



S. Carefree Times



19 Winter 95



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
of the
SOCIETY OF STRANDERS
and
THE ASSOCIATION OF
CAROLINA SHAG CLUBS



**George Hamrick and
Allison McGonigle of
Atlanta & Alpharetta, GA**

S.O.S. Carefree Times

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the mail-out version of the *Carefree Times*. The S.O.S. Board decided to reduce the number of mail-out issues (heretofore called Quarterlies) to two—Winter and Summer. Our purpose remains keeping you informed about events and items of interest around the Southeast and around the country.

Our publication can only be as interesting as you, our readers, make it, so we solicit your assistance. We will always need pictures, feature articles, short stories, poetry, and humor.

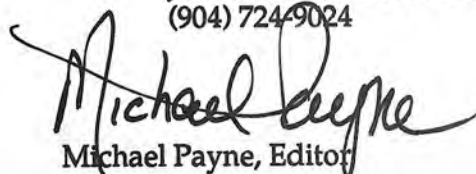
This issue contains the all-important S.O.S. 1996 renewal form. (See the back cover). A photocopy will be okay if you want to preserve this issue. Also included are more comments on the S.O.S. Grand Nationals, a lot of interesting articles, pictures, and a 1996 Shell Award nomination form.

We welcome comments from you telling us what you think about current issues and what you would like to see in the future.

So, put your feet up, read the news and views in this issue ... and enjoy!

As always, please insure that I am on your newsletter mailing list.

Send all submissions to:
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Michael Payne, Editor

Upcoming 1996 *Carefree Times* Deadlines

(Revised)	Deadline	Distribution
Spring Safari	20 February	5 April
Summer Mail-out	3 June	15 July
Fall Migration	23 July	30 August
Winter Mail-out	15 October	16 December

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Thank you.

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S.O.S. *Carefree Times* Winter Mail-out

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All New!

Charlie & Jackie

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TAPE 1

<p>Pause Walk-up Arch Side Step Tuck Barrel Ducks Arm Up Pivot</p>	<p>Pause Walk-up with Boogie Walk Arch with Male Turn Backwalk into Pivot Side Spread Side Spread with Backwalk Away</p>
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Shaggers hoof it to Strand for off-season fix

by Rosanne Howard

"Hav2shag" proclaimed an N. C. license plate on a car parked outside Ducks bar in North Myrtle Beach.

And so they must—with a vehemence that draws a conventional-looking crowd in their 40s and 50s to the beach during the off-season and onto dark, crowded dance floors.

They come to see old friends, get away from the teen-agers and the mortgage payments at home, and to swill down some beer. They come to feel young again, to flirt, and to prove there's life beyond 40.

"The music, the friends, the party, and to get away," answered Tricia Davidson, 37, of York, of her reasons for being at Ducks with at least 450 other shag enthusiasts on a rainy day at the beach.

The event: the Mid-Winter Beach Classic sponsored by the Association

of Carolina Shag Clubs, an event apparently intended to quench that thirst for spinning, shuffling, and swiveling until the big 10-day semi-annual shag event in the spring.

"No one really knows the origin of the word shag," said shag teacher Susie Beaver, of High Point, N. C., delivering a five-minute rapid-fire lecture on a dance from which she makes her living. On her business card, Beaver lists her occupation as "full-time SHAG instructor."

"It's a slowed-down version of the jitterbug, swing, and the Lindy Hop," she said. "It's a smoother version of six-count dances."

Beaver credited the birth of the shag to rhythm and blues influences, too, and said it originated in either the '30s or the '40s. A resurgence occurred in the '70s.

"Groups like the Band of Oz and The Embers and beach music in gen-

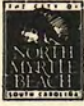
eral got us back on the dance floor," Beaver said.

Which is where they've been ever since—and not only at the beach. Thanks to the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs, inland shag parties are now a common occurrence, Beaver said.

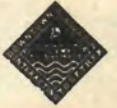
To Nancy Dunham of Salisbury, N. C., who grew up in Myrtle Beach and shagged at the famous Pad in the early '60s, this retro version of a shag event is only a poor relative of what once was. "It wasn't so orchestrated. This is awfully big. I look around here and see only a sprinkling of my old beach group."

Submitted by Susie Beaver. Reprinted from the January 15, 1995 edition of "The Sun News" of Myrtle Beach, S.C.





Ground broken for paver project



A symbolic ground breaking ceremony was conducted on Saturday, September 16, 1995, during the S.O.S. Fall Migration, kicking off the long-awaited Streetscape Project. The street was blocked off the Monday after Fall Migration, and the work began.

We first reported about the project in the 1993 Spring Safari *Carefree Times*. The city of North Myrtle Beach and D.O.I.T. have had to overcome many obstacles in making this project a reality.

This redevelopment of Main Street will include a Walk of Fame made up of individual, local club, and other group pavers, accompanied by blue concrete waves, festive sidewalks, exotic palms, sitting areas, outdoor eating areas, and much more, according to Denise Blackburn, Program Manager.

Proposed for the future is an honorary bronze Walk of Fame plaque for Shag Hall of Famers.

The ground breaking ceremony is pictured at upper right. Those also attending the ceremony are pictured at right.

Pictured below are the members of the current A.C.S.C. and S.O.S. Board of Directors.



L-R: Norfleet Jones, Ducks and Ducks Too; Harold Worley, Spanish Galleon and OD Cafe; Harold Bessent, Fat Harold's; and Donnie Way, S.O.S. Chairman



L-R: Pat Smith, SOS Recorder; Bruce Fitzsimmons, SOS Observer; Phil Sawyer, SOS President; Donnie Way, SOS Chairman; Hector Pfifer, SOS Board Member; Foster McKinney, SOS Corporate Treasurer and ACSC Treasurer; Ron Whisenant, ACSC Chairman; Lynn Northrup, SOS Recording Secretary and ACSC Secretary; Speedy Lewis, SOS Vice President; Mike Rink, ACSC Vice President; Ken Hudspeth, SOS Corporate Secretary; Judy Vick, SOS Board Member. Not shown: Joe Magee, SOS Board Member; John Gilstrap, SOS Observer

MESSAGE FROM THE S.O.S. PRESIDENT

As president of this wonderful thing we call S.O.S., let me tell you that nothing is more personally rewarding than a great and wonderful year; and 1995 was just that.

Both the Spring Safari and the Fall Migration exceeded our expectations. Letters continue to pour in from members who wish to commend everyone concerned for the opportunities we have given them to experience the ultimate dancing and beach music week-long festival. We sincerely appreciate all who take the time to write to us, and we'll do everything we can to assure that this goes on for years to come.

The S.O.S. Board of Directors, under the chairmanship of Donnie Way, is working very hard to make 1996 even bigger and better. We have some great things to look forward to. By Spring Safari, the Main Street renovation project should be completed so we can enjoy the pavers we provided and the conveniences of redesigned sidewalks.

The parade should be even more fun, and special events are in the works. But not to worry. We won't deviate from what has made S.O.S. the "greatest adult beach party in the U.S.A." We know what got us where we are, and we want to keep it that way.

I do have one special request. Please renew—renew early. It is a great help to Pat and me if we can process renewals in January, February, and March. It also helps to eliminate the inconvenience of arriving at the beach without your membership card.

A special note to club presidents: the March 1st deadline cannot be extended for renewals through local clubs. Please make sure your renewals are in the mail before that date.

I look forward to seeing all of you—we'll do the jive in ninety five.
— Phil Sawyer

EDITORIAL

Should we be critical of how others dance? — by Larry Fournier

Human nature, being what it is, invariably causes individuals to react to others either positively or negatively in every walk of life. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise to hear comments made with regard to how well or how poorly others may dance.

Within this context, comments may additionally concern themselves with a person's physical appearance

the source and their mood. It could be a simple "thank you" or total lack of acknowledgment or something like, "Do you also think I would look better with plastic surgery?"

Most dancers are generally super-sensitive about their dancing, and a good rule is to keep your negative comments to yourself. If one absolutely must be expressed, it should at least be guarded and perhaps only

level, without feeling they will be criticized. Be aware that, if one wants to find fault, it can be found in everyone—even in those who are regarded as "the best."

For many, to stop being critical is extremely difficult. There are certainly times when someone's dancing is bizarre, overly flamboyant, terrible, or even rude and inconsiderate; that causes some to react negatively. In listening to dancers, many feel they have the right to verbally critique those paid performers who do dance exhibitions.

To do so, however, when amateurs volunteer to entertain without pay, is more controversial. Many cite the circumstances and the competency as a basis to justify such criticism. Those dancers entering competitions need to understand, however, that by its very nature, competing is judgmental, with many viewers emotionally expressing their likes and dislikes.

While dance teachers, by way of
(Continued on Page 30)

"... some have been approached at social dances by strangers who have complimented them about their dancing, while adding how much better they would look if they would lose some weight."

or attire. If these feelings are not verbalized, they may come across as expressions or, perhaps, just harmless thoughts.

