill, a Westerville resident, has remained a vital component of the theatre scene in Columbus. Most recently he directed "Our Town" for Grandparents Living Theatre.

"Charley's Aunt" will be presented Wednesday through Sunday and July 24-28 in the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St. The opening night performance will begin at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees are at 2 p.m. All other performance begin at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 for Sunday matinees and opening night; \$12 for Wednesday and Thursday; \$14 for Friday and Saturday.

Reservations may be made by calling the Otterbein Summer Theatre box office at 823-1109. The box office will be open from 1 to 8:30 p.m. weekdays.

Christie work to be staged at OC

The Otterbein Summer Theatre 30th anniversary season ends with the Agatha Christie mystery "Black Coffee" July 31 through Aug. 11.

"Black Coffee" is a little-known mystery that will appeal to Christie fans. Written in 1934, the story concerns a physicist named Sir Claude Amory, who has created a formula for an atom bomb. Sir Claude is surrounded by his family, secretary, butler and a visitor. When his coffee is poisoned, it turns out they all had motives to kill him. Many, of course, are

red herrings.

One of Christie's best-known detectives, Hercule Poirot (played by Ed Vaughan), is called in to solve the case.

Vaughan, an Equity actor, opened Otterbein's summer season as Frank in "Educating Rita." An associate professor of theater at Otterbein, Vaughan's recent acting credits include roles in Grandparents Living Theater's production of "Our Town" and CATCO's production of "Loman Family Picnic." At Otterbein, he appeared in "A Few Good Men" and "King Lear."

"Black Coffee" will be directed by Director of Department of Theater and Dance Chairman John Stefano. At Otterbein, Stefano has directed the musicals "Big River" and "Sweet Charity," the drama "Top Girls," and the children's play "Robin Hood."

"Black Coffee" will be presented July 31-Aug. 4 and Aug. 7-11 in the Campus Center Theater, 100 W. Home St. Opening night performance will begin at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. All other performances begin at 8 p.m.

Ticket information is available by calling the OST box office at 823-1109 weekdays between 1 and 8:30 p.m.

Curtain Players earn OCTAFest honors

The 1996 Central Region OCTAFest was held June 15 at the Davis Discovery Center.

Six excerpts were presented by local theaters. Two of the excerpts were invited to represent the Central Region at the State OCTA Competition in Toledo, Ohio, over Labor Day weekend, including "Talking With" by Westerville Curtain Players.

Curtain Players's production of "Talking With" also received specialty awards for their performance. Excellence in Acting awards were presented to Di Felice and Cynthia Meade, and John Falkenbach earned Excellence in Directing honors.