



Lamar Johnson - 1986

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Grew up in Greenville, SC, finished Greenville High school in 1950 and spent the next four years in the Air Force. Graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1957 and lived in Atlanta, Georgia for 14 years. Have lived in Charlotte, NC since 1971 with wife, Linda Garrick, from Columbia, SC.

Having had an older brother, Charlie, when I was growing up, I had a tendency to hang around with older people. When I was in junior high school, I lied about my age, joined the Teenage Canteen and started to dance. Everyone was very encouraging, especially Charlie, D. B. Evans, Harpo Rardner, Nita Guilliard, Jerry Ray, Caroline Trussell, and Roy Hall.

When I was 13 I wanted to go to Myrtle Beach for the summer. Charlie was probably already there. D.B. Evans convinced my mom that I would be among friends and would have no problems. Can you imagine that - what a friend, and what a mom. Well, that was it for me. Greenville couldn't hold me in the summer anymore.

From 1946 to 1950, I spent all my summers at Myrtle Beach and Ocean Drive. Fond memories include sleeping in Ken Lafone's Packard automobile; eating yesterday's leftovers from Jack Armstrong's donut stand (after I had swept up, of course); going to Ocean Drive for Jimmy Cavallo's all night sessions; Barringers after hours; and particularly all the friendships that have lasted all these years.

My favorite early dancers were Harpo Gardner and Bob Donahue. We are talking "show time" here. Others included D.B. Evans, Buddy Kennedy, Bud Hunt, Jinx Barfield, Harry Driver, Leon Williams, Strawberry Barrineaux, Frankie White, Bubba Snow, Bobby Rainwater, and many more. My favorite dancing partner of all time is Betty Dobson Crowe. Some others include Bobbie Sawyer, Pat Fain, Johnnie Lou Wingate, Gwynn Tootle, Betty Greer, Lila Munn, and of course, Linda.

Today, we don't dance as often or a long as we used to, but we are still having a big time with it, even if we don't do all our old steps.