It has been noted that some have been approached at social dances by strangers who have complimented them about their dancing, while adding how much better they would look if they would lose some weight. The reaction varies, depending upon

shared quietly with someone who can be trusted. Democratic people love freedom of speech, and our society encourages us to express our opinions. In so doing, however, more thought needs to be placed upon doing this with tact, sensitivity, and good manners.

Generally speaking, social dancers should be able to get up on the dance floor, regardless of their skill

More of what they're saying in local club newsletters

was had by all; and to top things off, we shared a birthday cake with Ramiro Gonzalez. (He's 21, of course!) Mario, Robert, Jonathan, and Sylvia just laughed; we believe him?

It seems impossible, with her busy schedule, but Jackie McGee took the time to design the beautiful crystal first place trophies. This lady is extremely talented. All I can say is the U.N. should consider hiring Charlie and Jackie as Good Will Ambassadors.

We are looking forward to next year. In closing, thank you for sharing your dreams with us. — Louise Del Carlo

Phoenix Swing Dance Club

Over the Memorial Day holiday weekend, a unique celebration of dance took place in Atlanta, Georgia, by way of the thorough and long-term planning of Jackie McGee and Charlie Womble and the welcoming reception of the S.O.S. Association.

The first S.O.S. Grand National Dance Championship hosted dancers from the worlds of swing and Carolina shag. The weekend was filled with exciting contests, great dancing fun, and added friendships.

Eleven years ago Jackie and Charlie began their "stardom" in Carolina shag. Six years ago they became acquainted with the swing community by competing in the U.S. Open in Anaheim. Thus, their dance world opened up to more friendships and greater rewards from dance and music. We know them to be not only talented but truly nice people. How like them to want to turn their rewarding experience into something *everyone* can enjoy.

Their discovery of swing turned into *our* discovery of shag. Easygoing and delightful, like their wonderful style of dance, Jackie and Charlie have naturally served as ambassa-

dors of their dance concept. As we met their fellow shaggers at the Grand Nationals, we realized they accurately exemplify the shag community—talent and friendliness prevailed throughout the event.

As was stated in their welcome, the purpose of the S.O.S. Grand Nationals was not to change dance styles, but to offer an opportunity to improve our dancing through association with dancers who do things a little differently.

For many it was a weekend of revelation. Swing dancers were in awe of the beautiful, tastefully flowing garments worn by the ladies of shag. The shaggers, once they became accustomed to our attire, seemed to get a kick out of it. (In the spirit of decorum, some of us may have become more conservative as we chose our dancing ensembles. After all, we didn't want to knock their sock off!)

We were spellbound as we watched the shaggers' style of ease, seeming to make their lower limbs flow effortlessly with soft, busy grace. In turn, our new shag friends were fascinated seeing the energy and full-body activity of both men and women of swing.

True *Masters of Ceremony*, Kenny Wetzell and Mike Lewis combined their wit and music to entertain us and make shag and swing dancers realize that we enjoy dancing to the same music. Kenny and Mike must have had great fun on the bandstand because they surely made us have fun.

Judges from all over the country were led by Annie Hirsch, a wonderful liaison for all dance communities.

Every contest was exciting. Every contest, whether it be shag or swing, was applauded and cheered by one of the most constantly enthusiastic audiences I've ever seen. All three days the ballroom had a feeling of excitement and support for all the performers, with most receiving standing ovations. To say it was

"thrilling" is putting it lightly.

If you have an opportunity to acquire the tape of this event, you will definitely appreciate the talent in all the divisions.

Many swing friends traveled great distance for the S.O.S. event in Atlanta, eager to show their support, anxious to compete, and glad to expand their horizons of dance experience. It was a thrill to be in Shag Country. Throughout the event we were reminded of the wonderful warmth and hospitality of the South. Their land is beautiful and so are the friendships newly made. — Sandra Callas

Lake Hickory Shag Club

What a fantastic weekend! I can't begin to tell you what a wonderful time I had—and I know that Michael will agree with me. The competition from both groups, shag and swing, was awesome! The swing people were super friendly and enjoyed us as much as we enjoyed them. Needless to say, the swing group, especially the Showcase group, were unbelievable. (Usually I come home from a shag weekend with tired feet—but not this time—it was my hands. I clapped so much, my hands swelled instead of my feet)

If there are plans for another one of these meetings of the two dance worlds, I strongly suggest that you attend. It was a first-class party and competition with plenty of dancing time at a beautiful hotel. — Ann Sigmon

ShagAtlanta

A Competitor's View or "I know there is a contest in here somewhere."

We started our volunteer duties Wednesday, making runs from Alpharetta to the airport, picking up special attendees, driving them to the Waverly, and then driving back to Alpharetta.

Since we have a mini-van, which
(Continued on Page 28)

More of what they're saying in local club newsletters

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SPOTLIGHT ON: Virginia Beach Shag Club

by Kandi White

It all began in 1984
When folks would run to dance on the floor.
Then Fran Bingley came up with a dream.
"I'll start a shag club," she started to scream.

She approached George Lineberry and asked for
financial help.
Even he was excited in spite of himself.
And there it began, the Tidewater Shag Club.
They'd meet at the Round Room and rub-a-dub-dub.

They would dance and dance for years to come.
Then one day they had to find a new home.
A man named Roger who liked being called Fat
Opened up a club and said, "Here's where it's at."

And after, folks started coming and learning to dance.
Why even some got lucky and found romance.
But because a new home had been founded,
A new name for a shag club was heard and sounded.

Then Barbara Ambrose came into view.
Bill Henry said, "I want to talk to you.
I am appointing you president of this new organization.
And you can serve in it 'til you give me your
resignation."

Then in November 1989 there came a time where a
woman was elected.
She was approached and notified that she had been
selected.
She was in charge and by and large she'd listen to what
you'd tell her.
There could be no other than the lovely Vickie Keller.
She also served as president through December 1990.

In the year of 1991, we thanked Vickie for what she had
done.
And during this election year Charlie Snow had won.
He took the seat as president and liked to bang his gavel.
But to all the S.O.S. events he went because Charlie loved
to travel.
And when Charlie did all he could for the club, he never
turned his back.
And when his term was over, we voted in Nancy Black.

Now Nancy served as president through the year of '92.
She worked endlessly to make everyone happy including
me and you.

She dressed us like reindeer and we'd prance around the
floor

'Til all you members in the shag club simply cried for
more.

She left that year at the end of '92 'cause she couldn't
work any harder.

So the next elected president was known as Betty Carder.

Betty served as president through December of '93.
She provided fun for everyone and made money for
charity.

She helped in every way she could and danced 'til her
feet were swelling.

She stepped down and we got a new president—his
name was Roger Elling.

Roger served in '94; though laid back, he kept his eyes
open.

And if we ever had a problem, there was never any
wishin' and hopin'.

He took care of everything we asked and did it with a
grin.

And then our next president was known as Mac
McLaughlin.

So to each and everyone, we extend our appreciation
And would like to give you this award for your hard
work and dedication.

And although you no longer serve in office, your work
we'll never forget.

For you have helped the Virginia Beach Shag Club be the
best club ever yet!

Editor's note: Kandi's poem was first published in the Virginia Beach Shag Club's newsletter, "The Beach Breeze."

ATTENTION DANCE CLUBS:
Your club can be featured in an
upcoming issue. Simply submit
your typed article to me at the
address on page 2, and I'll take it
from there! — Editor



The Competitive Edge

by John English

When was the last time you attended a SPA/CSA contest? If it's been a while, then let me try to give you some good reasons for going to the next contest in your area.

From the first time I saw the shag in high school, I remember thinking what a sexy dance it was with all the exciting footwork. It was a street dance and still is today. The dance has really evolved into a more entertaining art form. I remember how much I enjoyed watching those dancers who could do it well. I still enjoy watching the best shaggers wherever I go, whether it's a shag contest or a party.

If you enjoy watching the very best shaggers, then go to a contest. If you go on Friday night, you get to watch two categories of competitors. First the Amateur Division dances one round, and then the Novice Division finishes one round of competition.

The Amateur Division is made up of those couples who are just starting out in the competitive world. You just might see the beginning of the next National Champions. With the Novice Division, you will see a more polished group who have won and earned enough points to move to this division or have made this category their starting point based on personal experience.

If you attend on Saturday night, then you will see the last round of the Amateur Division and the first round of the Professional Division. The Professional Division represents a group of dancers who have earned the right to be there either by winning contests and earning enough

credit to become Professional or by choice based on their personal judgment.

On Sunday, contest time is one o'clock with the second round of the Novice Division and the final round of the Professional Division. The scores are then tallied up, and the winners in each division are announced.

Now, with all that information, you might ask, "When do I get a chance to dance?" No matter what night you attend, you will have time to do some dancing. With our revised format of only one round per division, enough time is allotted for recreational dancing as well as a chance to dance with some of your favorite competitors.

"The biggest reason for you to attend a shag contest is because *we need you!* We want you to feel the enthusiasm we feel as competitive dancers. We also welcome your ideas and suggestions as to how we can make our contests more entertaining."

