



Sandy Lowder 2005

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It seems to me that I was born to dance because I can't remember a time that I didn't love it. My earlier years were spent doing tap and ballet and then later on in the mid to late 50's, it was the jitterbug. I enter my first dance contest in 1958 when I was just 10 years old. My dance partner, Big Boy Thomas, and I did the jitterbug at Battleground Park during the 4th of July celebration. We placed 1st. We were members of the Greensboro Community Center where we would gather and dance to the music on the juke box.

My introduction to the Shag came later when I was in my 20's. I remember seeing this "fantastic dance" at a club in Greensboro called the Castaways during the late 60's. I couldn't do the Shag but it was fun to watch all the dancers and the various steps they were doing. I tried to do some of the steps but unfortunately, since I did not know how, there were only a few male dancers that would ask me to dance. A friend of mine, Paul Craver, showed me some basic steps and I practiced with a rope tied to a door knob.

Greensboro, called the Hilton Underground, which is where I met a lot of great dancers. I started learning steps and gradually became comfortable dancing with some to the male dancers. I entered my first Shag contest in 1979 at "The Bushes". Even though we did not place, I still had fun. That was the beginning of my quest to learn even more about this dance. Since that time, I have danced with many great dancers including Harry Driver, Ed Page, Chicken Hicks, Dewey Kennedy, Bob Myrick, Kim Maynard, Mike Tobin and Ronnie Duggins. I had the pleasure of dancing in contests with Kim, Mike and Ronnie.

Also in 1979, I met Milton Nowell. Mutual friends of ours talked us into competing in a dance contest at a club called Bananas. This was a beginning of a great dancing relationship. We began dancing the Pro Circuit in 1979 and continued until 1985 when, after traveling from New Jersey and Pennsylvania to contests, I had to stop competing. The drive was too much for me to come down two or more times a month. I continued to go to shag competitions supporting the dancers as often as I could. Living in Greensboro, I now compete in Mixed Double contests and still enjoy dancing for fun.