

# Close Ties

By

Elizabeth Diggs



March 1, 2, & 3

8:00 P.M.

# CLOSE TIES

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Presented by Starkville Community Theatre  
Produced by special arrangement with Dramatist's Play Service

PLACE: The Frye summer home, ample and sprawling. The place was acquired more than 50 years ago by Josephine and her husband Charles. Josephine gave it to Bess and Watt after Charles' death.

TIME: Now

## ACT I

A Saturday morning in August

Scene 1: Midmorning  
Scene 2: Several hours later  
Scene 3: Late evening

THERE WILL BE A 15 MINUTE INTERMISSION BETWEEN ACTS.

## ACT II

The next day

Scene 1: The next day  
Scene 2: Late afternoon

DIRECTOR . . . . . Joan Embree  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR . . . . . Barbara Bouchillon  
STAGE MANAGER . . . . . Shay McDonnall  
SET CONSTRUCTION . . . . . Bob Anderson  
Charles Thomas, Inez Thomas, Irl Howell, Ralph Olivetti, Mary E.  
Anderson, Dan Embree, Joan Embree, Kelly Balus, Suzanne Dewberry  
LIGHTS/SOUND . . . . . Edwin Ellis  
PROPS . . . . . Pat Alred  
Nona B. Flynt, Bob Alred, Faye Kirk, Pat Kellu  
MAKEUP . . . . . Helen Eaves  
Monroe Dewberry, Rose Buntin  
PUBLICITY . . . . . Betty Frnka  
Sharon Powe  
PROGRAM . . . . . Mary E. Anderson, Shay McDonnall  
TICKET SALES . . . . . Fay Hutto  
HOUSE . . . . . Ron Walker  
FIRST NIGHT PARTY . . . . . Shay McDonnall

## CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

JOSEPHINE . . . . . Ruth Eckhardt  
WATSON FRYE . . . . . Perry Mullen  
BESS FRYE . . . . . Katherine Conroy  
ANNA . . . . . Terry McDowall  
EVELYN . . . . . Suzy Richey  
CONNIE . . . . . Marianne Ulmer  
THAYER . . . . . John Helms  
IRA BEINSTOCK . . . . . David Cook



JOAN EMBREE is conducting her first show. Joan describes herself as the world's oldest graduate student, working on a Master's in Small Town Design at the School of Architecture. She is married to Dan, an English professor at MSU, and they have two children, Nick and Molly. Joan has many SCT credits since she joined the first SCT crew, constructing sets for "Six Rms Rv View."

BARBARA BOUCHILLON has been working with SCT since she first won two tickets to a performance four years ago. She has done all tasks from makeup to her current role as Assistant Director and has done them all well. She describes herself as a "general all purpose person." She has certainly served SCT in that capacity. She wants to thank her male crew (Bush, Rusty, and David) at home for keeping the home fires burning while she's away.

SHAY MCDONNALL, a transplanted Yankee, has been a member of SCT for several years but says this is her first "real" job with any of the productions. She's been behind the scenes typing programs and letters and is currently serving as SCT's secretary. Shay moved here with her husband, Scott, and two children, Sean and Kaisa, eight years ago from the upper midwest so considers them almost "native."

RUTH ECKHARDT is making her first appearance for SCT as Josephine. Ruth says her experience for this role has been in "living this many years." She says she is proud to be a naturalized American and a loyal Mississippian of 41 years. Ruth and her late husband, Dr. Robert C. Eckhardt, reared a family of two sons and two daughters here in Starkville where Ruth taught in the public school system. "Retirement" has allowed her to become "active" in many organizations in Starkville which include the First Presbyterian Church, Pilot Club, MSU Symphony Chorus, and Delta Kappa Gamma, which are only a few of her interests.

PERRY MULLEN has not been seen on the SCT stage since his role in "Dial M for Murder." Perry is Vice President of Garan and in addition to this demanding position has many activities which take his time. He is a member of First Methodist Church, NBC Bank Advisory Board, the Boy Scout Council, the Airport Commission. He and his wife Helen have six children. SCT is happy to have Perry back on stage!

KATHERINE CONROY is a veteran SCT performer having played many roles starting as a chorus member in "Little Mary Sunshine." She played the lead role of Lizzie in "The Rain Maker" as well as roles in four other shows. Katherine has also taken many of the backstage jobs and has done them all well and willingly. Katherine and her husband Jim have a family of "J" members, two sons, Jonathan and Justin, and a daughter Jami and one dog, Jenny. She is also kept busy in the Aldersgate choir, teaching church school, working with MSU Women's Club, and the MSU Veterinarian Wives.

TERRY REESE MCDOWELL is a newcomer to the SCT stage, her only theatrical experience being in high school. Terry is "on stage" a lot in her position as a second grade teacher with the Oktibbeha County School system. She is the mother of four children, Ledge, Sy, Jack, and Matt. She said she wanted to publicly thank her babysitter, B.L., for keeping the children so that she could be in the show.

SUZY RICHEY is another newcomer to the SCT stage. She has participated in theatre at both Delta State and the University of Mississippi. Suzy and her husband, Eddie, have one son, Michael Andrew, who is 20 months old. She is employed by the Starkville Daily News in advertising.



MARIANNE ULMER is another newcomer to the SCT stage. She is a Communication Education graduate from MSU and is now a Speech and Drama teacher at Henderson Junior High School. Marianne and her husband, Allen, have one son, Curt, who is nine. She is also a member of the Aldersgate choir.

JOHN HELMS is 16, lives with his father and stepmother, and has seven brothers and sisters. He enjoys working with people as evidenced by his many activities: Aldersgate Methodist Church, Boy Scouts of America, jogging, acting classes and skits put on at Aldersgate.

DAVID COOK is a veteran SCT member and actor. He has participated in all aspects of the productions from actor in four or five roles to set design and construction. His last set was for the MSU Symphony production of "Amahl." David is the Director of Psychology at Rolling Hills Mental Retardation Center while working on a graduate degree in Clinical Psychology. David's work history is most interesting including everything from Counselor for juvenile delinquents in Mexico, to waiter on top of the Tower of the Americas in the 1968 World's Fair. He is a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Symphony Association, and Association for Non-Traditional Students.

#### DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Everyone associated with "Close Ties" has worked hard to make this first attempt at more serious drama a success. In most of our past productions, SCT has tried to make audiences laugh. In this production, we hope to make you laugh and cry. We see this play as a "bridging" production--a play with more depth and character development than our comedies--perhaps the predecessor of occasional serious productions in the future.

One of the most exciting things about community theatre is the regular appearance of new talent. Lots of new folks came to auditions for this play, providing an embarrassment of riches in the casting process. Of the members chosen, five are new to Starkville Community Theatre (in performing roles) and three are returning after varying lengths of time away from SCT.

Even from the first, it was hard not to think of this group of people as a family. They have worked hard and well together. They even seem to like each other. They've been fun to work with, and I'll miss them when the family finishes its "vacation" and goes back to work.

Among the behind-the-scenes helpers, I'd like to offer special thanks to assistant director Barbara Bouchillon, who worked many extra hours for me and for the cast, and to Shay McDonnall, who stepped in at the last moment to take over the critical job of stage manager when original plans fell through.

#### SPECIAL THANKS

George Taylor, poster and t-shirt design;  
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Yvonne Alred; Suzanne Dewberry; Victor Huertas;  
Alice Carol Caldwell; and Judy Van Cleve.

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