



# Frances Tripp 2007

## FRANCES TRIPP

I truly believe that I came into this world knowing how to dance. It was just in my soul, and a huge part of who I am. When my uncle came back from World War II, he taught me how to jitterbug, the first real dance I ever learned.

I grew up in New Bern, North Carolina, which was less than an hour's drive to Atlantic Beach. As a child in the early fifties, I would go to the beach and watch the teenagers bop at the Pavilion which was open-air and right on the beach. As a teenager, I began bopping to some of the best music ever. It was a wonderful era to grow up in. I have so many memories of spending summers dancing at the Pavilion and the Idle Hour. We would pack 6 to 8 people in a car and make the drive to the beach. If we were not spending the weekend or week at the beach, we did not hesitate to make the drive to the beach on Friday night, Saturday night, and Sunday. Over the years I have danced with a lot of great dancers (too many to mention) and enjoyed every second of dancing with them. In the winter months we drove to Faison, an old sweet potato warehouse where the Mighty Blue Notes played. In those days we called it "fast dancing", later named the shag.

In 1963, I married Norman Tripp from Kinston, North Carolina. He loved dancing as much as I did. He has been my dancing partner for 45 years. Seldom, if ever, did we miss any chance to dance, distance was not a problem. We developed our own version of the cha-cha and many other dance steps. We enjoyed dancing at the Ocean Plaza, Red's, The Jolly Knave, River Boat, Peaches, Louie's, Elliott's Nest, The Bushes, Ocean Drive North and many other Clubs. Bobby Tomlinson of the Embers talked us into entering our first dance contest at the Ember's Club in Raleigh, North Carolina. Our prize for placing was a set of tires and a Pepsi Cooler!

We moved to Rocky Mount, North Carolina in 1966, and four years later we were blessed with a beautiful daughter, Anissa Rene' (she loves to dance too). I worked with Boddie-Noell Enterprises, and retired after 26 years of service. Though we were busy with our jobs and raising our daughter, we did dance exhibitions in various festivals and shag club events. We also have a beautiful granddaughter, Abigail, and a wonderful son-in-law.

In 1999, Norman and I were inducted into the Atlantic Beach Hall of Fame, and in 2002 into the National Living Legends in Virginia Beach. Last year I worked with a high school senior who chose shagging as her senior project. Teaching her to shag, and sharing its history was an enjoyable experience.

Throughout all my years of dancing, I have met many wonderful people, and formed lasting friendships. The club owners and DJs have done such a great job of providing places for dancers and wonderful music for all of us. After more than 50 years, to be able to KEEP ON DANCING means a great deal to me.