



Franz Johnson 1993

FRANZ JOHNSON

It all started for me in 1945 when Bud Baldwin and I hitch-hiked to Myrtle Beach. We walked down to the pavilion and a crowd of people were standing around the dance floor watching "Big George" Lineberry dancing. This was the first time I had seen the Shag (the Jitterbug at that time), and it really looked like fun. Bud and I decided then we wanted to learn this dance.

Dot Bradford and Harry Fowler from Sumter, S.C. had gone to New York to compete in the National Big Apple competition and they won. When Dot came back home, she opened up a dance studio. Dot taught me the basic steps for the jitterbug.

In Sumter we all went to the Teenage Canteen and a place called Second Mill to dance. People came from Florence, Columbia, and as far away as Greenville, S.C. to dance there. I danced a lot with Lila Skinner Munn, Shirley Knight Lancaster, Lynn Swett Brunson and Francis Cuttino, All were great dancers! Some of the great men dancers that came out of Sumter were Bud Baldwin, Rufus Wactor, George Morris and Jack Nichols.

I met my wife, Marcia McLeod (one of the best dancers around), in Florence, S.C. in 1955. I went in the Army in 1956 and when I got out in 1958 we got married. We have four children, and three grandchildren that have been a real joy to us.

It has really been a dream come true to be inducted into the "Shaggers Hall Of Fame", and it really makes it great that my wife is being inducted in at the same time. It just doesn't get any better than this!!