



Spider Kirkman 1987

"SPIDER" KIRKMAN

This dance started for me in 1951, the same year I started in radio broadcasting. Spivey's was the first place I danced, followed by the Rec Center and Pavilion at Myrtle and Old Pavilion at O.D. After Hazel in '54; The Pad; Sunnys; Windy Hill, etc. Away from the beach during the Winter months, it was clubs in Greensboro, Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Raleigh or any place where the music was right.

Some of the people I remember, Billy Jeffers, George Lineberry, Jo Jo, Charlie Boone, Clarice, Gene Allen, Francis Hyman, Bunk Leach and so many more. Harry Driver was my inspiration. He picked me up one day on the beach and started me in the right direction. He was the best.

Doug Perry and Shad Alberty were my closer friends. Shad and I grew up together with this dance, he will always be number one.

The early years were the toughest. Not much money around, I would dance for money, food, drinks, clothes, anything to survive and stay on the beach. Someone told me I could make money by working, so I bought a life savers card and worked on the beach as a life guard for four years using some other name than my own.

It was worth it to be broke, hungry and weigh 115 lbs., year after year just to dance.