THE OFFICIAL
COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON
STUDENT TRADITIONS BOOK
EPIC

Epic is being founded before the United States of America, and living to tell the tale. Epic is canceling class because campus is under siege during the Civil War. Epic is a computer science graduate winning the Academy Award for visual effects. Epic is working with NASA in an undergraduate class called Space Mission Design.

Epic is what happens when great minds meet cutting-edge resources at the College of Charleston.

What legacy will you create here?
DID YOU CHOOSE CHARLESTON?

History is alive here. It breathes with each careful step down to the cobblestone streets that open up to the harbor. It moves with the Spanish moss threaded through the live oaks. It sleeps to the sound of water lapping against the Battery walls.

You keep it alive.

In the classics classroom in Randolph Hall, teasing metaphors from Greek mythology, taking water samples from the inlet behind Lockwood Drive pond, capturing light in paintings in the art studio.

You become a part of it when you cross the cistern and pack up your apartment, when your diploma comes in the mail and when you hang it up in your office for the first time.

This history is your responsibility and your privilege. Here at the College of Charleston, you can decide how you want to honor it. This book will show you the traditions, landmarks and quirks that have become yours as a student of the College of Charleston. So you have to ask yourself - did you choose Charleston, or did Charleston choose you?
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INTRODUCTION

The College of Charleston Traditions Book fills you in on the long, captivating and surprising history and traditions of the College, so when you leave you know the story behind the seal on your diploma. It will also provide information about how to honor this history as a student Traditions Keeper proving you were truly immersed during your time here, and about how to be an active young alumnus no matter where life takes you after your time on campus.

The Student Alumni Associates (SAA) is leading an effort to maintain CofC’s traditions here on campus. All you need to do is take part of the traditions detailed in this book and upon completion you’ll be recognized with a Traditions Keeper medal! Go to alumni.cofc.edu for more information on being a Traditions Keeper, how it works and how to complete these fun tasks.
A BRIEF-YET-COMpletely-EPIC HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

1770
The College of Charleston is founded, making it the oldest institution of higher education south of Virginia, and the 13th oldest in the United States.

1790
Classes begin at the College. The first College classes were held in the basement of the Bishop Robert Smith House, now known as the President’s House.

1794
First graduating class of six male students participate in a commencement ceremony in the College Hall, which is believed to be the east wing of the old barracks, once located where the Cistern Yard is now. Because of their deterioration, the barracks were torn down by the city when Randolph Hall was built.

1828
The cornerstone is laid for the College’s main academic building, now known as Randolph Hall. Though today it is mainly occupied by administrative offices, some classes are still held in Randolph Hall.

1837
The College becomes the first municipal college in the United States.

1852
Porters Lodge, located across the Cistern Yard from Randolph Hall, is completed. This small building housed the office of the College porter, who acted as the College custodian.

1855
Construction begins on the first campus library, now known as Towell Library. The small building, located on the western side of the Cistern Yard, now houses some workspace for the Office of
Economic Development.

1857
The Cistern - the raised platform in front of Randolph Hall - is constructed as a reservoir to provide water for fighting fires in the days before the city installed a water system. It was later covered with grass, and has marked the commencement of graduating students since the early 1930's.

1864
The College closes as a safety measure while Charleston is under siege during the Civil War.

1866
The College reopens, classes resume.

1888
The College of Charleston Alumni Association is established.

1900
President Harrison Randolph introduces the Bachelor of Science degree. Until the Bachelor of Science degree was offered at the College, students

1904
Pi Kappa Phi is founded on the College campus. It is now a national fraternity with more than 125 active chapters.

1918
Women are admitted to the College.

1922
Perrine St. Claire Smith is the first female graduate of the College who was also valedictorian of her class. She went on to become very active in the American Rose Society and has a rose named in her honor, the “Perrine” Miniature Rose.

1967
The College admits its first African American student - Eddie Ganaway. He completed all four years as an undergraduate.

1970
The South Carolina State College System incorporates the College.

1971
Ganaway graduates with a degree in history and continued on to teach at two universities before taking a position at Allstate Insurance Company. In the same year, the Robert Scott Small Library opens on Cougar Mall.