It used to be that the competitors came from just two states: North and South Carolina. Now we have couples who compete from Jacksonville, Florida; Rincon, Georgia; Birmingham, Alabama; Atlanta, Georgia; and Richmond, Virginia. With the growth of the shag in these areas come more interesting styles. At any contest you will find athletic as well as smooth dancers. You will also find couples who dance to smooth and those who dance to upbeat R & B. So, not only will you find variety in styles but in music as well.

Variety is also there in age. We

have dancers who are in their early twenties, many of whom have moved up from the Junior ranks; and we have those who are in their 50's and some even in their early 60's still competing and showing their style of dance.

Where else can you go today and be as entertained? Certainly not the movies. The cost of the soda and popcorn alone is more than you would pay to get in the door to see a SPA/CSA contest.

Also, there is an extra added bonus we will throw in as well. The next time a contest comes to your area and you would like to have the competitors conduct a workshop, we will be glad to hold one for you on Saturday afternoon, provided there is enough interest. One way to do this is to meet with your shag club prior to the contest date and establish a roster of those members who may be interested. Pass this information on to the SPA club owner or the current president of CSA.

The biggest reason for you to attend a shag contest is because *we need you!* We want you to feel the enthusiasm we feel as competitive

dancers. We also welcome your ideas and suggestions as to how we can make our contests more entertaining. Please feel free to pass your ideas on to any of the competitors or SPA club owners.

By the time you read this article, we, as competitors, will have finished another year of competition with eleven SPA/CSA contests in all and two national shag contests.

A new schedule will be published for '96 in January. Please try to attend a contest this coming year, and we thank you for your past support.

John English is a Board Member of the CSA.

OPINION

Just What Is "Shag" Music?

by David Sessoms

There are a lot of terms that are used loosely out there to describe the music (or subsets of it) that we dance to and occasionally sip a few beers to. These include "shag music," "beach music," "smoothies," "bluegum," "boogie woogie," "bubblegum," and even "tourist beach music" (which, of course, all true shaggers loathe!).

Since none of these terms mean the same thing to any two shaggers, you can imagine how difficult it is for the deejay who gets a request for a "good shag song" where the requester can't give a single title or artist that he can identify as the type he personally associates with good shag songs.

In fact, there is such a variety of types of music out there that is enjoyed by different people or regions—although they are all legitimate shaggers—that I am firmly convinced that if a deejay were to compile a list of 100 proven and well-known shag songs and then ask ten well-versed shaggers to select their ten favorite songs, that they would generally be in agreement on about 20% of their selections.

And there is nothing wrong with that! That is one of the great things about shag music; there is something out there for everybody.

So, just what is this thing we call shag music? Personally, after several years of enjoying it after the military transferred me back to Fayetteville in 1986, I still can't quite pin it down. Part of the reason is that the music has expanded its R&B roots to include all types of music, as long as that special beat is there.

As a deejay, this is one of the strengths and also one of the weaknesses of trying to play shag music to the varied types of people who love it. I call it a strength because no matter what your previous personal tastes in music were before you

became a follower of this special dance and music, there is something there for you.

Bluegum, R&B, country, big band, and pop (and we can even say Latin with Hansel Martinez' *Love Potion #9* and Julio Iglesias' *Moonlight Lady* and *Begin the Beguine*) have been played regularly at popular shag clubs.

It is also a weakness because there are a few out there who firmly believe that shag music is one and only one style of music. *Their kind.*

Now, I have no problem with anyone who enjoys this music. Where I have a small disagreement is with anyone who tries to restrict the sincere enjoyment of this dance by others by acting as a censor on the music by trying to pressure the deejay in a given club to play only a particular type of shag music. Being

them, who has selective memory retention, or who is simply misinformed. But it does seem to me that what is important is keeping the numbers who enjoy it growing and making sure that it is not going to die with our generation.

So, as far as I am concerned (for what that's worth), I would like to suggest that we stop arguing among ourselves about what is a proper shag song. I would propose a simple definition. That is that a shag song is any one that makes people want to get on the dance floor and start shagging and enjoying themselves while doing so.

There may be some very good shag songs that I personally don't like, but who am I to say that they shouldn't be played if there are people out there that would like to dance to them. Besides, I can't dance

"I would like to suggest that we stop arguing among ourselves about what is a proper shag song. I would propose a simple definition. That is that a shag song is any one that makes people want to get on the dance floor and start shagging and enjoying themselves while doing so."

forced to listen to something you really don't like does not ensure that you will learn to like it. More than likely, it merely means that you will find another diversion and location where you will devote your spare time and dollars.

I've been told by some—I wasn't around back in the early days of the shag, although I sincerely regret missing it—that shag music should be only old, hard core R&B or "bluegum" as it was in the beginning. I've also been told by others that what the dance really began with was more of the smooth big band sound.

Now, I'm not smart enough to determine whose memory has failed

to every song, so why not let those others have their time on the floor.

Having said this, I never doubt for a moment that shag music will always have a heavy R&B base, and certain standards will always be heard. But at the same time, let's take advantage of those country, pop, or even Latin songs that have our type of beat.

I've been to parties where, through censorship imposed by either the deejay (certainly not one of our association members!) or one of the hosts, only one style of shag music was played. The majority of the attendees/guests—or at least those who were heard to express an

(Continued on next page)

opinion—did not particularly enjoy the experience.

My final bit of advice is to give the deejay a request that you would like to hear. Most of us will do our best to work it in as quickly as possible.

If you don't know the names of any of your favorite songs (you only know them when you hear them), try to help the deejay out in the future. Since most of us aren't clairvoyant (with the possible exception of Mike Lewis who can do anything), when you hear a song that you really like, ask the deejay playing it what it is. He would probably even be willing to write the title and artist down for you.

Then the next time you want to make a request but once again can't remember any songs, pull this out of your wallet or purse, march up to the deejay booth, and make your request.

David Sessoms lives in Fayetteville, N.C. and is a member of the Association of Beach and Shag Club Deejays. This article was reprinted from the Fayetteville Area Shag Association's newsletter, Sept. 1995.

Dancing ... the priceless treasure

by Kenny Wetzel

Nothing in the world offers more and costs less than the sport of dancing. Like an education, it increases in value the more one uses it. Its stock never depreciates as the splendor of it continues to shine luster and brilliance.

The enjoyment and exercise derived from body movements set to music are only two of countless advantages that the dancer receives. Introverts become social butterflies; stick-in-the-muds develop wings on their feet; shut-ins find freedom; busybodies make their bodies busy; frowners start to smile; and smilers begin to laugh. It infects us with a cure for all of life's miseries.

As the ultimate physical and mental outlet, the couple dancing serves as an international language while presenting competitive challenges and self-satisfaction. It gives all kinds of music a phenomenal extension and greater worth. The ever constant invisible mist, pro-

pelled by its movement, creates a fountain of youth that keeps us young—physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Fantasy dreams of pleasure and adventure become evident when dancing shoes touch the floor. It is an escape from the reality whereby the hectic world around us is forgotten for a few glorious and precious moments.

Music gives us hope. Our partner becomes an ally. The movement of our bodies, together in dance, sets us free for a song or two. It gives us an entire evening of stars in our eyes and a gold dust at our feet.

The special gift of dancing is priceless. It is a treasure with never-ending fortunes. Let us not forget that, as dancers, we are the luckiest people in the world.

Kenny Wetzel is an award-winning MC and DJ, dance teacher, and contest judge and played the music for the swing contests at the 1995 S.O.S.G.N. in Atlanta.

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BATTLING BACK

Nine years ago the American Cancer Society's mouse was diagnosed with cancer. During the 1970s, Julia Evans was the popular Send-A-Mouse-To-College mascot for the Cancer Society's local fundraisers. When she wasn't playing tennis, she was wearing gray fur and a mortarboard, urging people to give money for cancer research.

In 1986, it became more personal. That spring Mrs. Evans noticed an indentation in her breast. When she had it checked, she found that it was indeed cancer. Surgery immediately followed.

A month later she was having severe back pain, and doctors discovered the cancer had spread to her pelvis and then to her shoulders and then to her colon.

For the past nine years, she has undergone surgeries on her colon and her breasts plus reconstructive surgeries on her breasts. She has had countless radiation treatments and untold chemotherapy treatment. She has broken a leg and had a steel rod inserted. Her weight has sunk to 90 and ballooned to 145, depending on the nausea and the drugs. She has given up the tennis she once played seven days a week.

But through it all, Mrs. Evans has battled back. "My life is actually wonderful," she says with a smile. "... I gave it to the Lord. I had tried to deal with this and fix it myself for so long, and I can't fix it. My doctors can do a lot of things for me and keep me alive. But the Lord's the one

who makes the decisions."

If Mrs. Evans isn't trying to fix things herself, she is taking command of her personal well-being. Early on, she turned to self-hypnosis to help her combat the pain and nausea of chemotherapy. She began spending weeks at a time at the beach, a source of many happy childhood memories. And she has worked hard to communicate her pain needs to her doctors, taking a variety of pain medications, including THC, the active drug in marijuana.

