

HANDS ACROSS THE OCEAN

In a landmark art deco building just over the Potomac River from Washington DC, Quatuor Coronati's American Conference saw academic and masonic speakers looking at 'Freemasons in the Transatlantic World'

Just as Hurricane Florence hit the East Coast on 12 September, research lodge Quatuor Coronati (QC) was holding a three-day conference at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia. Fortunately for QC, the National Memorial was spared anything beyond a moderate breeze.

Themed 'Freemasons in the Transatlantic World', the conference followed a tercentenary event in Cambridge, England in 2016, and a well-attended symposium at Freemasons' Hall. The US event attracted an audience of over 180 from across North and Latin America, Europe and even Singapore.

Tours of the memorial

Delegates heard presentations from world-class academic and masonic speakers, including Paul Monod, Jackie Ranston and Susan Mitchell Sommers, academics with a significant interest in Freemasonry, and members of QC Lodge John Acaster, Ric Berman, Bob Cooper, Adam Kendall and Andreas Önnfors.

Friday's programme covered Freemasonry in the Caribbean; Scottish-American Freemasonry; French lodges; and Freemasonry in North America. It concluded with a demonstration Universal Lodge meeting in the Memorial's North Lodge Room, attended by Richard J Bautista, Grand Master of DC and his team, including Akram Elias, Past Grand Master of DC.

Delegates had full access to the Memorial over the weekend, with informal tours conducted by Mark Tabbert, the Director of Museum and

Library at the Memorial and another member of QC Lodge

Saturday's papers covered religion and Freemasonry, colonial Freemasonry, and the Freemasons of Jamaica, a beautifully illustrated paper delivered by Jackie Ranston. The afternoon concluded with delegates gathering for dinner at Theismann's Restaurant and Bar,



situated on the edge of Alexandria's Old Town and long a favourite among local Freemasons.

VARIED PROGRAMME

Sunday's events were led by Brent Morris, Managing Editor of *The Scottish Rite Journal* and a member of QC. A plenary paper was delivered by Oscar Alleyne, recently elected Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of New York, exploring the role of men of colour in early Freemasonry. The morning concluded with an animated discussion and question and answer session and the event wrapped up with a guided tour of DC.

Like many QC events, the conference was targeted principally, although not exclusively, at members of QC's Correspondence Circle, established in 1886 to share QC's research papers and encourage masonic scholarship. Membership of the Circle is not limited to UK masons and the organisation functions as an international association, with around a third of members based in North America.

Details of how to join QC's Correspondence Circle can be found at www.quatuorcoronati.com



Clockwise from left: QC's Ric Berman; the Memorial Theatre; The George Washington Masonic National Memorial, which was inspired by the Lighthouse of Alexandria