1972
The first graduate program is established at the College, providing students with a master's degree in elementary education.

1975
The College completes the Grice Marine Biology Laboratory on James Island. The Laboratory is still in use today.

1978
The Simons Center for the Arts, home to the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Arts and the School of the Arts, opens.

1980
The Honors Program is established which later becomes the Honors College.

1985
The Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture opens its doors.

1990
NASA chooses the College as one of six universities to serve as a partner organization and space research facility.

1992
The state of SC grants the charter and the College officially incorporates the Graduate School to become the University of Charleston, SC.

2005
The College opens two new facilities - the Marlene and Nathan Addlestone Library and the Beatty Center, home of the School of Business.

2007
Two new residence halls, the George Street Apartment Community and the Liberty Street Residence Hall, open at the College along with the Liberty Street Fresh Food Company dining hall.

2008
The TD Arena opens to host the men's and women's basketball and volleyball teams.

2009
The Marion and Wayland H. Cato Jr. Center for the Arts opens, attached to the Simons Center for the Arts. It now houses the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art.

2010
The School of Sciences and Mathematics Building opens.
FUN FACTS

Some schools have fun facts about their mascots or sports teams. Other schools have fun facts about signers of the U.S. Constitution, or being founded before America was established as an independent nation. We’re the latter.

- The College was founded by three signers of the U.S. Declaration of Independence and three signers of the U.S. Constitution.
- Thomas Heyward, Arthur Middleton and Edward Rutledge are the signers of the U.S. Declaration of Independence who cofounded the College.
- Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Charles Pinckney and John Rutledge are the signers of the U.S. Constitution who cofounded the College.
- The television shows General Hospital, Army Wives and Today (The Today Show) with Kathie Lee and Hoda are among the many that have filmed on campus.

Some College glossary terms you pretty much need to know before you graduate:

- **Shag:** South Carolina’s official state dance
- **Chucktown:** Nickname for Charleston. We are also called the Holy City
- **Palmetto Bug:** A horrible, disgusting creature known elsewhere as a cockroach
- **The Washout:** The surfing area on Folly Beach
- **The Joe:** The Joseph P. Riley Jr. stadium, home to Charleston’s minor league baseball team, The Riverdogs
- **Gullah:** A culture and dialect found on the Sea Islands of South Carolina and Georgia
- **Trippin’ on the Bricks:** Falling on the uneven and extremely old herringbone bricks that mark the College campus from the rest of Charleston.
BECOME A TRADITIONS KEEPER

It’s easy! This book contains 25 of the College’s most interesting symbols of history, heritage and school spirit! Simply read The Tradition, complete The Keeper and then stash away your Keepers on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or in the book itself. To receive your Traditions Keeper medal upon graduation, visit us at the Blacklock House during our spring semester Check-In days and bring in your completed Keepers for review. Check-In days can be found on the Alumni website at alumni.cofc.edu.
THE TRADITION:

BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY

Remember Convocation? The annual celebration during which you gathered with fellow incoming freshman and faculty to celebrate the start of a new scholastic year. You walked through the arch at Porter’s Lodge into the Cistern Yard and officially “signed the book.” You were welcomed to the liberal arts and sciences community and expected to contribute greatness to the almost-250-year legacy of College alumni.

THE KEEPER:

Snap a photo that represents your legacy of greatness to the College today.
THE TRADITION:

MEMORIZE THE MEANING AND ORIGIN OF THE GREEK ABOVE PORTERS LODGE

As you pass under the arch at Porters Lodge during the Convocation ceremony, you’ll notice a Greek inscription that says, “Know Thyself.” Whether you mean to or not, you will find yourself accepting this challenge again and again as a student and well beyond. Immediately following spring commencement, the College’s newest graduates will exit the Cistern Yard through the same arch and enter the world as alumni.

THE KEEPER:

Translate the quote and take a photo of the gate.
THE TRADITION:

ENJOY THE CISTERN YARD

If you are looking for a great place to study or relax, look no further than the heart of campus. In the Cistern Yard, students enjoy a calm atmosphere and beautiful setting on the green grass under live oak trees draped with Spanish moss. This place has been featured as part of many films and TV shows, convocation and commencement ceremonies, Charleston Affair parties and Spoleto Festival performances, but for your time on campus it’s practically your backyard.

