

Summertime greetings from Ocracoke Island!

For those of you who haven't been to the island recently, this month we share with you news about some recent events and island happenings.

Just over a month ago my daughter, Amy, and "Molasses Creek's" own, Fiddler Dave, were married on a beautiful, warm and sunny afternoon in the side yard of the Rondthaler House, an old island residence originally belonging to my grandfather's sister and her husband, "Aunt Sabra and Uncle Dan." Over 200 people attended the ceremony which was performed by Ocracoke's best known storyteller, Donald Davis. After the wedding, guests gathered at Julie Howard's house for a backyard feast and several hours of great music. Ocracoke's Martin Garrish played guitar, along with Gary Mitchell, Wes Lassiter, and Bill & Libby Hicks. David even joined in, and played fiddle for his very own love song, "Howard Street," which is on Molasses Creek's latest Album, "The Best of Molasses Creek."

#### Amy and David on Their Wedding Day:



Speaking of music and Ocracoke, the ["Ocracoke Festival, 2002"](#) is scheduled for June 8 & 9. Beginning at 10 a.m. on Friday, along Howard Street and the School Road, you will find music, storytelling, and demonstrations at three stages. In addition, artisans, performers, and craftspeople from all over coastal Carolina will be displaying wares and giving performances and workshops. On Friday evening, at 8:30, we will gather for a traditional Ocracoke square dance in the school gym. On Sunday morning performers will host a hymn/gospel sing-along at the Live Oak Stage, followed by a fundraising auction at 1:00 p.m. in the gym. Admission to all events is free. We hope you can join us. If not this year, perhaps you will want to plan next year's vacation around the Ocracoke Festival, 2003.

In other news, "Friends of Portsmouth Island" held their "every-other year" reunion this Spring. Several hundred friends of the island were on hand strolling through the village, visiting with old friends, and remembering life as it once was on Portsmouth. A church service was held at 11 o'clock with a potluck dinner on the lawn at noon. For a brief history of the island click on either of the two photos below.

### Portsmouth Methodist Church:



One highlight of the day was the opening of the U.S. Post Office. Friends of Portsmouth Island, along with the National Park Service, have spruced up the building with a new coat of paint, period furnishings and other repairs.

### Portsmouth Post Office:



All day long, folks stood in line to mail postcards, letters, and notes from the small wooden structure. This was the first time since 1959 that mail had been posted from Portsmouth Island. Ocracoke's postmaster, Ruth Jordan, and clerk, Melissa Fulcher, were on hand with other helpers to assist the steady stream of customers wanting to send mail on this historic day. A special postmark was created with the words, "Portsmouth Island Homecoming, Portsmouth Island Station, April 6, 2002, Ocracoke, NC 27960." We mailed a number of envelopes from Portsmouth that day and have them for sale (\$5.00 each) on our web site. All proceeds will go to "Friends of Portsmouth." You can click on the image below to order one for yourself.

### Portsmouth Island Covers:



If you are traveling from Cedar Island this season you may notice renovations made to the ferry "Silver Lake." Although the vehicle deck has remained unchanged, the vessel looks much larger. The entire superstructure has been rebuilt with a spacious passenger lounge (three times the size of the former lounge) with more tables and a commanding view across

the bow. The "Silver Lake," which took almost three months and nearly two million dollars to renovate, even offers a handicap accessible elevator to the upper level.

#### Motor Vessel "Silver Lake:"



The public was invited to tour the ferry several weeks ago. The captain and crew welcomed us on board and encouraged us to wander throughout the vessel, including into the pilot house.

#### Silver Lake Pilot House:



And even into the engine room.

#### Silver Lake Engine Room:



The Silver Lake is 200 feet long on deck and is powered by twin 800 hp Caterpillar diesel engines. She makes the run between Ocracoke and Cedar Island in about 2 1/2 hours.

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Whichever route you take on your next journey to Ocracoke, be sure to stroll down Howard Street, and stop by the shop to say hello.

Until next time, all the best to you from the entire staff of Village Craftsmen.