



# Leslie Y. Cohen 2010

## LESLIE Y. COHEN

Born in Boston, Massachusetts, my family moved to Charleston, S.C. when I was 3 years old. My first introduction to any kind of dancing was probably through my mother and grandmother, who jitterbugged with us kids in the kitchen and all around the house. We spent our summers back north in Boston during the time American Bandstand was coming of age. My older sisters, my twin brother and I spent many hours watching and dancing with the doorknobs and each other. On one of our summer trips, at the age of 15, I snuck out with some friends and we took a train from Boston to Philly to be on American Bandstand. Being televised, I was soon caught, but later forgiven, and would do it again if could.

Around the age of 14 I was introduced to Folly Beach and some real dancers. I would tag along with some of the older girls and we'd spend the week-end days dancing at the Folly Pier with the local boys that showed up. My first real dance contest was the Citadel at the age of 14. I can't even remember who my partner was, but we won and my prize was a set of hair barrettes and a ribbon.

Throughout high school I either went with permission or snuck out to any club open that would let me dance. Some of my favorite dance partners were Vincent Smith, Freddie Boulders, John English, Mike DeSantis, Bernie Matt, Mike Flato and Johnny Johnson. The Seaside in Mt. Pleasant, Big John's and Merchant Seamen's Club in Charleston were our favorite hangouts.

In the 80's I danced and won several competitions in Atlanta with partners like DeWitt Hinson, Larry Grant, Gary Scott and Clint Altman. About this time SOS was just starting and the rest is history.

Over the years I have met some wonderful people and danced with some great guys at many clubs in North and South Carolina to include the Bushes in Greensboro, the Sand Flea in Greenville, and the Barrel and The Pad at OD.

My home is now in Atlanta, but I have always been able to frequent OD and Charleston on a regular basis to get my dancing in.

I love this dance and I am extremely honored to be among so many friends in the Shaggers Hall of Fame.