

10-26-85

A special honor for Tookie Lee

His real name is Carl.

But not many people will identify him right off if we call him Carl. But when we say "Tookie," identification is immediate.

Tookie Lee is a native of Burlington, grew up here, went to high school here, but now lives in Greensboro.

And folks who know Tookie also know that he has been one of the best dancers around for a long time.

He is a shagger.

And he is so good at it that he has become the first person to be inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Burlington Triad Shag Club, along with being presented a lifetime membership in the club.

The club was formed back in August, and now it has 157 members.

What is the shag?

Diane Fogleman, one of the organizers of the club, gives the answer.

"Shagging is much like a slowed-down, smoothed-out version of the jitterbug — and Tookie Lee is one of the smoothest. You can spot him on the dance floor always because he dances with his pipe."

Beach clubs in South Carolina induct their "greats" into their halls of fame, so when

the Burlington club was formed, it was decided that it would honor their "greats" as well.

"Tookie was perfect for the honor," says Fogleman. "He's been shagging since he was 14, and tells us of the days when the Burlington bowling alley was the place to dance. It's interesting to hear him recall those times."

The presentation of a Hall of Fame plaque was made recently to Tookie by Bob Bullard, one of the founders of

the club: Fogleman, club president; Lock McKinnon, vice president; Joan Kimbro, secretary; Bill Inge, treasurer; and Larry Porterfield, lounge manager at Best Western, which is the home base of the club.

Others involved in organizing the club and in the presentation to Tookie were Lee Harless, Eddie Canada, Judy Johnson, Johnnie Michaels, Cookie Fogleman, Randy Sandifer and Candy Brooks.

A permanent plaque will be on display at Best Western honoring Lee and others who will be a part of the Hall of Fame in the future.

In explaining the formation of the club, Bullard said, "A group of us got together and decided to form a shag club to help preserve the shag. The fox trot, Charleston, twist, chicken, disco have all come and gone, but the shag has been around since the '50s. It has outlived a lot of dances."

He said the club has received tremendous response from local people interested in shagging, some of whom have not gotten out and danced in years, and from merchants who will co-sponsor special club events.

"Shaggers are usually in their 30s, 40s and 50s, and we

By Don Bolden



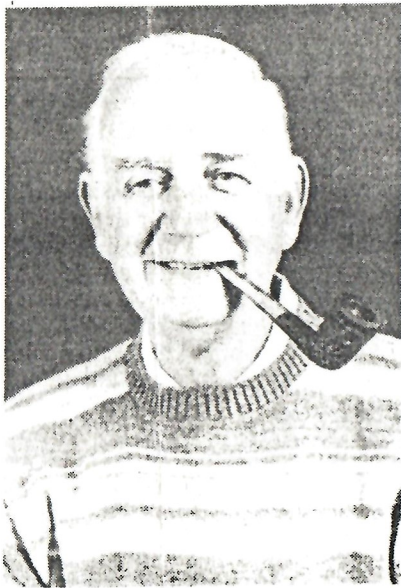
think that it will be great to have a club and a place to go every week, unwind for a few hours, listen to some old rhythm and blues shag music, talk to fellow shaggers, and of course, shag. The blues we shag to today is the root of the rhythm. The music is infectious and a great tonic," says Fogleman.

"A lot of members enjoy shagging at the beach, so we have brought the beach atmosphere a little closer to home and can enjoy shagging more often," she adds.

She explains that South Carolinians claim their coast is the birthplace of shagging, but North Carolinians say it started at Carolina beach.

"It's like the Hatfield-McCoy feud, but a lot less serious. However, South Carolina has one up on us. In April, 1984, Gov. Richard Riley of South Carolina signed a bill making the shag the official dance of the state."

"I wonder if Gov. Martin is a shagger..." she wonders.



TOOKIE LEE