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GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Neil Simon's "Brighton Beach Memoirs," 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 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. Throughout the play he takes "time out" to share his inside observations with the audience. In moments free from being the family errand boy, Eugene writes his memoirs, thinks about baseball and is consumed by the plan to catch his older, female cousin in a state of undress.

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.

Eugene's household is crowded with two families -- his parents and older brother, his mother's widowed sister and her two daughters. While truly funny moments pepper the play, stress, pain and conflict that coexists with family love is brought to light by the difficult struggle to generate sufficient cash for survival. Simon's

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play deftly pulls the audience inside the family unit, unraveling the fascinating intimacies that boil beneath the surface.

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; 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 on the Otterbein campus. 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 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.