"You're the only one who knows your own pain," she points out. "I've been a patient with my particular doctor for nine years. Although he has my records there, I go over everything with him when I come in that office."

There have been times, sometimes months at a stretch, that she was bedridden and feared she wouldn't walk again. But as soon as she got back up, she took a part-time job in a dress shop, began working out on a treadmill, and went back to the shagging dances that she and husband Ed love.

"I've been to my shagging parties in a wheelchair; I've been with a walker; and I've been on crutches," she said.

Eschewing wigs, she's also been in all manner of hats: sun hats, straw



Ed and Julie Evans

hats, derbies, ball caps. "I get so many invitations to dance," she added, "that I've had the other women tell me they're going to shave their heads and wear caps, too."

For more regular aerobic exercise, she turns to her treadmill now that tennis and strong sunlight are out.

"I try to do five miles a day," she said. "It may take me all day to do it, but I do it."

Because of her positive attitude, Mrs. Evans is frequently asked to counsel people who have just been

diagnosed with cancer or who are at critical stages of treatment. One of her phone contacts was Jim Valvano, the basketball coach at North Carolina State University, who died at age 47.

"I think what most cancer patients are afraid of is that they're alone," she said. That's one fear she doesn't have.

"What she tells most of our friends," says Ed, "is that the reason she's been able to go through all these experiences is so she's still alive to make my life miserable."

"That's my ambition in life," she agrees with a wink.

Editor's note: This article was written by Deb Richardson-Moore and appeared in *The Greenville [South Carolina] News*. I found it in *Shag Atlanta's Peach Beat*, Vol. IV No. 3.

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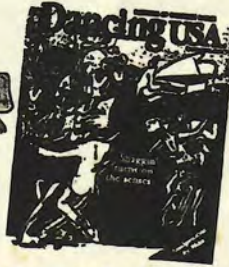
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SOURCE..... **S.O.S.**

Finally something definitive has been written about the Shag. This book is everything I hoped it would be. Wonderful stories, pictures and facts. Having been a part of the beach scene for so long, I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed reading SHAG, The Dance Legend. It brought back a lot of memories. Congratulations on a job well done.

Harry Driver, President,
Shag Hall of Fame

The answer to a Shagger's prayer. If you have, or ever had, one grain of sand in your shoes, this book is a "must have" for you. Bo Bryan and Will Maddox have done the world of Shaggers, Stranders and lovers of beach music a great service. The people, the places, the music, the dance; this one has it all. As true to the Shag as an eight-count basic step.

Phil Sawyer, President,
Society of Stranders



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<p>DECEMBER 1995</p> <p>1-2 OK Swing Champ'ships, OK City 1-3 ShagAtlanta Christmas Party 1-3 CSA Banquet, tba 27-31 New Year's Eve Parties, Harold's 28-31 New Year Extravaganza, Ducks 29-31 New Year's Champ'ships, Dallas 29-1 New Year's Eve Party, CA 30-31 Outerbanks New Year's Eve 31 JBBA New Year's Eve Party 31 SFSDS New Year's Eve Party</p>	<p>JANUARY 1996</p> <p>1 JBBA Pig Roast, K/C Hall, Jax 1 SFSDS Dance 5-7 Isl Winter Classic, Hilton Head 6-16 Big Band Cruise (800) 47-DANCE 7-14 Blues Cruise 800-886-6132 11-14 Mid-Winters, N. Myrtle Beach 12-14 Swing Expo '96, Las Vegas 13-20 Boot Scoot the Caribbean 19-21 Monterey Swingfest, CA 21-28 Swing Cruise (800) 521-2346 26-28 Mixed Dbls. Contest, G'boro, NC</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 1996</p> <p>1-4 Spring Fling, Daytona 2-4 Foothills Winter Boogie, Lk Hick'y 9-11 Winter Shag Blast, Atl. Bch., NC 9-11 Swinging in Northland, MN 12-28 Big Band Cruise (800) 47-DANCE 16-17 Benefit Dance, Burlington, NC 16-18 Capital Swing Conv, Sacramento 16-18 Boogie Dance Festival, CA 23-25 ACSC Winter Workshop, Atlanta 29-3 DJ Throwdown, N. Myrtle Beach</p>
<p>MARCH 1996</p> <p>1-3 Las Vegas Swings 8-10 Paradise Champ'ships, Hawaii 15-17 Shag Classic VII, Augusta, GA 22-29 Big Band Cruise (800) 47-DANCE 29-30 Buddy Austin Invitation'l, OK City 29-31 Shag Attack, Fat Harold's, NMB</p>	<p>APRIL 1996</p> <p>4-7 Texas Classic, Dallas 12-14 American Swing Champ's, NYC 12-21 Spring Safari, N. Myrtle Beach 19-21 Swing Champ's, Buena Pk., CA 23-6 Big Band Cruise (800) 47-DANCE 26-3 Swing Cruise (800) 537-8937</p>	<p>MAY 1996</p> <p>2-4 SOB, Panama City, FL 3-4 Pere Marquette Getaway 10-11 Sand Kicker, Sandy Bch., NC 18 Electric Storm '96, Clemson, SC 21-8 Big Band Cruise (800) 47-DANCE 23-26 Grand Nationals, Atlanta 25-1 Ultimate R&B Cruise, (800) 886-6132</p>
<p>JUNE 1996</p> <p>7-9 N.W. Regional Swing, Seattle 13-16 St. Louis Invitational 13-16 Reno Dance Vacation, NV 15 Feather Awards, CA 18-23 Boogie on the Riverwalk XI, Jacksonville, FL 21-23 Jack & Jill O'Rama, CA 22-29 Bop Cruise</p>	<p>JULY 1996</p> <p>4-7 Summer Sizzler, Nashville, TN 4-7 Phoenix Swing 11-14 New Orleans Extravaganza 12-13 ACSC Summer Wrkshp, S. Pines 26-28 Summer Dance Festival, CA 29-2 Dallas D.A.N.C.E.</p>	<p>AUGUST 1996</p> <p>7-11 Boppin' on Beale St. 7-11 Holiday to Dance Camp, Oregon 15-18 Windy City Classic 30-2 Labor Day Weekend, CA</p>
<p>SEPTEMBER 1996</p> <p>6-8 National Jack 'n Jill, Las Vegas 6-15 Fall Migration, N. Myrtle Beach 16-20 Crusin' & Boppin" (800) 289-9990</p>	<p>OCTOBER 1996</p> <p>5-12 Sea Cruise '96 (800) 847-5951 14-21 Caribbean Cruise</p>	<p>NOVEMBER 1996</p> <p>15-17 Move Across River, Cincinnati</p>

TO OUR READERS: Please see the Upcoming Event Details beginning on the next page for more information about the events listed here. (In some cases, we know the event dates but not the details.)

Upcoming Event Details



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DECEMBER

- 1-2 **OKLAHOMA STATE SWING CHAMPIONSHIPS** at the Myriad Convention Center in Oklahoma City. Info: (405) 722-6799.
- 1-3 **CSA BANQUET**
- 1-3 **SHAG ATLANTA'S CHRISTMAS PARTY** at the Marriott Northeast in Atlanta. Rates \$55 (until 11/2), (404) 325-0000 (code ShagAtlanta). Tickets \$30 / \$35 after 11/1. Info: Mo Patterson (404) 288-1191.
- 27-31 **NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTIES** at Fat Harold's in N. Myrtle Beach, SC.
- 28-31 **NEW YEAR'S EVE EXTRAVAGANZA** at Ducks and Ducks Too in N. Myrtle Beach, SC \$25 singles / \$50 couples. Info: (803) 249-3858.
- 29-1 **NATIONAL NEW YEAR'S DANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS** in Dallas, TX. Info: LaFemina/Robau (800) 270-4090.
- 29-1 **'96 NEW YEAR'S DANCE CAMP PARTY EXTRAVAGANZA** at the Red Lion Hotel in Bakersfield, CA. Info: (805) 529-8241.
- 30-31 **OUTERBANKS SHAG CLUB'S NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY** at the Comfort Inn in Nags Head, NC. Rates \$35-\$40, (800) 334-3302. Tickets \$50 / \$60 after 12/15 (includes two meals and free pours).

