



Olivia McManus 2009

OLIVIA MCMANUS

I was born on April 24, 1945 and lived in Charlotte, North Carolina all my life. My love for dance began at an early age. At 8 years old, I enrolled in tap, ballet, toe, jazz and acrobat classes, and I was selected twice to go to New York and take private lessons in tap.

My love for dance and music continued to grow in me when I entered Junior High. My favorite activities were going to sock hops and listening to records. On Saturdays, the local radio station had dance contests, which my partner, Donnie Melton, and I won!

By the time I was in high school, shagging had become the most popular dance. On the weekends, my friends and I enjoyed going to dance clubs like Park Center, Gene & Hazels, and Club 74. My favorite dance partners were Ronnie Joyce and Ernest Burris. They taught me how to shag to the sound of my favorite bands, such as, the Tams, Drifters, and 5 Royals. At graduation, I received the superlative recognition for the "Best Female Dancer".

On November 2, 1963, I eloped with my high school sweetheart, David McManus. Later on, when our children were older, David and I wanted to do more activities as a couple. We started going out to dance every weekend with our best friends, Ernest and Jo Carol Burris and Tommy and Moe Funderburk. We loved going anywhere shag contests were offered; especially Steak an Ale and Groucho's. We traveled all over the Carolinas to attend shag competitions; including the National Competition. However, my favorite hot spot was Fat Jacks. I cannot count how many contests we attended there. Those were some unforgettable times of my life.

I have been a supporter of shagging and its music for over 50 years, attended SOS for over 24 years, and most important, I have made countless life-long friends through shagging. The thing that I enjoy the most, at this point in my life, is going to the beach and being at the Pavilion with all my friends. There is nothing like being at the Pavilion with the best DJ's and dancing till your feet hurt.

Dancing has brought a tremendous amount of joy and friendship throughout my life, and I will keep dancing as long as God allows me to do so. At this time, I would like to thank everyone who voted for me to receive this amazing honor. I am eternally grateful to all of you for this.