THE KEEPER:

Find the Class of 1990’s senior class gift in the Cistern Yard and take a photo of the memorial plaque.
THE TRADITION:

VISIT RANDOLPH HALL

Randolph Hall, named for President Harrison Randolph (president from 1897-1945) is the statuesque pink-tinged building that sits in the Cistern Yard. Not only is Randolph Hall one of the oldest buildings in the country, it is the oldest college classroom building still in use in the United States. Though today it is used primarily for administrative offices, it still hosts undergraduate classes. Check out Alumni Memorial Hall (located on the second floor) and find the name of the first honor graduate, John Lewis Gervais of the first graduating class in 1794.

THE KEEPER:

Take a photo of the John Lewis Gervais plaque there.
THE TRADITION:

VISIT TOWELL LIBRARY

The Towell Library was the College’s first campus library built to the west of Randolph Hall in the Cistern Yard. It was constructed by famed architect George E. Walker between 1854 - 1856 and was named for Edward Emerson Towell ’34, a former dean and chemistry professor at the College. This National Historic Landmark is one of the great treasures of the College and the City of Charleston. Enjoy a quick visit before going to Addlestone Library, and you can see how the College has grown.

THE KEEPER:

Take photos of the lobby of both Towell and Addlestone Libraries and keep them side-by-side.
THE TRADITION:

MEMORIZE THE LATIN ABOVE ALUMNI GATE

The Latin phrase written in the gate reads, “Haec olim meminisse iuvabit”—a quote taken almost verbatim from Virgil’s epic poem The Aeneid. The phrase represents the notion that your time at your alma mater, though challenging and even grueling at times, will be some of the most fulfilling, happy, life-shaping experiences you’ll have.

THE KEEPER:

Translate the quote and take a photo of the gate.
PICK YOUR FAVORITE SKELETON

Dinosaurs? Sabre tooth tigers? Sharks? No, it not a horror film. It’s the Mace Brown Museum of Natural History, located in the School of Sciences and Mathematics Building. With skulls and bones proudly presiding over the corner of Calhoun and Coming Streets, the museum includes fossils that are as many as 50-million-years old. You will come across skeletons of ancient familiar species like crabs and rodents, but the real treats are the giant sloth and Megalodon teeth - and also knowing that some of your fellow classmates worked with Mace Brown to prepare the fossils for exhibition! Admission to the museum is free.

THE KEEPER:

Trace the most interesting fossil you find and write down its full scientific name (genus, class, species, kingdom, all that stuff) and take a photo of your favorite skeleton.
THE TRADITION:

ENJOY AN EXHIBIT AT HALSEY INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

The Halsey Institute is filled with contemporary art pieces ranging from sculptures, paintings, drawings, photography and occasionally even large-scale salt art (Google it...). The Institute is committed to providing a direct experience with works of art in all media within an environment that fosters creativity, individuality, innovation and education.

THE KEEPER:

Feeling inspired? Make a sketch of your own while sitting in one of the light-filled lobby’s comfy chairs. Not an artist? Simply take a photo of the piece you like best.
THE TRADITION:

POUR OVER THE COLLEGE’S EXCEEDINGLY RARE COMPLETE AUDUBON PORTFOLIO

In Special Collections of the Addlestone Library tucked within a glass display case sit two books illustrated by the most famous bird painter of all time, John James Audubon. Completed in 1838, this unparalleled work of 435 hand-colored folio plates illustrates 1,065 birds in four leather-bound volumes. Only 120 sets are known to exist in the world, and the pages are turned once daily.

THE KEEPER:

Take advantage of this unique opportunity by taking a selfie outside of Special Collections after flipping through the Audubon portfolio.
THE TRADITION:

VISIT AVERY RESEARCH CENTER

The Avery Normal Institute was completed in 1868 and was Charleston’s first free secondary school for African Americans. Avery was acquired by the College of Charleston in 1985, and the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture has served as a source of community outreach for African-American issues. The Avery Center currently houses the study of African American traditions and cultures with a mission to bring diverse constituencies to the College.

