



RODGER WOODSON (2001)

Rodger was born in Roanoke VA in 1944. While growing up there, he took annual summer trips (as soon as he was licensed to drive) between 1959 and 1965 to Myrtle Beach, where he learned to do a six-count bop-style basic at the Pavilion. Little did he know that the foundation was being set for the most important time in my life. Toward the end of this era, he attended Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, NC and then served in the United States Air Force from 1966-1970.

Married life followed with two sons and the beginning, in 1971, of a career as a homebuilder. Time outside of work was centered on domestic life, Lions Club and golf. In 1989, he found himself single again and he was approached by friends to help start the Roanoke Valley Shag Club (RVSC). Rodger quickly and most enthusiastically agreed because there would be dancing, a social life (again) and girls! He served on the RVSC Board for twelve years and as President for 4 1/2 years.

In 1996, the RVSC's annual Pig Pickin' event featured Susie Beaver and her Junior Shag Dance team. That is when he got serious about the dance, and started taking coaching from Susie. Her guidance and incomparable expertise gave him the solid foundation he would later draw on in competition. The second very influential person he met in 1996 was Berta Lull. Berta was a tremendous positive influence on his self-confidence in dancing, and opened many doors for him to events such as "Our Time" and "Shag Attack". Rodger owes her an eternal debt for her guidance and help in navigating the Carolina Shag lifestyle. 1998 became a pivotal year, in that he had advanced to the point that he was teaching with the Susie Beaver Dance Co. and started competing with the late, great Karen Garman in non-sanctioned shag contests in Virginia Beach and Clarksville, VA.

Rodger was also involved as an instructor at workshops in West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, Boston, MA and at Junior SOS from 1998-2000. At the urging of Susie Beaver, he decided to compete in CSA in 2002 and at the National Shag Dance Championships (NSDC). After a two-year hiatus, he re-commenced CSA dancing in 2004, and with the help of gifted and patient partners, he attained Pro status in 2007. Additionally, he placed 3 times in NSDC competition, and placed in the top ten twice in the Carolina Classic Division at the Grand National Dance Championships (GNDC) during 2005-2006. He began competitive dancing again in 2017, placing once while dancing 3 times in the GNDC Masters Division.

He has traveled tens of thousands of miles in the enjoyment and camaraderie of the dance with no regrets. He acknowledges that he been blessed with wonderful partners, such as Judy Davis, Loretta Macintosh and Pat Folds. He sees his involvement in the Carolina Shag universe as having saved his life; a journey that has brought him to what he feels is the ultimate honor, the recognition of his peers and his 2023 induction into the Beach Shaggers National Hall of Fame. For all this, Rodger is eternally grateful.