JANUARY

- 5-7 **ISLAND WINTER CLASSIC I** at the Crystal Sands Resort Oceanfront Shipyard Plantation in Hilton Head Island, SC. Rates \$59 (incl. 2 tickets for midnight buffet), (800) 334-1881 (code Island Winter Classic). Tickets \$30 until 11/30, \$35 after. Info: Mac MacDonald (803) 785-8836.
- 6-16 **BIG BAND CRUISE THROUGH THE PANAMA CANAL** on the Queen Elizabeth II with the Glen Miller Orchestra. Casino, Broadway shows, ports of call include Cozumel, Cartagena, Acapulco, LA. Info: (800) 47-DANCE.
- 7-14 **THE 4th ANNUAL ULTIMATE RHYTHM & BLUES CRUISE** aboard Premier Cruise Lines S.S. Atlantic. Starting at \$1029 (double occupancy). From Port Canaveral, FL to St. Croix, San Juan, Port Lucaya. Artists on board include Tajmahal, War, Magic Dick & Jay Geils Bluestime, Koko Taylor & Blues Machine, Lonnie Brooks, Jimmy Thackery & The Drivers, James Harman, Latimore, Chubby Carrier & Bayou Swamp Band, Debbie Davis. Info: Marty Adler (800) 886-6132.
- 11-14 **ACSC MID-WINTERS** in N. Myrtle Beach, SC. You will need a special "dot" on your membership card to attend.
- 12-14 **SWING EXPO '96** at the Gold Coast Hotel in Las Vegas. Info: (702) 458-1302.
- 13-20 **BOOT-SCOOT THE CARIBBEAN CRUISE**. Info: (903) 887-6339.
- 19-21 **MONTEREY SWING FEST** at the Hyatt Regency in Monterey, CA. Info: (805) 937-1574.
- 21-28 **SWING CRUISE TO THE MEXICAN RIVIERA** aboard the Carnival's "Jubilee" departing from Los Angeles. Ports of call: Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan, Cabo San Lucas. Cabins \$625 (in) \$725 (out). Info: (800) 521-2346.
- 26-28 **3rd ANNUAL HALL OF FAME FOUNDATION CHARITY MIXED DOUBLES CONTEST** at Thirsty's in Greensboro, NC. Info: Vivian Burick (910) 855-6305.

FEBRUARY

- 1-4 **5th ANNUAL SPRING FLING** at the Ramada Resort in Daytona, FL. Rates \$40 (1-4 people), (800) 654-6216. Tickets \$15 until 1/10, \$20 after. Info: Edee Dickinson (407) 795-4360.
- 2-4 **FOOTHILLS WINTER BOOGIE IX** at the Holiday Inn Piedmont Center in Hickory, NC. Rates \$59 (1-4 people), (704) 323-1000. Tickets \$25 / \$30 after 12/31. Info: Ann Sigmon (704) 324-6122.
- 9-11 **8th ANNUAL WINTER SHAG BLAST** at the Sheraton Resort in Atlantic Beach, NC. Rates \$45 (2 persons), (800) 624-8875. Tickets \$30. Info: (919) 266-5141.
- 9-11 **SWINGING IN THE NORTHLANDS SWING FESTIVAL** at the Holiday Inn & Conference Center in Arden Hills, MN. Rates \$59, (800) 777-2232 (code song). Info: (612) 429-4785.
- 12-28 **BIG BAND CRUISE THROUGH HAWAII** on the Crown Odyssey with the Russ Morgan Orchestra. Casino, dance contest, ports of call include Hilo Kauai, Kahului Maui, Lahaina Maui, Honolulu Oahu, Nawiliwili Kauai. Info: (800) 47-DANCE.

(Continued on next page)

UPCOMING EVENT DETAILS *(Continued)*

FEBRUARY

- 16-17 **3rd ANNUAL MEALS-ON-WHEELS BENEFIT DANCE** at the Ramada Inn in Burlington, NC. Info: Chuck Priest (910) 692-4749.
- 16-18 **CAPITAL SWING'S 4th PRESIDENTS DAY CONVENTION** at the Radisson Hotel in Sacramento, CA. Rates \$69 (1-4 people) (800) 333-3333. Info: (916) 422-5801.
- 23-25 **BURN ATLANTA** the A.C.S.C. Winter Workshop at the Century Hotel in N.E. Atlanta. Rates \$78 (code: ShagAtlanta), (800) 325-0000. Tickets \$35 (incl. midnight buffet Friday, free buffet Saturday). Info: Mo Patterson (404) 288-1191.
- 29-3 **5th ANNUAL DJ THROWDOWN** in N. Myrtle Beach, SC. "Roomful of Blues" party at Ducks on 2/29. Info: Steve Baker (919) 676-2159.

MARCH

- 1-3 **LAS VEGAS SWINGS** at the Rivera Hotel in Las Vegas. Rates \$70, (800) 634-6753. Tickets \$65. Info: Christy (702) 873-0363.
- 8-10 **PARADISE CHAMPIONSHIPS** at the Hawaiian Regent Hotel in Hawaii. Info: (808) 734-1315.
- 15-17 **SHAG CLASSIC VII** in Augusta, GA.
- 22-29 **BIG BAND CRUISE THROUGH DIXIELAND** on the Mississippi Queen with the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra. Ports of call include New Orleans, St. Francisville, Natchez, Vicksburg, Baton Rouge, Oak Alley. Info: (800) 47-DANCE.
- 26-30 **BACK TO THE BEACH VI** at the Ramada Inn & Conference Center in Jacksonville, FL. Rates \$55 before 3/14, \$65 after, (800) 354-5000 (code Back to the Beach). Tickets \$25, \$30 after 3/14. Info: (904) 744-2424.
- 29-31 **SHAG ATTACK** at Fat Harold's in N. Myrtle Beach.

APRIL

- 4-7 **CLASSIC '96 INVITATIONAL SWING CONTEST** at the Sheraton Grand Hotel at the Dallas/Ft. Worth Airport in Irving, TX. (800) 345-5251. Tickets \$50 / \$60 after 3-1-96. Info: Cher Chilton (817) 654-1736.
- 12-14 **AMERICAN SWING DANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS** at the Manhattan Center in New York City. \$20,000 in prizes. Info: Alan Rocuff (800) 64-SWING.
- 12-21 **S.O.S. SPRING SAFARI** in North Myrtle Beach.
- 19-21 **6th ANNUAL SWING DANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS** at the Buena Park Hotel in Buena Park, CA. Info: (310) 92-DANCE.
- 23-6 **BIG BAND CRUISE THROUGH THE PANAMA CANAL** on the Crystal Harmony with the Guy Lombardo Royal Canadians. Ports of call include San Juan, Curacao, Aruba, Hautulco, Acapulco. Info: (800) 47-DANCE.
- 26-3 **WESTERN CARIBBEAN, TAMPA, NEW ORLEANS SWING CRUISE** on the Fun Ship Tropicale. Fares from \$939. Info: Rod Graddon (360) 275-6920 (evenings).
- 29-31 **SHAG ATTACK** at Fat Harold's in N. Myrtle Beach.

MAY

- 2-4 **6th ANNUAL S.O.B. WEEKEND** at the Howard Johnson in Panama City, FL. Info: (205) 856-1744.
- 18 **ELECTRIC STORM '96** in Clemson, SC.
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- 22-29 **BOP CRUISE TO THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN** put on by Nashville Beboppers. Info: Bob Watson (615) 851-9360.

ATTENTION DANCE CLUBS: Your party or event can be listed (as far ahead as space permits) in this column at no charge. Please send info on a timely basis to Michael Payne at the address on Page 2.

Go West, Young Man ... But Go East, Young Lady

A Texan's Report on S.O.S. — by Rose Marie Mallady

The old saying, "Go West, young man," was fine for our long-ago pioneers! But I decided to "Go East, young lady." What a party—I went to my first ever big S.O.S. shag convention (approximately 10,000 people) in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, September 13-18.

Truman McCullough had warned me that those folks come to party, and he is exactly right. There were a few more clubs open this year—still crowded, but most of the time you had room to dance. People go from club to club until about 3:00 or 4:00 a.m. The music starts at noon.

My biggest and best reason for going was that last year at the U.S. Open Thursday night early bird dance, Truman introduced me to Judy and Shea Carver and Connie

Key and her son, Brent Key. Truman said Brent had the fastest feet in the West, and he was right. Brent is the best young shag dancer I have ever seen.



We became friends and saw them in Atlanta. Connie and I talked several times, and she said that if I ever wanted to come to Myrtle Beach, I was welcome to stay at their house. So I did. What a family. Ken Key could be a double for Kenny Rogers; the daughter, Christi, has a beautiful 3 1/2-year old little girl who acts and


talks like a six-year old.

I already knew most of the top shag dancers, but the Keys introduced me to many more of them. The highlight of my trip was Friday night at the Boulevard when over the mike the deejay asked Brent to stay on the floor, and he said, "We have a lady here from Dallas and we want you and Brent to do a spotlight dance!" Oh, boy. What a surprise and quite an honor for a beginner shagger like myself.

Not only is Brent the best dancer, but he is also such a nice young man. He is to shag what Mario is to swing!

Bye for now, until my next trip to Albuquerque on September 28.

From the October 1995 Texas Classic newsletter




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by Johnny Hammond

I can't ever remember being so young that I didn't love music. Even when I was just a wee lad, I would bother my mother until I would finally get her to stop whatever she was doing, wind up the old Victrola, and dance the Charleston for me. Man, as they used to say in those days, she could really cut a rug.

I just heard an oldie that also reminded me of when I was just a mere lad. It was a song by the late Johnny Ray entitled *Just Walking in the Rain*. It hit the charts in the fall of '56. But when I think of Johnny Ray, I think of his first hit, *Cry*, and the silly little routines we used to do. This was our way of trying to be noticed by the girls. (Kids, what can I say?)

