



Jerry Freck Greene 1999

Jerry (Freck) Greene

If you were born and grew up in Fort Mill, South Carolina, just about a pivot and a couple of fly-backs from Charlotte and only a wedge shot from Rock Hill, shagging was in your genes. High school summers found shaggers from all over North and South Carolina spending week-ends at Myrtle Beach. I often hitch hiked down with Dickie Adkins. Our thumb was our ride. We hit the Myrtle Beach Pavilion and Spiveys where I became "smitten" with the dance.

Along the way I met "Sleepy" Timmerman. He spent several week-ends at my home in Fort Mill teaching the other locals and me the 1 & 2, 3 & 4, 5 & 6 of the dance. Don't you know that if you're playing the music and doing the dance, some time or other Jo Jo's gonna pop in--he did and thrilled us all.

Week-ends the locals haunted the YMCA and Joslin Park in Rock Hill. Anytime I could get the car Sonny Small and I would slip over to Mountain Lakes in Chester where you could always find Linda Carroll and Emily McAbee, two of the state's best.

Presbyterian Junior College in Maxton, North Carolina provided education and additional dancing for me where Connie Baker, "Swamp Rabbit", and I spent Friday nights at the American Legion dances.

In 1956, I promoted a dance at the armory in Fort Mill and booked Maurice Williams and the Zodiacs (then the Royal Charms). While they were writing "Little Darling" I met Sylvia Munn from Charlotte. We were married the next year.

Shagging was great, but with three children born in four years, someone had to make a living. I started my career in insurance where I have spent forty years. With bills to pay every day, there was not much time for shagging every night.

Then in 1979 while vacationing at NMB with Ron and Peggy Whisenant I ran into "Suntan" Jacobs, an ole Rock Hill boy. We learned of the Shag Contest at Fat Jacks, came and saw, and the fire was ignited.

Sylvia and I did the first S. O. S. in 1980 with Connie and Sylvia Baker, and learned that you can survive four days on eight hours of sleep. Back to Columbia along with Bill Holler, I promoted the first S. O. S. Shag Contest which drew shaggers from both Carolinas and Virginia.

Like a bush fire, the parties began--S. O. S. spring and fall, mid-winter, the Geechie Blast, Columbia Invitational, the Rock Hill Spring Fling, HOF week-ends, and the Grand Nationals in Atlanta. Along the way, we saw opened, and sadly saw closed, Wit's End, Fanny Teagues, Fanny's, Butch's, Beau's, the Shag Club, and several others.

There is more--so much more: Shag Classes with Wanda and Norman Holliday, the shag cruises, and Jerry, our first born who took to the dance, competed and won in the SPA, was featured in the SC ETV Documentary, and "my claim to fame."

Sylvia and I were inducted into the Central South Carolina Wall of Fame in 1998 and into Living Legends in 1999. Thanks for the memory, and special thanks to the members of the Hall of Fame for making me an inductee.