



Billy Jeffers 1983

BILLY JEFFERS

In 1938 I met this guy Moses and a couple of other guys at O.D. I told them "You know if we can get this water turned on this will be the garden spot of the world". There was Roberts Pavilion and Caseys Place and now an ocean. This was the place where all the wonderful people could come and dance and enjoy the fellowship of each other.

Roberts Pavilion was the center of attraction with dancing on the second floor and on the front downstairs. The College Inn and several other fine bands would play during the week and on weekends. You could catch Johnny Long and some of the big bands. The most unforgettable characters I met at O.D. were big J.P. Oliver the constable and Dwight Casey who ran Caseys Place across from the pavilion. Caseys was the late night place to be at O.D. He stayed open all night and played the "Funny Little Thing With The Hole In the Middle". Casey said he had everything but love, but once in a while, a little Careless Love dropped in but that was the beginning of a dogs life.

I stayed at O.D. but once in a while I would venture up town to Myrtle Beach and sometimes to Pawleys Island. I was not real wild about Myrtle. It was a fair place to visit but I would not want to Bum Around there. Pawleys was great and had some great dancers. If your feet left the floor over one inch you were asked to leave. I did go on the Hill at Myrtle sometimes to catch some of the good black dancers and their steps.

The Jitterbug (smooth) was our dance along with the sweet swing slow numbers. Big Bands played everywhere. My favorites were Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Les Brown, Louie Prima, Tony Pastor, Jimmy Lunceford and Count Bassie. The Shag was just as Harry Driver said and most people did their own thing. I learned to dance doing the Big Apple like Harry. I always said that when I grew up I wanted to be just like Harry Driver.

The best dancer I knew was Bum Taylor of High Point. He and Jimmy Calcutt were probably the closest thing to what we know today as the Shag. Others were Harry Fowler, Buzz Rivers, Bud Hunt, Bert Bennett, Leon Williams, Robert Quarles, and Bobby Thames. I still remember Pat Foster the lifeguard, Tom Roberts, Johnny Burroughs and Roy Hamilton, who ran the pavilion, Mason and Charlie Hubbard, who ran the bowling alley, Jimmy Ratley, Jack Ward and all the Wards.

The girls were my wife Wanda, of course as I taught her everything she knows. Also Dot Bradford, Hattee Simpson, Billy Williams, Betty Jane Oliver, Betty Hickey, Peggy Ryan, Betsy Lake, Peggy Nite, Ella Lee Sparrow, Mary White Clardy, Mary Parrish, Ainsley Maxwell and Anne Austin.

Wanda and I will celebrate our 40th April 14th. It has been great. Remember to do your thing and if you are not having fun, you are not dancing - You are counting. - Hell, I can't count. I must get back to "The Home" now - Good luck and thanks for giving us a new life with the revival of the Shag or Whatever.