



Bill (Billy) Jolly 1988

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I graduated from Union High School in 1942 and entered Clemson as the youngest freshman in the class at the age of 16. I was at Clemson from 1942-1944 and my love for music and dancing became an important part of my life. My roommate, Ed Ford Byars (Rock Hill), was a great dancer and we were at all the dances -- Autumn Ball - Mid-Winters - May Dance and all the others. It was the time of BIG BANDS, swing and "jitterbug." Ed and I saw many of them -- Count Basie, Harry James, Gene Krupa, Jimmy Lunceford, Charley Spivak, Jerry Wald, Dean Hudson and many more. We would go far and near to see the BIG BANDS, traveling in Ed's 1939 Terraplane -- nicknamed "Terrible Pain" because it was always breaking down. On to Greenville, Columbia, Charlotte, Atlanta, or Augusta to hear the music and dance with all the good dancers like Billie Williams, Emily Trescott, Wanda Jeffers, Margaret Lunn, Pat Boone, and Betty Lou Hicky.

In May 1944, Eddie "Fireball" Freeman (Greenville - deceased), Ed Byars and I worked at the Old Myrtle Beach Pavilion for Coach Speedy Speer (Greenville) and Mr. McSpadden (Memphis). We ran the bowling alley and baseball dunk tank. Bud Hunt set pins and also was the "dunkee." I lived in the bathhouse and gave Jimmy Calcutt (deceased) a place to sleep when he first came to the beach. Buck Holcomb, Dick Hendly, Big George, D.B. Evans, Bruz Rivers and others worked in 1944.

Edna Ward (Greensboro - deceased) was one of the best dancers ever. When Big George and Big Edna took the floor, everybody backed off and gave them room -- they were the greatest!

I had to leave the beach in late August, 1944, to join the U.S. Navy in World War II. I served in the Pacific until May, 1946, and when I was discharged I came back to the beach -- Ocean Drive -- and worked as a lifeguard at Roberts Pavilion. I may have been the first authorized lifeguard at O.D. In 1946, Ira Schmidt, Leon Williams, Billy Jeffers, Dick Wilkins, Quinn Jefford, Harold Horne and others worked at O.D. We danced at night as the tourists fed the jukebox and watched. We wore our tailored slacks, draped with open welt seams, tunnel loops, inverted pleats, flap pockets and small cuffs along with a V-neck sweater, loafers (no socks) and our Duck-Tails. Beach life was great and dancing was a big part of it. Each person had his own style and you could tell where someone was from by the way he danced. The sea breeze blew the sand onto the dance floor and the "jitterbug" and swing gave way to Rhythm and Blues and the dance became slower and smoother and a part of the SHAG evolved and everyone who was there will remember because FOREVER -- IT WILL STAND!