



Bob Myrick 1998

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I have always loved music and dancing. I started dancing as a kid growing up in the 1950's in the paper mill town of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina. I learned ballroom and took tap dancing from stepmother who taught, danced in, and gave recitals for over 60 years until she passed away in her mid 80's. Most Saturday mornings you would find me on my bicycle heading uptown to Livesay's Music Company to buy the latest Rock 'n Roll release on 78 or 45 rpm. I would rush home and play it all day, committing to memory all the words and phrases. Late at night, long after Mom thought I was asleep, I had my trusty transistor radio under the covers listening to WLS Chicago, WKBW Buffalo, and any other all night Rock 'n Roll or Blues station I could find. When I was about 11 or 12 years old, my friends and I learned a form of touch dancing which we called Rock 'n Roll or "The Bop".

When I was 14 years old my family moved to Smithfield, North Carolina and I was introduced to a form of the Shag: we called it "fast dancing". During my high school weekends for the next four years one could always find me at a "dance" somewhere in Smithfield or other towns in eastern North Carolina. Goldsboro, Kinston, New Bern, Carolina Beach and Atlantic Beach were a few of the places where I watched and learned. During my late high school years I especially remember the Ocean Plaza at Carolina Beach and later during college and law school the Jolly Knave at Atlantic Beach.

During the 70's the music changed and I tried all the new dance crazes that came with it; but, somehow, I would always revert back to the old music and "fast dancing". I met my ex-wife Carol at a dance joint in Durham, North Carolina in 1975. We danced during our courtship, were married in 1978, and continued dancing. In May of 1980 we attended a Shag contest promoted by Norfleet Jones at Elliott's Nest in Raleigh, North Carolina. I had never seen the dance performed at this level and I was hooked. We started dancing more and more, going to contest and hanging out in Shag joints. About this time we met and became friends with John and Pee Wee Teel. For the next seven or eight years we practiced incessantly, learned everything we could about the Shag, and danced in every contest possible. It was during these years and with the help and friendship of John and Pee Wee, Norfleet Jones, Cecil and Linda Squires, and many, many others that we learned more about the dance and gained a great love for the music and the lifestyle.

During my years on the "circuit" as a contest dancer I traveled all over North Carolina and South Carolina and in each city and each contest I found new friends and learned something new about the music and the dance. More importantly, I met and became friends with the dancers, many of whom would become members of the Hall of Fame. I have continued to dance and probably love it now more than ever. It has been an integral part of my life and it is hard to imagine what it would be like with out the friendships, the music and the lifestyle that is the Shag. For this reason I am very grateful and honored to have been chosen to be a member of a group that represents the greatest dance, the greatest music, and most important of all, the greatest people in the world.