



Cindy Mangum "Slim" 2001

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My family started out vacationing at Pawley's Island with family friends. My brothers were born in 1952 and soon after our beach trips shifted to Myrtle Beach. I can only guess that my parents realized the amusement rides would provide endless hours of entertainment for my brothers and me. It was on one of those Myrtle Beach trips that I found the upstairs dance hall at The Pavilion. I can't say for sure how I ended up there, but I strongly suspect I was an unwelcome tag-along with my teenaged sister and her summer beau. I couldn't have been more than 11 or 12 years old but, like so many, I just knew that what I was witnessing was special. I didn't necessarily want to get out there and dance, I merely wanted to listen to the great music and watch everyone else dance.

We did the Myrtle Beach thing for another few years and then my parents decided they wanted to try pier fishing and eventually we ended up going to Cherry Grove Beach so they could fish. My parents, owned Press' Grill (greatest cheeseburgers in the world) in Pageland, SC and they worked unbelievably long hours. Still, it was nothing for them to close the grill on Saturday night, go home get the kids and head to the beach!! I have slept in our car at the Cherry Grove Pier more times than I want to remember. They fished and I found Sonny's Pavilion.

I spent hours and hours watching the dancers at Sonny's. Suddenly something changed and I really wanted to be able to do this beautiful dance. During my high school years, I spent hours on end dancing with the bedpost in my parent's bedroom—enough that I just flat wore out a spot on the floor. Was I dancing? Not really...but I sure as heck thought I was.

Fast forward to 1964 and Wingate U.; my roommate, Karliss Walker Virtue, and I discovered the B&G on Remount Road in Charlotte, The Pad, The Barrel, The O.D. Pavilion, The Beach Club, The Forks, The Continental, and Sonny's. I moved to Charlotte in 1966 with Sally—my best friend from the third grade— and we found The Box and The Cellar, add Phyllis B., Judy T., John Lundy, Belva S., Geri., T.C., and this group seldom, if ever, missed a night (Phyllis' diaries will confirm this!) at The Cellar, The Castaways, The Bitter End, The Pour and STILL, I CAN'T DANCE. I was, however, addicted to the people, the music and that dance.

On one of our nights out at The Cellar, in late 1966 or early 1967, Buzz Sawyer and his dance partner of the evening joined us. She was, of course, a really good dancer. Even though I couldn't dance and Buzz knew it, he still would get us out there to dance with him. This particular night, his partner berates him for dancing "with those girls who can't dance—it's embarrassing for you to do that". For those who know me well, you know that was all it took. Soon afterwards, I had Buzz, Mike Osborne and Larry Lupo at our apartment and said...Ok, I have to learn how to do this! Personally, I think those three guys are the best of the best and they are absolutely the reason for my induction to the Hall of Fame.

Over the years more and more people have started dancing and the dance has changed a little. But whether you call it the shag or simply "fast dancing", it is still a bond that brings us all together. I am proud to still have friends that I met at the beach in the early 1960's. We continue to share in each other's lives and are STILL dancing at the O.D. Pavilion on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. My life has been blessed by these friendships and I am thankful for each and every person.

There are so many great dancers and so many still to be recognized as HOF inductees. I hope you recognize and remember just a few of my favorite dance partners over the last 34 years... Mike Osborne, Buzz Sawyer, Larry Lupo, Richard Abney, Kim Maynard, Jim Jayroe, Donnie Christenbury, Ronnie Joyce, Bill Hussey, Ed Miller, Eddie Page, Spyder Beckham, Tommy White, Don Reid, Shad Alberty, Ronnie Duggins, Chuck Mack, Danny Beam, Edward Rhew and Milton Nowell. And I don't want to leave out some of the female dancers I have enjoyed watching - Judy Kilpatrick Tucker, Karliss Walker Virtue, E.k McDaniel Neelon, Diane Thrasher Mills and Sharon Phillips. I'm leaving out a lot of people I know, but my one page is now full and I just had to recognize a few of the best!!!