



# Tommy "Bones" Hussey 2007

## TOMMY "BONES" HUSSEY

Growing up in Kinston, a small rural Eastern N.C. town, there was little to do, but even at the young age of 11 to 12 years old I was always trying to find on the radio what was known then as "Rhythm and Blues" music. I didn't really know anything about music, all I knew was I loved it. Some of my favorite songs were by Jimmy Reed, The Clovers, Little Richard, The Ink Spots, Joe Turner and so many more I can't remember.

Fast forward to the late fifties and early sixties at the old pavilion at Atlantic Beach, N.C. where I was first introduced to the dance (Bop as it was called back then). I first saw and met Steve Rouse from Snow Hill, N.C. (one of the best dancers I have ever seen to this day. I knew watching all the ladies dance with Steve; this was the "Lifestyle" for me. Steve is no longer with us but in his closing days I went to see him in the hospital and I know he is "up there" with all the other great dancers who have passed on watching and dancing.

In 1965 I graduated from High School and did what I thought everybody should do and enlisted in the military and went to Vietnam. What a culture shock! We should all be thankful we live in this great country and each and every one of us should really appreciate and respect our veterans, especially the ones that don't make it home.

In the late sixties, returning home from Vietnam, my first visit to a Shag Club called the Jolly Knave at Atlantic Beach, N.C., I had the pleasure of meeting two gentlemen, Carl Smith and Norfleet Jones, both from Raleigh, N.C. at the time. These two would become my good friends and mentors, teaching me a step or two about the dance. In the years that followed I was introduced to Shad Alberty, Doug Perry, Charles Gurley, Spider Kirkman, Bobby Griffin, Norman Tripp, Sam McIntosh, Buzz Sawyer and the list goes on and on. Watching these folks dance was just mind boggling to me. During this period of time I met Judy Bazemore, O'Neal Branch and Susan Jarrett. These ladies could flat hurt you on the dance floor! About this time I got married, but I still danced in every club I could find along with all my friends. My partners in contest were generally Judy Bazemore and O'Neal Branch, now living in Ocean Drive, S.C. We were lucky enough to win 1 or 2 and place in some more.

In the mid 80's, my wife and I had two children along with my oldest son from my first marriage, the dancing Temporarily stopped to raise a family. Divorced in 1988 I turned my attention to other things in life and didn't dance much from then until later in life due to being permanently injured in a "medical incident". In the mid 90's I met and married Mrs. Bonnie Parrish from Goldsboro, N.C.

Today, as I look back over the last 45 years, I am so Thankful I was a part of that era in time and had the opportunity and the honor of dancing with and competing against some of the greatest dancers then and probably there ever will be. I will always remember those summer nights, cold beers, great friends, fantastic music and good dancing. When ever possible, my wife, Bonnie, and I still enjoy an occasional trip down memory lane as we go down to Ocean Drive, S.C. and Atlantic Beach, N.C. to dance and visit old friends.

I am very Humbled, Honored and Thankful to be inducted into such an outstanding group of people as the Shaggers Hall of Fame!