



JOAN MCKINNEY (2005)

Joan learned to shag at age 9. In Greenville, SC in those days – the late-50s -- families gathered on front porches after supper, and kids played games on front lawns and in the streets. In between the dodge ball games, the older kids in her neighborhood taught the younger kids how to shag. They danced in the street, under the street lamps.

She was too young to run off to the beach or "go jukin' " on Saturday night. She had to wait, and almost missed out on shag. By the time she got to high school, people already were doing the new - and easier - dances. The Twist started it. Both folk music and The Beatles were mixing with beach music at her school, Wade Hampton High. But, they still had a small corps of shaggers, and they still had the slightly-older shaggers to watch. She and her friends shagged to the jukebox at Pine Grove Lake (alas, now a townhouse development).

They shagged in the old Gallivan's Hall at CYO (Catholic Youth Organization). Catholics don't frown on dancing; there was no religious overtone at the dances; and a lot of Baptist and Catholic kids were doing a lot of "ecumenical" shagging on Sunday nights in Greenville. Just after college, she met her husband-to-be, Dallas Campbell (a High Point NC native), while on vacation in Myrtle Beach with mutual friends. Dallas hadn't noticed her at all --- until she did a few shag steps to the radio playing in the kitchen of the beach house. He grabbed her into a pivot, and those few shag steps were, quite literally, their first steps on a joyful life's journey. Ten months later, she joined Dallas where he lived, in Northern Virginia.

So far as they knew, shag was pretty much dead. They got only hints of the shag revival back home. While vacationing at Litchfield sometime in the 80s, they drove to Ocean Drive on a whim, in search of shag. It was about midnight, it was midweek, and the streets were lifeless. Somehow, they got directed to Ducks. There weren't many dancers, but the few on the floor were just amazing. Joan later learned that they'd been watching Judy Duke, Norfleet Jones, Dana Brown and Cy Creed. A non-shagging Virginia friend with them said, " This is the most beautiful dance I've ever seen. This is ballroom rock 'n roll."

About eleven years ago (circa 1994), Dallas and Joan stared at a sign on the door of The Jukebox, a bar and restaurant in their Springfield, VA neighborhood. It said "*Northern Virginia Shag Club dances here tonight.*" "No way," said Dallas. "Whatever they're doing, it ain't shag." But it was. Not two miles from their own house, they were shagging!! Or trying to. Several transplanted Carolinians --- Rick Hendrix (VSHOF, 2008) and Liz Kestler (High Point, NC) and Nick and Debbie Nichols (the Sumter, SC area) -- were doing their heroic best to teach Yankees not to bounce.

The NVSC was then in its infancy. They became one of the 75 charter members. The club gave them back part of their Carolina heritage, and Joan tries to remember that, when the call goes out for volunteers, one volunteers! The volunteering she loved most was serving on the Dance Instructors Committee. She taught shag for more than 10 years in the NVSC's free-lessons program, served a term as Club President and served on the Dance, Social and By-laws committees of the Northern Virginia Shag Club. She won First Place, Carolina Shag Amateur Division of the VA State Open and was a two-time member of the Virginia Shag Dance Team which competed regionally and nationally from 2004 - 2006.

After her VSHOF induction in 2005, Joan advanced in the Competitive Shag Association (CSA), with her partner Tom Edwards (VSHOF, 2009). In 2011, they won the Non-Pro Division of the USA Grand Nationals Dance Championships in Atlanta, GA. The next year (2012), they won the Non-Pro Division at the National Shag Dance Championships in North Myrtle Beach, SC. In 2013, she and Tom achieved CSA Pro status, continued competing for several more years, and served together for a two-year term on the CSA Board of Directors.