



James R. Coley - 2019

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I was born in Burlington, NC, moving to Greenville, SC in 1964. I currently reside in Taylors, SC with my wife Becky.

The Teen Club in Burlington was my first exposure to the Shag. I learned a few basics of the Shag at this time, but I wanted more.

In Greenville, I made new friends, some of whom I am still very close with today. These new friends introduced me to a few places where there was dancing, like Woods Lake and The Summer House just to name a couple.

In the early part of 1967, I found myself in Myrtle Beach working for a construction company that was erecting the Swamp Fox roller coaster. I was very unskilled labor. I screwed in a lot of light bulbs, and it seemed like I painted the roller coaster at least twice. A small pavilion across the street, Fun Fare Pavilion, caught my attention, and I decided to check it out. To my surprise, I found that it offered a small dance floor in the back with a jukebox. I spent many hours in this little joint. I would journey north to check out what was happening at the PAD when I was able to get away from work early. In the sixties, the beach would close after Labor Day, and my job at the amusement park ended. Dad notified me that I had just received my draft notice. Within a few months, I was in Paris Island and life for me would never be the same. The Marine Corps was undoubtedly the turning point of my life. I was fortunate to survive my tour of duty in Vietnam, and I am grateful to the Marine Corps for teaching me the skills that I needed to survive.

My first wife, Sandy, was also a lover of the dance. In the late 70's, we discovered a place called Tramps, and they had Shag night on Saturdays. It was apparent to us that we were not good dancers, but we saw what good dancers were. We decided that we needed to improve our dancing. We took a few lessons here and there, then we heard about Club Savoy/Sand Flea. We took lessons from Billy Waldrep and Elaine Wilson. We attended The Flea anytime the doors opened. The years at the original Sand Flea were like no other! The Sand Flea was the birthplace of my second family. The original Sand Flea closed May 1987. Rick Hubbard and I, along with many others, worked to procure a new location for the Sand Flea. We opened the New Sand Flea Beach Club on Halloween weekend 1987 at McAlister Square. After losing our lease, we opened a new location at the former Ye Old Fireplace in 1990, eventually closing for good in early April 1993. The Sand Flea had a great run as a beach club far removed from any beach. As the first President of FasDanc, Inc., the corporation that operated The Sand Flea, I was heavily involved in virtually every aspect of operation.

I do not have words to express how very honored and humbled I am to be inducted into the BSNHOF. My involvement with the Sand Flea allowed me to witness many legends that have been inducted into this organization. These legends were idols to me, had all the moves, and you could see their love for the dance. I may not have the moves, but there should be no doubt about the love.

Thank you, Beach Shaggers National Hall of Fame!