

Otterbein chairman on leave

Charles W. Dodrill, chairman of Otterbein College's theater and dance department, will take a leave of absence from his job this fall.

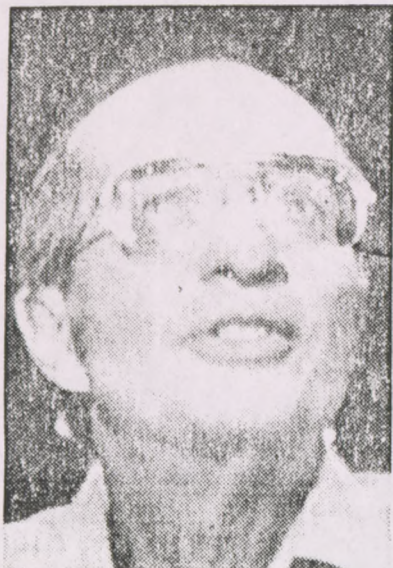
Dodrill, who survived major heart surgery several years ago, suffered a heart attack while on vacation last week in Michigan. His doctor advised him to take several months off to recuperate.

Because of Dodrill's leave of absence, Otterbein has appointed Dennis Romer to teach Dodrill's fall classes and direct *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, Otterbein Theatre's season opener. Romer, a 1971 Otterbein graduate and frequent actor/director during the college's summer theater program, will be considered an "artist in residence," according to Valerie Klawitter, Otterbein's director of news information.

"Dodrill's presence certainly will be missed on campus and we look forward to his recovery and return," Klawitter said.

Dodrill has chaired the department since 1958. He has been instrumental in developing the theater department into a nationally recognized program.

"There's no doubt that the program has grown to this level because of Dodrill," said Ed Vaughan, coordinator of Otter-



File photo

Charles Dodrill

"(Charles) Dodrill's presence certainly will be missed on campus and we look forward to his recovery and return."

bein's actor training program. "He's a rare combination of administrator, educator and artist."

Dodrill said no decision has been reached yet about whether Otterbein will appoint an acting chairman.

After returning to Columbus from Michigan, Dodrill said he is feeling better but is looking forward to taking it easy for a while.



At Cowan Hall

Neil Simon's "Brighton Beach Memoirs" will open at Cowan Hall on Oct. 8 at 7:30 p.m. with performances also on Oct. 9-10 and 15-17 at 8 p.m. A matinee will be Oct. 11 at 2 p.m. Otterbein College cast members include senior Kevin Ford Carty, front, Findlay, as Eugene; junior Cathy Lee Collins, Mount Clemens, Mich., as his mother, Kate; and junior Ralph Scott, Albany, as Jack, Eugene's father.

Neil Simon play set for Otterbein opener

Neil Simon's "Brighton Beach Memoirs," a Broadway and movie smash hit, will be the 1987-88 season opener for Otterbein College Theatre.

The comic drama, to be directed by Equity actor/director Dennis Romer of Los Angeles, will be presented at the college's Cowan Hall, Oct. 8-11 and 15-17.

The semi-autobiographical memory play peers into the lives of a lower middle class Jewish family from Brooklyn during the Depression.

The play "is absolutely brilliant...hilarious and deeply touching," according to an Associated Press review. "Neil Simon's best play yet. He is the poet of all your forgotten yesterdays. I laughed and cried," wrote Clive Barnes of the New York Post.

Otterbein junior Kevin Ford Carty of Findlay will play Eugene. Other "Brighton Beach..." cast members will include sophomore Diana Blazer of Mechanicsburg as Blanche; junior Cathy Collins of Mount Clemens, Mich., as Kate.

Also, junior Meg Williamson of Plain City as Laurie;

junior Lori Schubeler of West Chester as Nora; junior Scott Willis of Lockbourne as Stanley; and junior Ralph Scott of Albany as Jack.

