

The History of the Society of Brunswick Shaggers – March 1993 to March 2013

Volume 1

On March 15, 1993, a group of people (Shaggers, obviously) met at Meeting Street (logical place) in Shallotte, NC, with the purpose of forming a Shag Club. They stated the following reasons: 1) Promote Shag Dancing, 2) Social Interaction, 3) Meet with other Clubs, 4) Sponsor a Charity, 5) Form a Club for fun and Charity. The organization would form with a minimum of 25 Charter Members. Any new members would have to make a commitment to attend the meetings at their new home base, Meeting Street. Everyone joining would also be asked to serve on a committee or in some capacity.

Beth Pupp was the first Nominating Committee and named the temporary officers as follows: President – Charles Smith¹; Vice President – Herbie Phipps; Secretary – Geraldine (Gerri) Floyd; and Treasurer – Pam Evans (now of Coastal Shag Club Charter Member Fame). Pam felt that it would be logical to open a bank account, so the Club needed to develop a name. Names for the Club were offered up and included: South Brunswick Island Shag Club and Shallotte Shag Society. Dues were set at \$15 per person to defray the cost of the newsletter and travel expenses for officers attending meetings and workshops. The intention, upon formation, was to petition for membership to the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs.

In the pre-internet days, it was determined that a Bulletin Board would be placed on a Meeting Street wall for Shag Club News. This led to the original formation of the following committees: Telephone (yes, they actually had a phone tree for communications), nominating, social, publicity, membership, and ways and means.

Thus ended the “Birth Meeting” of our little Club. Interest was high, so the second meeting came only two weeks later. Remember, there had not been an organized “Social Dance” yet! It was decided on March 29, 1993, that the Club name would be the Society of Brunswick Shaggers, also known as the “SOBS”. The aforementioned slate of officers was installed and the By-Laws were accepted. There is no mention of who authored the By-Laws.

By the April 19, 1993 meeting, there were 42 members and no Socials YET! All of the new members had to be “sponsored” by a current member and voted in by a majority of the members present! The first Club social was held on May 15, 1993. There were 65 to 70 in attendance and everyone was thrilled. The SOBS were officially out of the gate.

It was determined that business meetings were to be held monthly, and that regular Club parties would be held QUARTERLY!! Notification would be by PHONE TREE and Club Newsletter (mailed at least six times per year). Now the easy part of the SOBS formation was complete.

Our next history installment will cover some of the rough patches of our road to the 20th year of the SOBS (2013). The purpose of our Club in 1993 was – and remains today: “to perpetuate and preserve the Shag Dance; to perpetuate and preserve Beach Music and the atmosphere surrounding the Dance; and to create and maintain an environment conducive to the Dance.”

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Volume 2

Continuing into May of 1993, the Club decided on a Logo Design (your current Membership Card) and formally applied for membership to the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs. There was also a Social planned for June! Ideas were being traded around about a possible road trip. A membership of 58 was reported in July, 1993, and a balance of about \$650 in the bank. As 1993 drew to a close, a pig-picking was planned. This took the Treasury down to \$250. It was then decided to try to raise some money at the Socials and the 50/50 Raffle was implemented. We are still using this to supplement our Treasury.

Meeting Street closed in October, 1993, so a new venue was investigated. The Islander, Steamers, and Shucker's were all suggested. These places have long since closed. The situation of a long-term venue will plague the Club for many years as public bars come and go. Also, at public bars, the Club has little control over party guests and entertainment.

Various places to party were tried throughout 1994, with some costing the Club nearly 50% of its funds. Also, discussions surfaced about increasing the dues in order to pay for the attendance of our representatives at mandatory SOS Workshops and help carry the Club through Dances with sub-par attendance. (Most Socials had between 20 and 30 attendees.) In reference to SOS Workshops, our Club was voted into the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs in February of 1994 with the Cape Fear Shag Club as our Sponsor.

The implementation of a "Phone Tree" was discussed, as it had become difficult for one person to call all 72 Members. Was this the early stages of email forwarding? By mid-1995 Socials were being held at private residences (pool parties, beach parties, etc.) due to the lack of a suitable venue and the accompanying expense. Also, in June, Calabash Flash and Babs are mentioned as Club Members!

Moving forward to 1996, we find \$39.09 in the bank and no place to dance! We are looking forward to the Re-Up Party and some money. The Club made good on its pledge to promote the Shag Dance several times through various functions. Some of those being the Shag Contest at the Oyster Festival and Shag Dance exhibitions at the Boiling Spring Festival by the Lake and at the Chamber of Commerce.

During 1997, 1998, and 1999, the Board met a total of FIVE times for discussions on whether or not to keep the Club alive! There seems to have been a decline in attendance at Social Events and there was a definite lack of a "Home Base". The Club had money in the bank, but it seems as though the fun was waning.

The Secretary's Reports from this era end in February of 1999. The next installment of our history will be collected from past memories as well as some written data and will be featured in the September Beach Beat Newsletter. Volume 3 will bring us to 2013.