THE KEEPER:

What’s the meaning of the bottle tree? Take a photo of the tree.
THE TRADITION:

ATTEND A SCHOOL OF THE ARTS PERFORMANCE

Want a life full of drama? Or maybe just a taste of the drama we have in the School of the Arts? See a production, go look through the Halsey or Hill Gallery, go to a Monday night recital or see a ballet. From student productions like Equus to Piccolo Spoleto performances in the spring, there are many different opportunities for students to enjoy the fine arts.

THE KEEPER:

Hang onto the playbill or pamphlet you receive at the theatre.
THE TRADITION:

CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAY SEASON AT THE SOTTILE HOUSE LIGHTING

Brighten your day at the Sottile House Tree Lighting, held every year in front of the Sottile House between Thanksgiving Break and exam week. This dates back to 1921 and marks the first electrically lighted outdoor tree in the city of Charleston. This is truly one of the most heart-warming traditions at the College of Charleston.

THE KEEPER:

Take a picture of the tree once it’s lit.
THE TRADITION:

RECEIVE YOUR CLASS RING OR WATCH OTHERS RECEIVE THEIRS AT THE ANNUAL RING CEREMONY

Each year, juniors and seniors are given the opportunity to purchase the official class ring from the Alumni Association. The ring features the College’s seal and they are presented to the students at an annual ring ceremony.

THE KEEPER:

Flash your ring or a photo of one when you present your completed Traditions Book.
THE TRADITION:

GET A PICTURE WITH CLYDE

Find our mascot, Clyde the Cougar, around campus and show us your school spirit! College of Charleston students voted to change the school’s mascot from the Maroons to the Cougars during the 1970-1971 school years.

THE KEEPER:

Clyde is represented in two statues on campus, so find them or get a photo with the mascot himself.
THE TRADITION:

SHOW YOUR PRIDE AT A COUGARS BASKETBALL GAME

Show your Cougar pride! Our Homecoming Week is held annually in the spring in conjunction with Cougar Basketball and includes a week-long calendar of events with royalty elections, a golf cart parade and tailgate, a concert at the Music Farm, a service project for the campus community, and a Spirit Cup Challenge for all recognized student organizations on campus.

THE KEEPER:

Take a selfie at the game.
THE TRADITION:

VISIT THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OFFICE AT THE BLACKLOCK HOUSE

The Alumni Association is located in the Blacklock House. Stop by to admire the incredible architectural and design details - from the archways to the crown molding to the wallpaper on the second floor, everything in the Blacklock House tells a story.

THE KEEPER:

Well you’ll have to stop by before graduation to present your book and Keepers if you choose to participate, so take a look around while you’re here!
THE TRADITION:

CELEBRATE THE END OF YOUR SENIOR YEAR AT A CHARLESTON AFFAIR.

Join the CofC Alumni Association for its annual alumni celebration honoring the graduating class. A Charleston Affair boasts over 3000 guests each year and is held in the beautiful Cistern Yard under the majestic oaks. Enjoy live music, delicious food and beverages while mingling with friends and classmates. It’s a party you can’t miss!

THE KEEPER:

Take the best party photo ever.
THE TRADITION:

LOCATE THE COLLEGE’S SEAL IN THE STERN CENTER LOBBY

On the seal, the woman seated holding the scepter is described as a personification of Charleston herself and evokes an image of the city deriving its livelihood from the sea and prepared to defend itself. She is shown presenting a laurel wreath to a young man holding a diploma in front of a classroom building.

THE KEEPER:

Take a photo of the seal.
THE TRADITION:

TAKE IN A QUIDDITCH MATCH ON RIVERS GREEN

There’s nothing quite like watching a Quidditch match because, well, it’s literally not from this world. But the College’s team is nationally competitive and evokes school spirit from even the most casual onlooker.

THE KEEPER:

Take a photo of the golden snitch during or after the game
THE TRADITION:

ATTEND A COUGAR COUNTDOWN EVENT

Cougar Countdown offers students a wide array of activities and events designed to help them stay positive and productive during Final Exam Week. Opportunities include yoga, massages, pancakes, Puppies on the Green, Peer Counseling and more!

