



# Connie Smith 1995

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My love of dancing and R&R music began in St. Louis, MO in the late 1950's. Although the dance similar to the shag wasn't until 1975, when I moved to Greensboro, NC, that I witnessed "poetry in action" Shad and Brenda Alberty were at the Rodeway Inn and when they started to dance, the floor cleared and everyone watched in amazement. I was hooked!

In Greensboro, the dance crowd moved from the Rodeway Inn to Bill Griffin's Hilton Underground, there I saw Eddie and Vee Page, Ronnie Duggins, Al and Barbara Capeland, Janet Harrold, Linda Cook, Danny Bean, each with a different style, interjected their own personalities into their dance. This individuality is what, in my opinion, makes the shag so unique. It was at this time that Shad and Brenda agreed to help my husband, Jack, and myself refine our basic.

In 1977, Jack and I began competing in contests in North and South Carolina. Although the contests at Groucho's, Mint Julep's, Red's and the Bushes were among our favorites, the contest that everyone looked forward to was Labor Day weekend at Fat Jack's. On that weekend, there would be as many as 25 couples competing, each with their own style and steps that made them unique. It was at these contests that we met the "lengends" of the shag. Harry Driver, Chicken Hicks, Doug Perry and Jo Jo Putnam, to name a few. They were always willing to entertain you with a "war" story about dancing or help you perfect a step you were trying to learn.

Through our dancing, we have made many friends and met some of the nicest people anywhere. The bond that shaggers share in our love of the dance and the music will keep the shag alive for years to come.

It is an honor to be included in the Shaggers Hall of Fame.