



# Jerry L. Greene, Jr - 2021

## JERRY L. GREENE, JR

My passion for the Shag started in 1981 when I attended my first SOS in North Myrtle Beach. I was 20 years old and a student at The University of South Carolina. I had no idea what an impact this dance was about to have on the rest of my life. The first beach club I stepped into was 'Harold's Across the Street'. The club was packed with shaggers dancing to the coolest rhythm & blues music I had ever heard. Known to Shaggers as 'hard core' beach music, it stirred my soul to the core and I loved it. I soon found myself by the dance floor watching the 'original Ocean Drive Shag'. I stood for hours watching greats like 'Cadillac' Jack Smith, Spyder Kirkman, Chicken Hicks, Ellen Taylor, and so many more. This was shag dancing at its purest and I knew I wanted to learn.

A few months later I started my first lessons taught by shagging legends, Norman & Wanda Holliday. The class also included my parents, Freck & Sylvia Greene, and Chick & Phil Sawyer. Norman and Wanda were master teachers of the dance and ingrained the eight-count basic into my soul. I practiced often with my mother and became addicted to the dance. Both my parents would later become BSNHOF members, too. The following year I began competing on the shag dance circuit. I moved up quickly from Novice to Non-Pro and then competed regularly at the Pro level.

While competing, I met BSNHOF legends Shad & Brenda Alberty. Shad was my favorite and we connected through the dance. He took me under his wing and polished me up with more lessons at Groucho's Beach Club in Charlotte, NC. Shad told me often, "You have a unique, original style so don't ever change it. Enjoy the dance, Jerry; it's going to be good to you."

During my senior year at Carolina, I competed in contests throughout the Carolinas. I won a fair share of those contests and met some of the most wonderful people of my life. By 1985, I was out of college and ready to start a career. I boxed up my worn out loafers and ended my time as a competition dancer. In 1989, I married my beautiful wife Leah Jowers Greene. We have two sons, Evan and Elliott. Our boys are graduates of the University of South Carolina and work with me at our local Mercedes Benz Volvo dealership in Columbia, SC.

Looking back, Shad was right...the dance has been very, very good to me. I was a featured dancer in the 1985 "Shag" documentary produced by SCETV, a frequent judge in the annual National Shag Dance Championship, a 2017 member of the Living Legends, and a 2019 inductee into the South Carolina Shaggers Hall of Fame.

I can't imagine what life might have been like without this dance. When you learn to shag, you become a part of something that's larger than life. The great showman, JoJo Putnam, once described the shag as a dance indigenous only to the Carolinas which I believe makes it a unique dance we Carolina Shaggers can forever proudly call our own.

Thank you to the BSNHOF Committee and all the members who considered me worthy of being inducted. This is quite an honor and I consider it a priceless gift which I will treasure until my last shag dance. God Bless the Shag!