As the song played, my mind drifted back to late '51 or early '52 when *Cry* was released and we were sitting in what was probably our first hangout, listening to it. This early utopia of ours was located on the ground floor of the beautiful Calhoun Hotel in downtown Anderson, South Carolina. It was called The Soda Shoppe.

Now, this wasn't a very large place. It consisted of a counter with about eight stools, a row of booths lining the south wall, and, as well as I can remember, about four small tables with chairs.

I'm not really sure about the exact numbers of all this. But the one thing I am sure of is that they had a 1949 rainbow model Wurlitzer jukebox. This box had all the latest pop hits on it—no race music, not even if it was requested. But all in all, it was pretty good.

Some of the most popular numbers were Kay Starr's *Wheel of Fortune*, Jo Stafford's *You Belong to Me*, Vaughan Monroe's *Racing with the Moon*, and Johnny's *Cry*. This was the reason we packed the place every afternoon about 3:25. We would sit around drinking cherry cokes, talking about movies, playing the jukebox, and acting silly (kinda like today!).

The girls always seemed to have more money than we did (kinda like today!), so we would talk them into playing the box. The real reason was so we could watch them giggle and wiggle as they walked. Naturally, we just sat there with a straw stuck up each nostril, grunting like a bunch of walruses in heat. Little did we know we were about to sign up for Frustration 101. I don't care what age you are; I know you remember those days.

We weren't really hanging. We were really just a bunch of teenyboppers waiting for the 4:30 bus. All the kids who took part in this daily "social hour" rode the city buses to and from school. But still, The Soda Shoppe was, to us, what the old Standard Drug Store was to the jitterbug hep cats of the '40s. It will always hold fond memories for a lot of us.

You have to keep in mind that this was the early '50s, and the major entertainment we had consisted of movies, radio, music, and ball games. These were also our pre-dating days, so our social time was our afternoons at The Soda Shoppe and Saturdays at the movies.

Most of the girls had to go home after school, so we would plan to

meet them Saturday at the movie. We would try to get there for the first movie, which started at 11 am. This way we could get a seat on the back row. Now, this was very important because we were in training to become the world's greatest smoochers. Believe me, we trained in earnest.

Back then, the Saturday movie was a double feature with a short comedy or two cartoons plus the news and the ever-popular weekly serial. Also shown were the previews of coming attractions. It's not too hard to imagine coming out of the theater after all that with a permanent pucker and feeling a little weak. Of course, we did take a break during the serial.

These weekly cliffhangers, as they were called, consisted of 15 chapters. We didn't dare miss one because we had spent the whole week discussing how the hero was going to escape the inescapable predicament he was left in the week before. Every week we were sure he was going to meet his demise, but it never happened.

I'm sure we all have a story about our formative years just as I'm sure we all have times we would like to forget. But when we balance it all out, it wasn't that bad, was it?

Johnny Hammond is a member of the Electric City Shag Club in Anderson, SC. This article was first published in their newsletter, *Shag 'N Tales*.

Humor Corner

A shagger, gun in hand, ordered the pilot of the airliner: "Take this plane to Myrtle Beach! I'm staying in the cockpit until you do."

"But we *are* scheduled to fly to Myrtle Beach," the startled pilot replied.

"I know," said the shagger. "So were the last two planes I boarded, but they ended up in Havana. I'm taking no chances this time!"

Shagger's trials and tribulations ...

... By the time a shagger can afford to hire someone to cut the grass, his doctor tells him he needs the exercise!

'50s: Era of the American dream

As Eisenhower kept the boat from rocking, progress went full-speed ahead

For well over a generation now, the "Fabulous 1950s" have been painted as 10 years of froth, characterized by hula-hoops and coonskin caps, Ozzie and Harriet, drive-ins and tail fins, Jackie Gleason and Howdy Doody.

And presiding over it all, between rounds of golf, was the genial Dwight Eisenhower.

Viewed through the haze of nostalgia, it may look like a decade of tranquillity and complacency. But in many ways, the 1950s was an era of breathtaking change, masquerading as a 10-year summer vacation.

Review the decade's social changes—from the growth of interstate highways to the rise of television, from the boom in suburbia to the dawn of computerization, the start of civil rights to the birth of shopping malls—what emerges is a revolution in how Americans lived.

"There was a lot going on. But I think when times are good and when things are going fine, nobody really focuses on the really substantive things within government," said Midge Saint, executive director of the Eisenhower Centennial Foundation. "Inflation was down, all the economic figures were good, and it made that [American] dream come true."

In the popular image, the 1950s was the white bread decade, the breathing spell sandwiched between the hardships of World War II and the turmoil of the 1960s. In that view, Eisenhower was the amiable leader, unwilling to rock the boat.

His conservatism had its critics. Still does, in fact.

"He seemed incapable of arousing public enthusiasm about anything, uninterested even in trying," writes Alan Brinkley, a professor at City University of New York.

So, were the 1950s just placid by accident, with Eisenhower the lucky

beneficiary?

No way, says Stephen E. Ambrose, a leading Eisenhower scholar whose view of Ike is based on recently declassified secret papers.

"There would have been an economic boom no matter who was in the White House," Ambrose concedes. "We had built almost no housing in the previous two decades, and we had done almost no road building. There was an enormous pent-up demand, so you can't credit Ike for that.

"But he kept us out of war, and this was the hottest decade of the



Cold War. He had unanimous pressure to go to war—five times in 1954 alone, with all his advisers recommending it. And he kept saying no."

Rather than marshaling the nation's resources for a war, Eisenhower turned the nation loose to pursue its own goals. He tried to balance the budget so that interest rates and inflation would be low. With a healthy economy and scientific knowledge multiplying, the country responded with a remarkable outpouring.

The first mass-produced computers began appearing in the 1950s, as did the computer industry. The resulting changes are part of all our lives.

The modern suburb was, in a large way, a creation of the 1950s. After nearly two decades of depres-

sion and war, the United States had an enormous need for housing.

The suburban lifestyle required cars, which fueled the need for interstate highways. The interstate highway system is an Eisenhower legacy, a project he advocated and then helped build. The 1950s trio of suburbs, autos, and highways has, even today, defined the American dream.

Trips to the shopping mall and supermarket would have been nearly impossible before the 1950s, the decade in which both truly arose. The same goes for fast-food stops. The rise and spread of franchised restaurants caught fire in 1955 with a burger joint known as McDonald's.

Television was so rare entering the 1950s that fewer than one million homes had their own set. But a decade later there were TVs in 45 million homes, tuned into shows like *I Love Lucy* and *Ed Sullivan*.

But the impact of television went far beyond the shows. With television came new powers to launch trends, create demands, promote social change, and influence tastes.

The Cosby Show, in a humorous way, reflects a serious social change: the striving of minorities to share in the American dream. Civil rights history has a handful of pivotal moments, two of which involve Eisenhower. First was the Brown vs. Board of Education case, in 1954, outlawing school segregation—an opinion written by Chief Justice Earl Warren, whom Eisenhower appointed to the Supreme Court.

The second pivotal moment was Eisenhower's 1957 decision to use federal troops in Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce a school desegregation order against demands of a racist governor.

Modern air travel, too, is a '50s legacy. Eisenhower was the first

(Continued on Page 29)

At every shagger or bopper affair I've attended over the last 10 years, I have heard the remark, "These people are the nicest, most congenial, fun-loving, peaceful people I have ever seen." Son, let me tell you it has not always been that way.

The largest, bloodiest, most ridiculous brawl I ever witnessed was at the 1959 Azalea Festival in Carolina Beach, N.C. Shaggers, Yankees, and servicemen in those days did not mix.

Buddy Skipper was playing there over the weekend, and late Saturday afternoon someone wanted to hear *Dixie*. The Yankees didn't like it; and before the first verse was over, my friend, Bobby Parker of Morehead City, N.C., had decked a Yankee Marine. From that point on, it was a full scale riot.

The fight, with 50-60 combatants, carried down a narrow flight of stairs (barely wide enough to get one



In the Sack with Money

by Jim Money

Dedicated to the Preservation of
the Shag, Beach Music & Legend Stories



substantial part in the altercation.

I remember the lively screaming afterwards, as everyone was trying to talk at once to tell everybody what had happened to him during the melee. We were all yelling, "I guess those damn Yankees will think twice the next time they say anything about *Dixie* ... especially since we consider it the South's National Anthem."

In all of my stories, there is a twist—and the twist is something that is somewhat unknown. Listen up ... *Dixie* was written by a Yankee! That's right, a Yankee!

Mr. Dan Emmett, a native Ohioan, writing songs for a New York minstrel show in 1859, wrote the song, *Dixie* ... our beloved *Dixie*!

Prior to the start of the Civil War, which started officially on April 12,

New York City for \$300. Do you think they would sell it back to us for a small profit? I doubt it.

