



# Monty Simpson - 2017

## MONTY SIMPSON

My love of music and dance began when I was around 12 years old. I purchased a record player at the local five and dime in Rockwell, NC, where I grew up, and began collecting records...lots of records. I was fortunate to start going to NMB on vacation in the 50's with my parents. I would hang around outside the clubs and around the pavilion, listening to the latest tunes playing on the jukebox. I remember, with envy at the time, seeing a couple sitting in a '59 corvette parked in the Horseshoe and the car radio playing Mother in Law by Ernie-K-Doe. To this day, I still get a thrill being at the OD Pavilion just listening to great music and sharing stories with great friends!

I played several musical instruments in the school band, but loved the drums. I bought a set of drums when I was around 16 years old and formed several beach bands. I played throughout the Southeast at clubs and colleges, booked by Hit Attractions out of Charlotte. I still love and enjoy playing, and play drums in blues jams whenever I can.

Throughout the late 50's and early 60's, I frequented local dance scenes such as Happy Lake which was close to China Grove, Gene and Hazel Dance Land in Norwood, and Shoal's Barn Dance in Salisbury. It was at Shoal's that I met the love of my wife, Gail. When the square dance band took a break, the jukebox was plugged in, and we danced the "basic" as it was called then. Our dates were centered around music and dancing. We frequented Park Center, Pecan Grove in Charlotte, The Keg, Ranch Chateau, and National Guard Armor in Salisbury, and the American Legion Hut in Rockwell, NC also a favorite spot of Sally and Larry Edwards.

Gail and I married in 1965. I began a 45 year career in sales and management. Our lives and activities focused for many years around our two children, Monica and Clint, and work.

After raising our children, we took the opportunity to once again enjoy music and shagging. We won an amateur shag contest at Polo's in Winston Salem and this sparked what would become a 16 year stent of dancing in SPA and CSA sanctioned contests. I served on the board of CSA and on various committees. We competed in the National and Grand National competitions. Our son danced in the Jr Shag Division for a few years. I still participated in mixed doubles contests, local fundraisers, and judging contests throughout NC & SC.

Music, this dance, and its people have been a driving force in my life for over 55 years. What an honor to be recognized by my peers for something I love. Thank you BSNHOF Board and many supportive friends. I am truly humbled and Honored to be included in this great organization.