



## **CHARLOTTE BATCHELOR (2015) (D)**

In the 50's and 60's in Bible Belt Middle Tennessee, there was not much dancing for young people, but Charlotte and her girlfriends rushed home from school to dance with American Bandstand. Then came college and ballroom dancing at Tennessee Tech where she was a teaching assistant in the ballroom class for a couple of semesters. But then came marriage and children so dancing was neglected except for a brief time during the Disco Era.

The real opportunity to dance came in 1990 when she saw a group of 4 couples doing a dance they called SHAG at a street festival in Johnson City, Tennessee. A few weeks later, Charlotte joined with those four couples and three or four other people. They took a boom box and a small collection of cassette tapes and convinced the Holiday Inn to let them dance in the lounge there on Monday nights. When the air-conditioner died later that summer, the little group took that same boom box and those cassette tapes up the hill to the Sheraton and begged to dance there in the lounge. They were allowed to do so as long as they did not bother the hotel patrons! That was the beginning of the Mountain Empire Shag Club, of which Charlotte is a charter member. She served that club as Secretary/Treasurer, Social Chairman, and Chairman of the By-Laws committee as they applied for membership in the ACSC.

In 1993 that handsome Batchelor man from North Carolina came to the Mountain Empire Club to help with dance lessons, and he and Charlotte immediately formed a dance partnership. When his job took him to Raleigh, NC, she tagged along, and they were married in 1996 - a love that grew along with their love of SHAG. In Raleigh, Charlotte was a member of both the Raleigh and the Capital City Shag Clubs. She took lessons and danced regularly at Reds and Loafers. The next stop on their shag odyssey was Greenville, SC. There she took semi-private lessons weekly for five years and danced 5/6 night per week with Allen at Dockers. She was an active member of the Greenville Shag Club where she served on the Board of Directors and on the annual party committee for three years.

When Allen's job took the couple to Ocala, FL in 2000, she missed dancing as much as Allen did. So she helped him start the Brick City Shag Club, where they provided both the lessons and the music. Charlotte even bussed tables at the end of the evening to stay on good terms with the bar staff. As word spread about the fun dance group in Ocala, people came from Gainesville and Daytona to join in. People from The Villages and several other retirement communities in the area got interested, and the Brick City Shag Club morphed into the first shag club in The Villages.

She also was a member of several shag clubs (i.e. Daytona Beach, Tampa (Sun Coast), Tampa Bay (Beach Boppers), and Jacksonville (First Coast). She and Allen taught periodically in Tampa on Sunday nights, and many times Charlotte got back to Ocala just in time for work on Monday morning. She also did exhibitions in the area at various dance clubs that heard about and wanted to see SHAG dancing, including a ballroom club in Sebring, FL and another in St. Augustine. She helped to found the Palm Coast Dance Club and was recognized by that club for "her efforts in promoting interest in Carolina Shag in the State of Florida".

In 2005 Charlotte and Allen moved to Midlothian where she was a member of the Richmond Shag Club for 8 years (through 2015). She served that club as Co-chair of the annual party for two years, worked on the Decorations Committee every year, and contributed numerous handmade items to the Silent Auction to raise money for the club's charity. She taught intermediate and advanced level shag and, along with Allen, taught at the Sunday Shag Jam for two years. She served on the Social Committee and was recognized (along with Allen) with the RSC's Spirit of Shag Award as Outstanding Club Members in 2011.

She attended SOS regularly since 1993, won the O.D. Arcade's Rookies' Revenge in 2008, and participated in the Smoothies Competition. She could be found at all Richmond Shag Club functions where she gladly helped anyone who asked about a step or technique, and she encouraged all newcomers to improve and to have fun with Carolina Shag. Promoting and preserving the dance was her passion.

Tragically, Charlotte was killed in a car crash in 2017 shortly after receiving news of their selection into the National Living Legends of Dance (NLLD) and only a few months before the NLLD induction ceremony. Charlotte looked forward to reuniting with friends from TN, NC, FL and VA that she met on her dance odyssey. The whole shag world, from Virginia to Florida, mourns her passing and remembers fondly her bubbly personality, her artistry on the dance floor and her love for Allen and the Shag. As any shagger will tell you, SHAG is not just a dance - it is a way of life. And that was certainly true for Charlotte.