



EDMUND “LITTLE EARL” ROBINSON (1987)

It started in Richmond, VA in the 1940's, just after WW II. I remember the radio was playing jump music, and I stepped on top of Aunt Lou's feet and we took off! She said always make the girls look good, and so my lifetime journey with dancing began.

By 1950 I was in the 5th grade and I was fast-dancing in the gym at school dances, wishing all the while that dance was a graded class....I could have a ball AND get an “A” at the same time. By 1952, Daddy was taking us to Moore's Lake down on the “Pike” (Jefferson Davis Hwy in Chester, VA). The jukebox was blaring early rock 'n roll and R & B music, and calling out my name. I'd step out on the floor and the older folks would holler for me to “tone it down”. You would have thought my bopping moves were akin to Elvis' gyrations on his first Ed Sullivan show. This only served to egg me on, as my teenage years were spent anywhere I could find a place to dance, such as Moore's Lake, White's Lake, The Top Hat, The Peppermint and The Satellite. My love for, and dedication to, fast-dancing led to my ownership of a night club, Nostalgia's, in the 70's which catered to boppers. There was never a time in my life from age 6 when I wasn't dancing.

By the early 90's my regional reputation as “King Bopper” was well-established, and about to change big-time when Bert and Kitty Novotny took me to S.O.S. in 1983. My conversion to Carolina Shag was immediate and complete, as I had the good fortune to fall in with stellar shaggers such as Beach Shag Hall of Famers Carolyn Hedricks (who taught me the basics), Walt Graves, Cadillac Jack, and Phil Pritchard. In making the rounds at The Pad, OD Pavilion, Ducks and Crazy Zack's, I started picking up the Shag culture and footwork. So great was my enthusiasm after that initial SOS that I came home and started The Richmond Shag Club in 1986 at the old DJ's Lounge on Midlothian Tpke. The club flourished and in 1992, I started dancing with Beverly Jones, and by 1994, we started competing at the Dance of Contenders in NC, where we placed 2nd. With Suzie Beaver as our coach, we moved to dancing in the Competitive Shaggers Association (CSA), and by 2006, had worked our way to the Pro Division. Ironically, our 3rd Novice win, qualifying us to move to the CSA Pro Division, came in Richmond!

Along the way, Bev and I got married, danced at the National Shag Dance Championships several times, placing in the Non-Pro, Pro and Masters Divisions. Until we moved to North Myrtle Beach (NMB), we worked as master shag instructors in Central Virginia, and spent much time at our NMB condo, enjoying our many friendships in the Shag community. I feel truly honored by this great recognition of being inducted into the Beach Shaggers National Hall of Fame (2009) as a capstone achievement to a life of dancing.

In addition to being a VSHOF charter member (1987), Earl was inducted into the National Living Legends of Dance in 1995 and the Beach Shaggers National Hall of Fame in 2009.