Additionally, the president of the Confederate States of America had *Dixie* played at his inauguration acceptance speech in Montgomery, Alabama. Also, the president of the United States of America had *Dixie* played at Lee's surrender at the close of the Civil War.

The additional irony of all this is the similarities in these two leaders of government: Jefferson Davis, born June 3, 1808, in Todd County, Kentucky, a mere 100 miles from Abraham Lincoln, born February 12, 1809, in Hodgenville, Kentucky. And each were known to have loved the song *Dixie*.

These powerful, intelligent former neighbors, leading their troops in the most deadly of all wars, the Civil War, each listened to *Dixie* with opposite meanings held dear to their memories.

Rest assured I will always stand and hold my hand over my heart in respect to the Confederacy and my heritage. And from the looks of the way people act when we all get together to shag or bop, it looks like we have learned something about getting along. It's a hell-of-a-lot more fun to dance than fight!

Jim Money is a member of the Jacksonville Beach Bop Association. Reprinted from the July '94 edition of "The Scoop."

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"And then when we sang *Dixie*, I guess it sort of added salt to the wound, which is about what happened that hot day at Carolina Beach in 1959, almost 100 years later."

person through) and out onto the street. It was so crowded that no one was hit head-on, as you couldn't get a full swing—which, consequently, probably saved a lot of people from getting seriously hurt.

It lasted about three to five minutes or less (as most of these things do before they're broken up by the police), but most of my friends had a mark or two on them.

Gerald Jones, Bobby Parker (the instigator), Frank Parker, Lynwood Swensen, Charles Wells, Steve Rouse, Jerry Tucker, Spider Kennedy, Spider Kirkman, Norfleet Jones, Doug Perry, Mike Nunn, and the legendary Harry Dean Bratcher—all had taken a rather

1861 at 4:30 am when Confederate troops fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina, *Dixie* was claimed by both North and South.

Most historians say the song at last belonged to the South after it was sung by the troops after their victory at a small town known as Bull Run, Virginia. Washington society had driven their carriages out to Bull Run to watch the Union troops whip those upstart rebels and was in shock at the Union's loss.

And then when we sang *Dixie*, I guess it sort of added salt to the wound, which is about what happened that hot day at Carolina Beach in 1959, almost 100 years later.

How 'bout if I tell you a few more

Hey! ... Bartender!

by Van Williams



Helpful Hint #2

Want to improve your service tenfold? Tip! Even if it is never more than change. And make *sure* your bartender *sees* you do it! They are often hustling, so time your contribution to the tip jar to coincide with the bartender handing you your drink. Believe me, it works!

And how about that most difficult of all situations for a bartender—how would you cut off the loud drunk at the bar without making him mad or causing him to get even louder? After all, he *is* a customer, and he does deserve to be treated well; but he is definitely not at his lucid best at this moment.

Think about it. Would you really want this job of *working* while everyone else is *partying*? True, some bartenders are better than others, and some seem to be wearing blinders most of the time; but they all deserve more credit for what they do under less-than-ideal conditions.

Two of the best bartenders anywhere can be found on the Strand at Fat Harold's and at the OD Cafe (Galleon). They are two long-time veterans, who have stayed at this profession long after most others quit. Why? Because they are skillful and professional at serving their customers. Hats off to Marcus of Fat Harold's and Mimi Grimes of the OD Cafe. They are always smiling (well, maybe Marcus smiles on the inside), and both of them can handle a large crowd efficiently. Both of them do a great job, and it is always a pleasure to be served by either of them!

So, how about going up to a bartender and telling him/her that you appreciate the job they do for you. It just might surprise you how well they remember your face the next time you go to the bar!

Van Williams is a mechanical engineer and part-time DJ. He is a member of the Eno Beach, Burlington, Sand Hills, and Greensboro Friendship shag clubs and is a regular contributing editor to the "Carefree Times."

I have always felt that bartenders were an under-appreciated group of public service employees. I felt this long before my ex-wife Shirley ever decided that bartending was her calling in life.

Working behind a bar calls for some skills you may not have thought of. Sure, you can pop the top on a beer as well as any bartender you ever saw, but how would you be at handling a dozen different patrons clamoring for drinks at one time? Each patron usually thinks he should be next, of course, and each bartender is usually responsible for a considerable length of the bar. And how diplomatic would you be with the jerk who keeps pounding his empty on the bar to get your attention?

Helpful Hint #1

Want to find out the number one way to instantly P-O any bartender—anywhere, anytime? Pound on the bar! Malign his mother, ridicule his ancestry, deride his intelligence or his looks, or even insult his girlfriend/boyfriend. If he/she is truly professional, they will take it in stride. But pound on the bar, my friend, and you will perish of thirst for as long as your face is remembered!

And just where do you suppose most of a (good) bartender's income comes from? Tips! And if your income depended largely on tips, how considerate would you be of the cheapskate who never even leaves you the quarter change from a beer?

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S.O.S. Grand Nationals . . . More of what they're saying

(Continued from Page 7)

had never given us a day of trouble, we thought the Transportation Committee would be something we could handle. Wednesday the brakes went out. Thursday we had a dead battery. I hope everyone has stock in Pep Boys; they got very rich off us that weekend!

Back at home we had six of our competitive dancing friends as house guests, and we all got to enjoy the great party at Joe's on Thursday night. Friday was another day to shuttle special guests. It was so much fun getting to meet and greet these visitors.

Friday evening we partied with our friends, both old and new, then dragged our collective butts home at not too respectable an hour. Saturday we were in charge of the morning workshops. We were back at the Waverly at 8:30 a.m. Thank God for caffeine and sugar. The coffee and doughnuts were truly life savers. We completed that task; and after running some errands, helped set up the Dancers' Hospitality Room that started at 3:00 p.m.

We left the Waverly at 5:00 p.m. and drove through a major storm back to Alpharetta. Kathy was about to fall on her face. Lack of sleep does not make for a good contest dance. We were couple #1, and we would start at 8:15 sharp.

Back in Alpharetta at 5:45, Kathy announced, "I have got to lay down." Next thing you know she runs into the living room and screams, "Are we going to be late?" Butch informs her that it is now 5:57. Wow—what a 10-minute nap! (Speaking of sleep, we want to know how Linda Bellflower lived on only three hours' sleep a night for two weeks!)

Just enough time to clean up and dress. Kathy pulls out the new jumpsuit and jacket she bought for the event. It's been back from the alterations shop for over a month. She puts it on and finds they never hemmed the bottom. Throw on jeans, sneakers, and a tee-shirt! Grab the sewing box!

Butch drives like a bat out of hell.

(Who would notice on Georgia 400?) We get to Holcomb Bridge Road and Kathy smiles at Butch while hemming her pants, looks lovingly at him, and calmly screams, "I forgot my dance shoes." Butch turns around at Northridge exit; we go get the shoes and then break land speed records getting back to the Waverly at 7:40—remember, we are couple #1 at 8:15.

Well, it's time to practice. We had all of 15 minutes to prepare for the biggest competitive dance event in our lives. Counting dance squares, we found that the dance floor at seven sections out from table 17 was the best spot on the floor.

Standing next to the DJ booth, waiting to take the floor, makes you keenly aware of the fact that 3000 square feet of dance floor is big—very, very, very big. We were so happy to find our friends, inspirations, and sometime drill instructors, Charlie and Jackie, waiting to wish us good luck.

We were dancing to *Slow Boat to China*, one of our all-time favorites. When we walked out on the floor, we knew there were many of our ShagAtlanta friends there rooting us on, and we wanted to do our best. Needless to say, we wanted to make Charlie and Jackie proud of their students. What a charge!

The dance seemed to be over in one minute, not three. No big mistakes. I wish we could adequately put into words the rush, thrill, kick, charge we get dancing competitively. Performing in front of 1000 people was absolutely terrifying and exciting at the same time. Getting to do it in Atlanta, surrounded by friends, was the best part of all.

We did what we always do after a contest dance. We headed to the bar. We walked off the floor, and there to greet us was Mario's dance partner, Carmen, whom we had picked up at the airport the day before. It was so rewarding to receive compliments and encouragement from such a talented member of the swing community. It really solidified to us what the entire S.O.S. GNDC was all

about: appreciation and love of dancing.

We relaxed and watched the rest of the show. Sunday had us back at 8:30 for workshops. For those of you who did not participate in Ramiro's workshop, you really missed the best male lead dance class ever. If you attend "Son of S.O.S. GNDC" next year, be sure to attend this workshop.

So there you have it, our Grand National experiences: bad brakes, dead batteries, no sleep, pants too long, no dance shoes, new friends, old friends, a good solid dance, learning "the connection" from Ramiro, and enough fun to last 'til we get back to the Beach. Would we do it again? Yes, yes, yes! — *Butch and Kathy Dukes*

ShagAtlanta

(The following letter was received from Easthampton, Massachusetts.)

Dear Members of ShagAtlanta:

I was one of the swing dancers who attended her first shag event in Atlanta this past weekend. I had a fabulous time, and part of the reason was the hospitality your club and members extended. Thanks for all the warm welcomes, information, hospitality suite, and helping the event run smoothly.

