



Vanessa Tompkins 2005

VANESSA TOMPKINS

I am a true local, lived in Myrtle Beach all my life. I was born in Conway, S.C. only because there was not a hospital in Myrtle Beach at that time.

I first heard the sound of good music when my mom took me to Spivey's Pavilion. I was too young to do anything but watch and listen. My first public dance was the Myrtle Beach Pavilion at the age of twelve. I loved the music, the dance and meeting great friends. That is when I met my friend Sherry. She would visit me here and I would visit her in Burlington, N.C., home of some great dancers.

When I was 14, I got my driver's license (no stopping me now). The 17 bypass was a single lane dirt road that got me to O.D. without seeing any cops. I think I was in every dance club there ever was in this area, even the Ocean Forest Hotel for my first prom.

While in school in Raleigh and Winston-Salem, N. C., I would frequent clubs there if I didn't drive home to the beach. I have been to a lot of clubs over the years. Still at it, only difference now is that we have DJ's that do a wonderful job rather than a juke box.

While living in Florida, I missed a few years of our dance. I did get into ballroom dancing and taught for several years. After a divorce I moved back home and in with my sister, Cindy. For years we tried to make most of the dance contests in South and North Carolina. We had some wonderful times. After dating Steve, another local, for five years we tied the knot. John Breeden married us on the beach with Harold Bessent at our side and a wonderful reception at Fat Jacks. That's when Steve and I couldn't get enough of the fun, the music, and enjoyment of our friends at O.D., so he built us a home here in North Myrtle Beach.

Through the years there have been lots of changes. The best thing that keeps changing is my increasing number of friends, some of whom are very dear and special to me. Some move here, the rest keep coming back, some often, some occasionally. The only thing among us all that will never change is our love for the music and the dance.