



# Jane Jacobs 2011

## JANE JACOBS

Dancing has always been a part of my life. I was greatly influenced by my parents' love of big band music and their stories of dancing the jitterbug to live bands when they were dating, particularly at the Lumina Pavilion of Wrightsville Beach in Wilmington, N.C., my mama's hometown. Some favorite memories are of my parents attending local dances in the Kannapolis area.

I was born and raised in Kannapolis, N.C. where I love teaching school and living there today with my two daughters, Anna Victoria, and Mary Elizabeth Jacobs. My dance lessons began when I was three and continued through high school at A.L. Brown High. I still wanted to continue dance. Following my daddy's footsteps, I graduated from N.C. State University where I was a feature twirler with the Marching Band. I found every possible chance to dance from ballroom classes to shagging at fraternity parties. Following graduation, I was very eager to dance somewhere, somehow.

Thanks to a rainy night and a neon sign flashing "Shag Contest" at O'Malley's Club in Salisbury, my date and I walked in to find couples gliding across the floor. I was mesmerized by their appearance, rapport, and smoothness on the floor. I knew that very moment I had found a way to continue dancing. A judge there named Shad offered lessons in Charlotte, N.C. I signed up then only to discover at the first lesson that my sling-back heels and A-line skirt had to go! I began watching couples including Bob and Carol Myrick, Jack and Connie Smith, and Sam and Babs McIntosh. Thanks to Shad and Brenda Alberty and Groucho's Beach Club, I spent the next several years enjoying shag lessons, show times, traveling to the beach and making life-long friends.

I cherish the great time and fun I have had dancing with Bob Jacobs, my former husband and dance partner. We enjoyed more than 13 years of competitions, winning a Non-Pro National Shag Championship, spending many weekends with great dancers, and teaching the shag in the Kannapolis area. After a call from Barry Thigpen to audition for a movie, Bob and I were chosen to play the roles of "Jack and Ettie Stroos" in Shag the Movie and enjoyed traveling to promote it.

Through this dance, I have had great mentors such as Sandra Schwartz, Wanda Holliday, Judy Duke, Ellen Taylor, Judy Eastwood, Katherine Tilghman, Jeannie Pack and many more. Mike Osborne from Kannapolis shared his drop spin move and later presented Bob and me with over 1000 shag tunes. He still shares his collection today. I love my Kannapolis and Charlotte area friends with whom I enjoy sharing the dance. Through my journey with breast cancer in 2006, many shaggers provided prayers and encouragement which gave me greater hope for survival. I prayed daily for strength to live and to dance again. During chemotherapy, Kim Maynard invited me to return to competition. My one request was to be careful not to knock my wig off! My life has been so blessed by our dance. Each day is a blessing and every change to dance is a gift! Thanks to the many DJ's and club owners for their dedication to our dance. I thank Milton Nowell (1<sup>st</sup> in Master Div.-National Shag Dance Champ.) and Gene Pope (2<sup>nd</sup> in Seniors-GNDC) for asking me to be their partners in recent competitions.

The style and grace of shagging is so exhilarating and easily becomes a true lifestyle for those who love the dance and the music. I have enjoyed teaching the shag for years, and I now love watching my two daughters Anna Victoria (15) and Mary Elizabeth (13) enjoy the dance. Their true passion for the shag thrills me. I am so grateful for the junior shaggers, the Keepers of the Dance, and their desire to preserve the shag. I am humbled by this honor, and I thank the Hall of Fame committee and the wealth of dancers who have influenced my love for the shag. May we all continue to dance, share the music, and embrace the great friendships we have made through the love of shag and ....long for the chance to dance!