



Ed Miller 2010

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My first memories of dancing were of my mom holding me in her arms and bouncing around our kitchen floor to Joe Turner's "Shake, Rattle, and Roll". I was blessed with great parents who let me listen to their records and radio with few complaints about how loud it was. Several things happened in my elementary school years that shaped my taste in music and dance. I found a radio station, WLAC-Nashville, Tenn., and the DJ was John R. The sound I liked was black rhythm and blues. Typical artists were James Brown, B.B. King, Sam Cooke, Bobby Blue Bland and occasionally Moms Mabley. Many nights I fell asleep listening to John R's deep smooth voice, telling me to buy Royal Crown Hair Dressing or One Hundred Baby Red Top Chicks- for four dollars- shipping and handling excluded.

My first memorable summer vacation was at Myrtle Beach. We stayed near the Pavilion. After several days of playing on the beach, putt-putt, and riding the rides, I asked my parents if I could have a coke and watch the older kids dance. Mom agreed and I observed while Mom and Dad were across the street at the rides with the rest of our group. I noticed this guy walking up who to me was obviously out of place. He looked like he had slept in his clothes and was definitely rough around the edges as compared to the rest of the crowd, who were gathered around the juke box. To my amazement, he began to dance with the prettiest girl there. Not only was she having fun but the whole crowd seemed to welcome this guy. For this fifth grader this was a life changing event.

In the early sixties my family vacationed at Cherry Grove and I discovered Sonny's Pavilion. This was my all time favorite joint. It was on the beach. I was still too young to get on the floor, but being able to watch the best dancers in the area made my summer.

My high school dancing revolved around live combos; usually the Catalina's at the Statesville Rec. or different clubs around Charlotte area- The B&G and The Cellar. I finally got to go to the beach Easter weekend of 64 and 65. I met Slim and the Wingate crowd, who became my dancing buddies. My favorite male dancers during this time were Mike Osborne, Buzz Sawyer, Henry Moody and Larry Lupo. Mike had a rare combination of athleticism and finesse. Buzz used his athleticism to constantly dance on the edge. Both Mike and Buzz knew how to clear the floor and put on a show with their unique styles. Henry was fluid and had precise turns and spins, which came from his training at NC School of the Arts in Winston-Salem. Larry had a smooth finesse style.

I went to UNC in 1965 and moved to Atlanta in 1971. I got married in 1972 and started a family in 1976. I went through the disco and country western faze but I had resigned myself to the fact that my shagging days were over. During these years I met some great people who loved to dance. Eventually enough people came together to form a shag club which is still going strong today.

SECOND CHANCE- September 1980- I got a call from a couple of friends saying the same thing- Swink Laughter is planning a reunion for beach bums, dancers, etc at O.D. I got a room at The Oak Tree and the rest is history. That weekend and the early years of SOS are my favorite times in dancing. I remember walking into Fat Jacks and thinking, "Dear Lord Take Me Now". The place was packed and everybody on the floor were good dancers. I have been very fortunate in the friends and memories this extended family has allowed me to have. I am honored to be a member of the Hall of Fame.