All performances will be in Cowan Hall. The opening night performance on Oct. 8 will begin at 7:30 p.m. The Sunday matinee on Oct. 11 is at 2 p.m. All other performances will begin at 8 p.m.

Tickets will be available beginning Sept. 24 at the Cowan Hall box office, open 1-4:30 p.m. weekdays as well as the Saturdays of performance weeks. The box office also opens one hour prior to performances. Telephone 898-1109 during box office hours for reservations.



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Otterbein to start season with 'Brighton Memoirs'

Neil Simon's *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, will be the 1987-88 season opener for Otterbein College Theatre at the college's Cowan Hall Oct. 8-11 and 15-17.

The comic drama will be directed by Equity actor and director Dennis Romer of Los Angeles.

The semi-autobiographical memory play peers into the lives of a lower middle class Jewish family from Brooklyn during the Depression years. Fifteen-year-old Eugene (Simon), who aspires to be a writer and is

statically charged with burgeoning sexual awareness, serves as the central character.

The opening night performance will begin at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 8. The Sunday matinee at 2 p.m. Oct. 11. All other performances begin at 8 p.m.

Tickets will be available beginning Thursday at the Cowan Hall box office, open 1-4:30 p.m. weekdays as well as the Saturdays of performance weeks. The box office also opens one hour prior to performances.

SATURDAY — Neil Simon long has demonstrated his knack for comedy. With his "Brighton Beach" trilogy, he showed his ability for wistful comedy-drama — and a willingness to expose and explore his own coming-of-age in Brooklyn in the 1940s. Otterbein College's production of *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, the first play in Simon's semi-autobiographical trilogy, features Otterbein junior Kevin Ford Carty as Eugene, Simon's alter ego. Veteran actor/director Dennis Romer will direct. The show opens at 7:30 tonight. Other performances are at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday in Cowan Hall. Performances continue from Oct. 15 to 17. Call 898-1109 for tickets.

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CURTAIN CALLS

Here is a guide to central Ohio theater shows, based on recent Dispatch reviews. For performance times and dates, see theater listings in Weekend Planner.

Brighton Beach Memoirs — It has been done before, but Otterbein College gives Neil Simon's coming-of-age comedy a sturdy production. Director Dennis Romer helps a solid student cast deliver a great deal of comedy and a good bit of pathos. Kevin Ford Carty's enthusiastic Eugene almost transforms Simon's memories of 1937 Brooklyn into a teenage sex comedy, but the rest of the cast balances the bawdy humor with genuine feelings. Too bad the young cast doesn't look its older

roles — a common flaw of college performances. Otterbein College Theatre.

A Murder of Crows — Central Ohio's first Equity theater company ushers in an era of professionalism with skill, grace and exquisite tenderness. Guest director Edward Stern brings out the warm but wry nostalgia in Ed Graczyk's rural Ohio comedy-drama about an elderly couple who must evacuate a 200-year-old town. Michael Higgins and Beverly May develop a marvelous rapport that compensates for the predictable conclusion, and Kaye Ballard's spunky neighbor gives Graczyk's poetic dialogue much of its eccentric humor. A must-see event for anyone who cares about Ohio's rural past — or the future of Columbus theater. Players TheatreColumbus.



Young Eugene's funny and touching memories of growing up in a Jewish family from Brooklyn come alive in Otterbein College Theatre's production of *Brighton Beach Memoirs* Oct. 8-11 and 15-17 in Cowan Hall. Opening performance will be 7:30 p.m. Oct. 8, with a 2 p.m. matinee Oct. 11. All other performances are at 8 p.m. For more information, call the Cowan Hall box office at 898-1109 1-4:30 p.m.

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OCT. 8-11 and 15-17 — Brighton Beach Memoirs, 7:30 p.m. Oct. 8; 8 p.m. all other performances and 2 p.m. Sunday matinee, Cowan Hall, Otterbein College, Westerville. 898-1657.

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