



ARNOLD G. KING - 2014

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I was born in Winston-Salem, N.C., on October 15, 1944, and learned the “Basic” from my high school basketball coach, Gray Cartwright, as part of our 9th grade Health and Physical Education class at Mineral Springs High School. We would practice all week with a door knob or bed post and go to the gym on Friday mornings and dance. We have some wonderful high school memories of “Sock Hops” on Friday nights, the “Hi-Fi Club” dances on Saturday nights and spending Sunday afternoons at Crystal Lake.

While attending Wake Forest in the mid-60’s, we did our “Fast Dancing” at the Rathskeller and Bitter End in Winston-Salem and the Castaways and Jokers III in Greensboro. There were also a lot of road trips to Ocean Drive where we would frequent the Pad, the Pavilion, the Barrel, Sonny’s, the Forks and the Beach Club.

Following college and a two-year stint in the U.S. Army, my career had taken me to Roanoke, Virginia. It was now the early 70’s and there were lots of discos but certainly no beach music clubs in Roanoke. My good friend Chuck King had heard about a club in Atlantic Beach called the Jolly Knave. That called for another road trip. We thought we had died and gone to heaven. Beach music and shagging were alive and well. We made some great friends from Raleigh and Eastern North Carolina that became a big part of my life for the next ten years as we competed in dance contests throughout the Carolinas.

I had the pleasure of competing with five dance partners (listed alphabetically) who are in the Hall of Fame – Susie Beaver, O’Neal Branche Bourne, Candy Brooks, Janet Harrold and Susan Jarrett Neal. I’m proof that you don’t have to be a good dancer to get in the Hall of Fame if you can get the right dance partners.

The guys whom I competed against, socialized with or later judged contests with didn’t even need last names. Everyone knew Shad, Spider, Doug, Norfleet, Rufus, Cecil, John, Buzz, Kim, Eddie, Glenn, Jet, Kenneth, Jack, Ronnie, Danny, Mike, Bobby, Bones, Norman, Carl and Tubby – all Hall of Famers – and a new couple named Charlie and Jackie were just arriving on the scene. It was a wonderful ten years of traveling the circuit and enjoying the music and the dance.

Life took me in a different direction in the 80’s. Career moves and relocations caused me to lose contact with many of my beach music friends for a number of years. It’s certainly nice to be back in the Piedmont Triad living in Kernersville, N.C., with my wife Kimberly.

Being elected to the Shaggers Hall of Fame and being reunited with these special folks who were a major part of my life 30-40-50 years ago is a very humbling experience and something for which I will forever be grateful. I love the music. I love the dance. And I especially cherish the friendships that I have made with folks who share this common bond. Thank you, Hall of Fame!