



George Ellison Stokes 1997

GEORGE ELLISON STOKES

Born November 13, 1929 — Lynchburg, S.C. — Moved to Florence, S.C. at age 12.

Graduated from McClenaghan High School in Florence, South Carolina in June, 1947. Joined U.S. Army (Adjutant General's Corps) July, 1948. Promoted through the ranks from Private to a Commissioned Officer in the grade of Major. After serving 24 years, retired from the service on 30 June 1972 as Commanding Officer, 401st Personnel Service Center, Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Began a second career in November, 1972 as Director of Personnel with Humana Inc. (a hospital company) — employed with this company for 20 years retiring on December 31, 1992 as Director of Compensation.

Married Laura A. Bradshaw in Louisville, Kentucky on May 17, 1952. We have a daughter, Bonnie Gail Stokes Lund and three grandchildren — Steven 12, Jennifer 9, and Christine 4. (They all look forward to their summer vacations at Cherry Grove and Ocean Drive Beach.)

After graduation from high school in June, 1947, many members of Florence's "Teen Age Club" — Vera Munn, Doodle "Rhett" Munn, Jimmy Calcutt, Bobby Rainwater, Herman David, "Buckshot" Daniels, Pete Corley, Gary Rogers, Tommy Turner and others including Leon Williams, our leader and task master, headed to Ocean Drive (O.D.).

A number of our group decided to stay the entire summer of '47 at Ocean Drive. Some were "Beach Bums" ("brother, can you spare a dime?") while others worked. Even then, Leon Williams was a big O.D. beach entrepreneur. My friend, Bobby Rainwater, and I worked for Leon, pushing the Ice Cream Vendor Cart up and down the beach by day, and at night we were Bingo Checkers at O.D. Pavilion for, who else, Leon, of course, the Bingo Caller. Although there was no "Fat Harold's" or "Ducks," we were never too tired to dance many late hours at the O.D. Pavilion ocean-front dance Pad. On that dance floor we would see many friends: Burt Bennett, Bobby Somerset, Bobby Hodge, Lamar Johnson, Harry Driver, Francis Lee, Franz Johnson, all excellent dancers, and so many others who are remembered to this day.

I've enjoyed the beach, especially O.D., since early childhood and have continued to come back year after year from Louisville, Kentucky for family reunions with sisters Margie Morris and Ramona Hatchell and their families.

The S.O.S. and H.O.F. (at the Sandflea in Greenville and at "Fat Harold's" and "Ducks") have energized many of us to continue the dance we all grew up loving so much. "SHAG" dancing is timeless — truly a dance for all ages.

So, I say to all of you THANKS. Thank you for allowing my name to be included with so many outstanding people who indeed love the dance they call the "SHAG" and have been recognized as such to enter the "SHAGGERS HALL OF FAME."