



Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite – XIX World Conference Lisbon, Portugal

Sovereign Grand Commanders and their Grand Secretary Generals from over 40 countries met in Lisbon, Portugal in May to discuss issues, renew friendships and build the bonds between countries.



The Sovereign Grand Commander, Ian Tilbury and the Grand Secretary General, Dominic De Candia representing Australia

This group meets every five years; Australia hosted the 2005 Conference in Sydney and Toronto, Canada hosted in 2010. The theme of this year's Conference was "New Ways to a More Humane Future; Contributions of the Scottish Rite." One of the aims was to groom leaders able to find new ways based on solid ethical and moral principles.

With many languages used it was a true test for the translation

service to provide accurate translations of unfamiliar Masonic terms and titles but we managed to make our thoughts known to each other. Three days of discussion and paper presentations took place but often informal discussions at social events and over meals were just as effective and much was learned from each other.



Over 40 countries represented at the 19th World Conference of the Supreme Councils 33°

Highlights of the social program were a Gala Dinner in the Grand Dining Room of the historic Queluz Royal Palace, the summer residence of the Portuguese Kings dating to the 17th century. We were received via a red carpet entrance with two suitably clad heralds to trumpet our entry, a Master of Ceremonies who looked as if he had stepped out of the pages of history, formally announced proceedings.

A day trip saw us visit the Sintra area, including a visit to the Masonically significant 'Quinta da Regaleira' where mystic initiations took place in a cavern or well. Later we had dinner next to a historic lighthouse at the Cascais Naval facility, but were late arriving as our three buses were caught up in traffic congestion caused by the 'Lisbon Colour Run' where over 70,000 people walked or ran a five Km course around Cascais. They all started with clean white tee shirts and were bombarded with coloured dye with a different colour for each Km travelled.



Gala Dinner at the Grand Dining Room of the historic Queluz Royal Palace, the summer residence of the Portuguese Kings dating to the 17th century

While the men attended their meeting, our Ladies were well entertained. On the day of arrival in Lisbon my wife Roslyn was invited at 10am to go for an unplanned walk with a group of ladies. She reappeared at 6pm saying “we did some shopping and had a long lunch”. Good thing they eat late in Portugal as dinner was scheduled for 9pm.

Both Dominic De Candia, our Grand Secretary General, and I had planned a day trip to visit Knights Templar castles prior to the Conference and it was a day well spent discovering the history of the Knights Templars in Portugal. The female guide was impressed with our knowledge of Knights Templar Grand Masters etc.



The Castle of Almourol; a Knights Templar medieval castle built on a small islet in the middle of the Tagus River, Portugal.

Dominic and I took advantage of a brief stay in London to attend different meetings of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, at Duke Street, St James, the home of the Rite in the United Kingdom. We were made most welcome and will both treasure the memory of our visits. I was welcomed in the

South with Waltzing Matilda and when I commented that I would have expected ‘Bound for Botany Bay’ they admitted that it was considered, but not sung. Perhaps they did not know all the words?

Dominic visited his counterpart in Duke Street, Dr. Giles Shilson, and had the opportunity to attend two of their Higher Degree Ceremonies, a 30th and 31st Degree; both were conducted by the nine Members of the Supreme Council for England and Wales. The Refectory was well attended; the first toast of the evening was given to the visitor from “down under” where 120 members of the Rite took wine with Dominic.

Overall, it was a great opportunity to meet representatives from across the world, from both large and small countries and share ideas with them. We all share the same issues and promote the same ideals and I met up with some friends who visited us in Sydney in 2005 and took back fond memories of Australia. Some who have not visited us yet are very nervous of sharks, crocodiles, spiders and snakes, so I did not mention box jellyfish and bluebottles, but assured them there was little chance of their meeting the other deadly creatures in Sydney.



Ian Tilbury
Sovereign Grand Commander
Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for Australia