THE KEEPER:

We know this is a stressful time, so count this one as optional. Enjoy the pancakes!
THE TRADITION:

VOTE FOR YOUR STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT

Being president or vice president of the Student Government Association (SGA) is a huge responsibility to take on, especially when you’re a full-time student. The SGA leadership makes decisions that impact all students. So know your candidates and vote!

THE KEEPER:

Vote online and take a screenshot of the confirmation.
THE TRADITION:

GET TO KNOW HISTORIC CHARLESTON

The Sottile House sits on the corner of two old city streets, both of which are now simply a part of the arboretum (the big square in the middle of campus that includes College Way, Green Way and Cougar Mall).

THE KEEPER:

Find the names of the two old city streets that ran through campus and take a photo of one.
THE TRADITION:

FIND THE PRESIDENT’S HOUSE HERE ON CAMPUS

This is the oldest building on campus. The president’s was constructed in 1770 as the parsonage of St. Philip’s Church.

THE KEEPER:

Write down the address of the house and take a photo.
THE TRADITION:

JOIN COMMITTED TO CHARLESTON (C2C)

One of the most popular student traditions at the College is to join Committed to Charleston (C2C). This student organization is designed to promote the value of philanthropy and the importance of getting involved while on campus. Each member is asked to make an annual gift of at least $17.70 in recognition of the year the College was founded. Just think, by giving up only four tall lattes a year, you can make a huge impact! Every gift goes to the College of Charleston Fund to support scholarships, exceptional faculty, alumni programming and other immediate campus needs. Membership in this organization provides social, educational and community service opportunities to enhance the student experience. Join C2C today at giving.cofc.edu/C2C.

THE KEEPER:

Join C2C by making your gift. We’ll have your name in the database.
THE TRADITION:

GRADUATION: CROSS THE CISTERN AND WEAR SUMMER WHITE

For decades this annual tradition has taken place in the Cistern Yard where ancient live oak trees draped with Spanish moss set the stage for one of your greatest life milestones. Unlike any other college or university in the U.S., students do not wear robes or caps for the ceremony. Instead, women students wear white dresses and men students wear white dinner jackets.

THE KEEPER:

You’ll have completed your book by now and received your medal, so CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION!!
HOW TO BECOME AN ACTIVE ALUMNUS IN 5 EASY STEPS

You know that Dr. Seuss book everyone gives you when you graduate? It starts, “Congratulations, today is your day!” Well it’s true, because you’re entering the world as a College of Charleston graduate. Your degree carries the weight of more than two hundred years of history, 57 majors and 73 minors, of 18 traditions mentioned in this book. When you come across a speed bump on your path, you have over 55,000 alumni to lean on. You have the College of Charleston seal on your diploma - and you know the story behind it. You’ve sung the alma mater, so you know the line, “Proud traditions hover ‘round thee.” With every passing day of your life as an alumnus, somehow more than even as a student, you’ll feel the truth behind that lyric.

To honor the traditions of our past and to help create new traditions, you can stay an involved alumnus no matter where in the world you are.
**STEP 1:**
Come to Charleston Affair! It’s the best party of the year.

**STEP 2:**
Join the College’s LinkedIn page to have access to a huge network. Join the Alumni Association on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and LinkedIn as well!

**STEP 3:**
Donate what you can when you can. We’ll touch base to see what you’re up to and we won’t be pushy, but we will tell you the kinds of amazing things your donations will help us accomplish. One way you can begin your contribution is by donating to the senior class gift. Each year the senior class celebrates their time at the College by making this gift - it’s the legacy you and your classmates will leave on campus.

**STEP 4:**
Read College of Charleston Magazine - you’ll see feature stories about current students, faculty and staff as well as fellow alumni, and you can stay apprised of happenings on campus.

**STEP 5:**
Keep your contact information updated in MyCofC (log in at alumni.cofc.edu) to stay connected with alumni, receive notice of alumni chapter events, and get the materials and publications the Alumni Association produces for you.