

Road Trip to a Southern Paradise

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Think of Charleston, and you picture old homes. They are a part of our southern heritage. Visitors can come and delight in the wonders of the Holy City for a brief period of time. However, there are those who have chosen to reside and rear their families in this extraordinary city.

In the 1980s, I set my sights on attending the College of Charleston while visiting a cousin who lived on South Battery. Of course, I never imagined that I would be joined by my siblings Catherine and David Brown. We were all blessed to attend and graduate from the College of Charleston. Every time I drive into Charleston, South Carolina, I love the smell of the marsh. The Holy City embraces me with its gas lanterns on centuries-old homes and its inviting spirit.

EARLY HISTORY

Founded in 1670, Charleston, South Carolina has over 300 years of extraordinary history. The city is known for its southern hospitality, elegant charm, cobblestone streets with well-preserved structures and unique culture.

QUICK CHARLESTON FACTS

Location: Charleston, South Carolina is only a three hour drive from Charlotte, North Carolina and has 90 miles of Atlantic coastline

Climate: Temperate to Subtropical, the region has about 230 days of sunshine each year and has an average daily temperature of 65.6° Fahrenheit.

Time Zone: Eastern

State Motto: South Carolina actually has two states mottoes: 'Dum Spiro Spero – While I breathe I



David and Blair Brown pictured with their two children

hope,' and 'Animus Opibusque Parati – Ready in Soul and Resource.'

Busy Port: One of the largest ports in the Atlantic coast

Home to: College of Charleston – The College of Charleston has a rich history founded in 1770. It is the oldest educational institution south of Virginia and the 13th oldest in the United States. There certainly are special times and special places in our lives, and sometimes they come together in extraordinary ways. Like God walks with us every day, Charleston moves your soul.

During our college life we worked in a seafood restaurant in Mount Pleasant on Shem Creek and lived on Sullivan's Island in a quaint 1950s beach-front home. Each visit takes me back in time where I recall the ocean breeze coming through the French

doors of my bedroom with the smell of the sea. Life was certainly sweet in the Low Country those days. To describe to you my college experience, I would have to take you to Sullivan's Island on the beach and say "breathe deep," and you would always remember that smell for the rest of your life.

One of the biggest blessings of being together was that my parents visited us almost every weekend. During that time my father was fighting terminal colon and liver cancer. Those long weekends with family will always be treasured. We would frequent the local seafood restaurant on Sullivan's Island, Sullivan's, that is still there today serving some of the best fried flounder in the Low Country.

During our college years, my brother David met his now wife, Blair. They loved the area so much that they remained Charlestonians and reside near Daniel Island with their two children. I was able to visit with them recently and a rush of memories came flooding back. How blessed we were as a family to live and attend the College of Charleston together. Those Oyster Roasts, Low Country Shrimp Boils and long summer nights with friends and family will never be forgotten.

Sitting at the dinner table at Sermet's Courtyard on Daniel Island that Saturday evening with my brother and his family, I remembered how much our dad loved us and how your paradise can be wherever you choose. Walking the beach with my Golden Retriever, Sterling, the next morning before returning back to Charlotte, I realized how much fun one can have with just your dog, the breeze of the Atlantic and the taste of salt fresh on your lips.



Cistern of College of Charleston campus



Randolph Hall at the College of Charleston



Sterling and I running on the beach on Sullivan's Island

Luke 23:43 – *And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."*