It was nice to see how supportive and close the shag community was. Everyone really went out of their way to make the swingers feel welcome. It was exciting to get the two dance communities together.

I look forward to attending more shag events—you guys really know how to party and have fun! Till we meet on the dance floor again, keep on dancing and having fun.

Sincerely, — *Patricia Brennan*

YOU CAN DANCE with some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you can't dance with all of the people all of the time unless you head for SOS in North Myrtle Beach!

— *Capital Area Shag Club*

Those were the days ...

The Car

—by Patricia Parrott



After all these years, I still carry around the car key. The car, a 1959 Renault 4CV, black, four speeds, finally gave up the ghost after four years of me, three trips coast to coast, and life in four states.

By that time my husband Frank had taken off both doors and showed me how to push, run along side, hop in, and pop the clutch. Our mid-morning phone conversations went something like this:

"Hello."

"Hi, Frank."

"Where's the car now?"

It could have quit running rounding a corner or directly under the light of a busy intersection. I'd never know, but it looked good! When it was newer, it resembled a little toy car ... a relative had attached a large wind-up key to its trunk.

The car carried me through many experiences and created a few of its own—for which it received its due notice. On trips we would often have everything that we could carry packed into every nook and cranny. Since the passenger side was pushed forward as far as it could go, it would be impossible to switch drivers. People passing us looked amazed to see me reach over to steer the car while he leaned back, eyes closed and resting, his foot still on the gas pedal.

People also took notice to see me stuck on an incline, unable to move my foot from brake to clutch. (I don't drive like that today.)

Then there was the time I lost control on the PA Turnpike in a snowstorm, twirled around a few times, and slid off backwards down the slope ... braked ... shifted ... waited for traffic to clear ... pulled back on the Turnpike and continued on.

I saw them watching when I had to get out of the car, hammer in hand, lift the hood, tap on the battery terminals, and repeat the procedure until the car started. And yes, I guess to those who saw us, we looked kinda funny—barefoot, wearing shorts, digging the car's wheels out of a mound of snow, just seeking relief from the Tucson heat below.

Driving and shifting gears with three girls riding in the two front seats was a sight. Straw hat hanging from the antenna, it never occurred to us that the police might frown on that; but they did not see us.

And though I didn't see this myself, the thought of it makes me chuckle today: Frank pulling the car uphill, chain swung over his shoulder, and friend Jim pushing from the back.

Yes, the car received lots of notice, but folks didn't see everything that happened. And though I'm sure it could talk if it wanted to, it never told. Neither did it ask how it survived me without a dent.

Patricia Parrott is secretary of the Northern Virginia Shag Club and a columnist for the club's newsletter, "Shag Rag."

Fab '50s

(Continued from Page 25)

president with his own airplane. And in 1955, Boeing began taking orders for the 707, the first successful commercial jetliner. Jets radically altered air travel by making it twice as fast.

Air conditioning was another 1950s phenomenon. Before 1950, fewer than 250,000 home air conditioners had been sold. By the time Ike left the White House, 13 million home air conditioners had been sold. Air conditioning fueled the rise of the Sun Belt and the migration to hot spots like Florida and California.

In one sense, Eisenhower had nothing to do with, say, air conditioning, just as he didn't invent the jet engine. Television and fast-food would have become popular without him.

But in another sense, the stability of the 1950s fostered a climate where those things thrived. Like many Americans, Ambrose knows that firsthand.

"Real wages went up in the 1950s by 4% a year—and did you know that real wages haven't gone up at all in this country since 1970? Ike's fiscal policy was the reason for that. Balanced budget. My very first house I got on a 4% mortgage."

Looked at mortgage rates lately?

For much of middle America, Eisenhower's 1950s were a time when people could buy their first house, afford a new car, have a place to raise children, and get their first TV. With cars and money, they could shop at the mall and visit McDonald's.

Individually, those were unremarkable events. When the nation's huge middle class did them together, it created a social tidal wave.

This article was written by Tom Webb for the Knight-Tribune News Service.

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Shaggy Dance Stories

by Laura Blumenfeld



After a hard day on the job as a marketing associate, Jim Taylor likes to come home, close the shades, take off his clothes, tie a pair of pantyhose to the doorknob, grasp the silky, sheer toes, and dance.

Pantyhose are for practice.

But tonight is the real thing, with real partners, soft-handed ladies doing a dance called the shag. Every Wednesday evening, Taylor and some 200 other members of the Northern Virginia Shag Club pair up and glide at Blackie's restaurant in Springfield.

"You eat and sleep and wait for Wednesday night," says Taylor, 44, who's originally from North Carolina. "It's like a religion. I'm so committed, I can't date a girl if she can't shag."

The fluid, laid-back dance style known as shagging flourished in the late '40s and early '50s in ocean-front dance pavilions from Myrtle Beach, S.C., to Savannah Beach, Ga. Today, it is the state dance of South Carolina. There are about 110 shag clubs throughout the Southeast, attracting a mostly white, over-40 crowd.

The dance's 15 or so steps are subtle and infinitely variable. You move from the floor up and the waist down, with little or no upper body movement. It's like a languid Lindy Hop or the jitterbug in a hot tub. In "Catcher in the Rye," Holden Caulfield described shag: "Not a corny jitterbug, not a jump, or anything. Just nice and easy."

"I thought dancing was for sissies," says John Belt, 53, a car dealer from Washington. Over the past eight months, he's become a shag fiend. At work, when callers put Belt on hold with canned music, he practices the sugarfoot step under his desk. "I feel so clumsy—the brain goes to the left and the feet go to the right."

It pays off with the women.

"There's a feeling of togetherness," Belt says, brushing the floor with a sockless loafer. "See the sex, see the romance. ..."

He points to a couple doing the belly roll. Their stomachs rub together. Shag has been called "the vertical expression of horizontal desire." It is British slang for copulation. And in the early years, it was pronounced too explicit, triggering police raids around Myrtle Beach.

"It's the best fun you can have with your clothes on," says Rick Hendrix, a dealer in exotic birds and one of the six people who founded the club two years ago.

His wife, Libby, says that while she's dancing, she doesn't think about "sensual stuff."

"You're probably the only one who doesn't," Rick replies.

The deejay plays old-time 45s: *Jazzy Lady*, *Ability to Swing*, *Soothe Me*.

"Shagging," says Marissa Cunningham, a commercial printer and a club newcomer, "is like the perfect rhyme—two bodies searching for harmony." She watches from the edge of the dance floor as couples flirt to rhythm and blues.

Their feet slide as if over ice, while spicy chips from the bar burn in their throats. The music takes a retired military man back to 16, when he wore a slicked-back ducktail.

A psychologist thinks about how he could swing for hours as a boy, singing, again and again, *Davy Crockett*. A businessman feels the rush of rounding the corner on a Harley-Davidson. A widow hasn't felt this happy since her 2-year-old grandson first put his hands around her neck.

"Shag till you drag!" says Hendrix, his white ponytail now loose, his hair scattered on his shoulders.

Taylor is out there, too, wearing

his green Northern Virginia Shag Club T-shirt. Apparently the pantyhose pas de deux has worked. Taylor is doing the boogie walk with a slim-hipped woman. He twirls her around. A smile lifts his gray mustache.

"I do a lot of twirl. I like to twirl," Taylor says. The red and blue and yellow lights blur in front of his eyes.

"I forget everything in the world," he says. "Except me dancing."

Editor's note: from the Oct. 22, 1995 "Washington Post;" found in the Nov. "Shag Rag" of the Northern Virginia Shag Club.

Editorial

(Continued from Page 5)

their training and expertise, are generally more aware, sensitive, and understanding, they may also be even more critical of how others dance. Their overheard comments frequently voice concern about how or what the person was taught, what is wrong with their dancing, and what needs to be done. While this may be appropriate in the proper setting, it should not be discussed openly at a public or social dance.

It is a well-known fact that dancers who consistently read dance articles and dance magazines are a more enlightened group because of being better informed and having their consciousness raised. With this in mind, therefore, we should all give more serious thought before we criticize our fellow dancers.

So! Get out of that chair, put on your dance shoes, ask someone new to dance, be kind and encourage one another, support your local dance instructors, learn cool stuff, and LET'S DANCE!

Larry Fournier is the president of the Great Lakes Swing Dance Club. Reprinted from "Music Notes," Aug./Sept. 1995.

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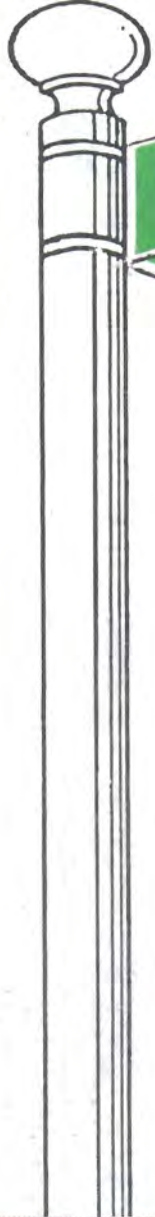
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