



A. C. Williams - 2017

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Growing up in Durham, NC in the 50's, I was introduced to fast dance/shag at the Durham Youth Centers. At twelve years old, my sister taught me the basics by having me stand directly behind her and copy the steps. So for the next 40 years, I danced on the wrong (girl) foot. Back in those days, it wasn't the major problem it would be today. Friday and Saturday nights at the youth centers, dancing and/or playing ping pong with high school friends, made for an ideal childhood. Because I could do both --- instant cool guy with the girls.

During those summers, the different high schools would rent cottages at Ocean Drive the week after school was out. Days were spent on the beach meeting new friends and nights were spent at the Pavilion and Pad wearing out loafers on concrete and sand. Different styles of the dance were exhibited and shared. The Juke Box was our only source of music and it NEVER STOPPED playing that music. You know ... THAT MUSIC. Magic days.

Fast forward through the years of college, dental school, kids, family, promoting a new dental practice in Dunn, NC ... and all new people brought different interests and responsibilities. But never too far from my heart was a genuine, deep down passion for the music that brought such joy as a younger man.

My daughter got the family involved in showing Arabian Show Horses in competition. This involved years of training, traveling, cleaning stalls, and time practicing. After those years, something less "all consuming" seemed appealing. My wife, Cathy, and I decided taking shag classes just might be the answer.

We signed up for group classes with Don Bunn in Fayetteville. Having just enough dance background to make me dangerous, it was a nice surprise to realize some of the moves I knew from the 50's had names. I was rocking it ... until my habit of dancing on the girl's lead foot reared its ugly head. Trying to change leads was like trying to change my name. ... Months and months of constant practice ... at class, home, work, in the car ... EVERYWHERE Finally, I was ready to learn again.