



Wesley Harrison May - 2019

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A little over a year after Pearl Harbor was attacked, I was born in Gibsonville, NC. I was the seventh son of eight boys and two girls. We lived on a farm where I learned to milk cows, slop hogs, pull tobacco and many other chores required to maintain the farm. The only running water I saw was in the school I attended. There were actual toilets which I had never seen before.

When I was thirteen, one of my older brothers took me to North Myrtle Beach. To free his time from me, he dropped me off close to the "Pad". I could hear music playing, people talking and laughing; all seemed to be having a "good time". When I got closer, I could see people dancing and drinking. The people there were very friendly as they talked to me outside the club. I was offered a beer which I could not drink. It tasted horrible!

All of my older brothers and sisters could dance. They told me if I wanted a girlfriend, I would have to learn to dance because girls loved guys who could dance. So, I watched them and picked it up very quickly and pretty soon, I had a girlfriend. We danced all the time, went to sock hops at school, dance parties at the VFW, and attended many parties at friend's houses where we could dance.

As I got older and more proficient at shagging, I started to teach others how to shag. Many of my students were female. Pretty soon I could do the female steps as well as the male steps. I have taught shag for more than 40 years and to more people than I can remember. Some of my students are in the Beach Shaggers National Hall of Fame and National Living Legends; some are actual shag instructors, and many are just dancers who love competition. I have helped many couples to the Professional Level of SPA and CSA. However, the most valued part of this journey is the lasting true friendships which I will cherish forever. I am continuing this journey with my life partner, Mary Milton. We will keep Shagging with a sparkling light under our shoes.

We will continue to dance and teach even in "Shagger's Heaven"!