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Volume 3

In February of 2000 a meeting of the Executive Board of the SOBS was held, at the home of John and Pam Evans, to effectively disband the Club. John Hutton and Katy O'Neill attended the meeting and were summoned immediately upon entering the room. John Hutton was told that if he did not take over the Club at that time, along with the Treasury of \$25 and six members, that the Club would cease to exist! John agreed to take the Presidency and he and Katy set upon the task of reviving the Club and search for a home base for it. In other words, the two of them held all of the Board positions between them.

Our Club history is the least clear between early 2000 and February 2002. The following is known: (1) the Club was under the direction of John and Katy; (2) the Club was moved from Shallotte to Oak Island (Long Beach at that time); and (3) the Club danced when and where it could and everyone had a good time! The SOBS were determined to survive and thus resorted to meeting and dancing at various places. A lot of work and effort went into a fun time.

The SOBS were first involved with the NC 4th of July Festival in 2002 by officiating a Shag Contest. One of our members, Phil White, put the contest together and it was held during the Breeze Band break. We even had some Club Members place second! We have since run the Shag Contest for the last ten years.

A place to call home was finally found in January of 2004. The Oak Island VFW was anxious for the SOBS to become a regular party. The second Friday each month was designated to be the party night on the Island. This meant that we no longer had to compete with the general public in the local bars. The Club also voted to institute a \$2 cover charge for Members and \$5 for guests to defray the cost of food and DJ's.

Later on that year discussion arose concerning a second dance each month, at least on a trial basis. The Membership approved the additional dance and plans were made to move forward with a dance at the Oak Island Moose Lodge in 2005. In the interim, the VFW had grown into disrepair and there was a question as to the continuation of the SOBS relationship. Cooler heads prevailed and the VFW management upgraded the facilities and assured the Club that they would do what was necessary to keep it there.

In 2004-2005 the Club entered the computer age by publishing the Newsletter on the Website. There had been an earlier attempt, but the Club was not quite ready for it. The old reliable Phone Tree was still in place and snail mail delivered the Newsletter to those without computers.

Since 2005, the Club has operated pretty much as it does presently. The Executive Committee meets once each month; we generally meet to dance twice a month; our parties are open to the public, but controlled by the Club; we have our selected charities; and the purpose of our Club remains: "to perpetuate and preserve the Shag Dance; to perpetuate and preserve Beach Music and the

atmosphere surrounding the Dance; and to create and maintain an environment conducive to the Dance.”

Members should consider themselves fortunate to belong to as strong a Club as the Society of Brunswick Shaggers. Our Membership has fluctuated from 70 in 1993; 6 in 2000; 217 in 2010; and hovering at 192 at the present. This short history cannot approach the complete story of our 20 years. I am sure that I have overlooked some elements, but I have attempted to include those of importance. Take a look at listings of Presidents, dance venues (including private homes), charities, awards, and teachers from the past. Please remember: You can't have fun if you aren't there dancing!

Butch Underwood
SOBS Cub Reporter

Club Presidents

Charles Smith ¹	1993	Lynn Moore	2005
Roy Hunter	1994	Ken Koehly	2006
Gerri Floyd	1995	Chuck Boney	2007
John Evans	1996	Chuck Boney	2008
JD Dutton	1997	Butch Underwood	2009
Irene Shreve	1998	Butch Underwood	2010
Vic Gillespie	1999	Rock Hall	2011
John Hutton	2000	Mamie Brown	2012
John Hutton	2001	Mamie Brown	2013
John Hutton	2002	Robert Carter	2014
Charles Smith ²	2003	Ellen Wester	2015
Bill Ruth	2004	John Hutton	Present

Teachers of the Dance

Phil White	Bonnie White	Henry Webster
Johnnie Webster	Susie Harvey	John Hutton
Katy O'Neill	Chuck Boney	Sandy Boney

Awards

Bronze and Silver Certificates from VFW Operation Uplink
Carolina Beach Music Award Nomination for Operation Uplink
Four placements in SOS Parade

Places Where We Have Danced

Public Bars

Meeting Street
Lockwood Folly
American Legion
Iris's
Fat Harold's
Captain Willie's
Chasers Beach Club
Oak Island VFW
The Whale
MCR Entertainment
Jimmy's Café
Turtle Island

Brierwood Clubhouse
DAV Building
Steamers
The 19th Green
Betty's Waterfront Restaurant
Greenbacks
Shucker's
Oak Island Moose Lodge
Duffers
Oak Island Elks Lodge
Dry Dock
OD Pavilion

Private Homes

Kuhnemann Residence
Capra Residence
Kowalchuk Residence
Hedgepath Residence

Forsey Residence
Rhyne Residence
Mammy Residence

Charities We Have Supported

VFW Operation Uplink
New Hope Clinic
VFW Women's Auxiliary
Toys for Children of Oak Island
Brunswick County Food Bank

Mooseheart Child City and School
Southport Oak Island Animal Rescue
Coastal Shag Club Activities
SOAR Animal Rescue

Footnotes 1 & 2: The first President Charles Smith (1993) was not the same person as the eleventh President Charles Smith (2003). Imagine that, two Presidents with the same name!