

After a cold and stormy winter, it finally feels as if spring is just around the corner. One sure sign of the impending warmer weather is Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras (otherwise known as Doughnut Day at Julie Howard's home on Lighthouse Road).

Every year Julie cooks up a big batch of doughnuts and distributes them to friends and neighbors.

Julie dropping the dough into a pan of hot grease:



This year (February 24) she & Gary invited 20 to 30 people to her house for a Doughnut Day get together.

A few of the Mardi Gras revelers relaxing after stuffing themselves:



Ocracokers of all ages enjoyed plain, chocolate covered, and powdered doughnuts, as we laughed, told stories, and caught up on the latest island news.

Maddie sneaks one more doughnut past her dad:



Although this was actually a rather quiet and sedate gathering of islanders, everyone wore strings of plastic beads, and some folks even came in typical revelers' attire.

Merle brings a touch of New Orleans:



In other news, now that the weather is beginning to warm up (at times even into the lower 70's) we are putting finishing touches on our annual repairs to businesses and rental cottages, and looking forward to another Ocracoke summer season.

Last month I shared with you information about the rehabilitation of my grandparents' home, not far from Village Craftsmen. Although work on the house will be slow for the next several months, I have made some changes in our web page, and I will be posting updates periodically.

Most of the photos are now hyperlinks. You can click on them to view a larger, clearer version of the pictures. I have also added some additional family information and a few more photos, including one of me on the front porch ca. 1954, and one of my 91 year old Aunt Thelma taken just last year.

I have also added some photos of the house being jacked up and of the original "hackmatack" knees that were used at the corners to hold the girders together. Click [here](#) or on the photo below to go directly to that page.



We hope your winter has not been too brutal, and we look forward to seeing many of you on the island this coming season. Be sure to stop by and say hello on your next visit.

Philip and the entire crew at Village Craftsmen