



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
CANBERRA

Reference: B12/686

Mr W J Frecklington OAM
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

20 APR 2012

Dear Mr Frecklington

Thank you for your letter of 9 March to the Prime Minister seeking an additional Australian Government contribution of \$5 million towards the cost of the coach you have constructed as a private gift for Her Majesty The Queen. You have also suggested the government consider presenting the coach as an official gift on the occasion of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee. The Prime Minister has asked me to reply on her behalf.

In 2006, under the government of Prime Minister Howard, \$245,549 was paid to you as a contribution towards the cost of constructing a coach proposed to be presented to The Queen on the occasion of Her Majesty's 80th birthday. In making that decision, the government noted that the coach was not a gift from the Australian Government and that the matter was a private initiative between you and Buckingham Palace.

You wrote to Prime Minister Rudd on 15 January 2009 and Prime Minister Gillard on 21 September 2010 seeking to update the government on the coach project and obtain additional financial and logistical assistance. On both occasions, you received a reply from the Office of the Prime Minister affirming the view that the coach is a private initiative and any unresolved matters should properly be resolved between you and Buckingham Palace. That remains the government's position.

As you would be aware, the government has already announced its intentions with respect to recognition of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee. Australian Government recognition has not, and will not, include the presentation of a coach.

I wish you well with your endeavours.

Yours sincerely

Mathew Jose
Director - Cabinet and Parliament

Committee
Tabled Document

Inquiry: Senate Estimates

Date/Time: 22/05/12

Name: Ms Renee Lean

Phone: PMSC

W. J. Frecklington O.A.M., F.A.I.H.A

9th March, 2012

The Hon Julia Gillard MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

Re: **The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Gift Proposal**

I wish to introduce myself; my name is Jim Frecklington, an Australian, whom in 1988, designed and constructed the Australian State Coach, presented to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II in Canberra as the Bicentennial Gift from the Australian nation.

Within this presentation, you will find photographs and official Buckingham Palace correspondence relating to a second State Coach that I have recently completed, taking eight years to build and perfect.

Together with a team of fifty or more of the finest craftspeople, we have tried to create something very special and unique. In the completion of the Coach, each element has been carefully designed and crafted to the highest perfection. Our team has worked tirelessly in trying to preserve the lost arts of certain crafts in making this Carriage an individual work of art.

Within this timeframe, I was fortunate enough to locate over 100 pieces of historic material encapsulating key elements of British history dating back over 1,000 years, which has been included in the Coach.

Due to the historical significance of the artifacts within the vehicle, it has been proposed a documentary be made and books written to record this history for the education of the youth of Britain and other countries around the world. A complete list of the historical material, along with other photographs, can be found at our official website at www.downau.com/britannia. You will also notice in this presentation a copy of an article in the British Carriage Driving magazine, which was published in Great Britain, Europe and the United States of America.

Before the construction of my former State Coach, previous Coaches kept in the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace have an average age of 130 years and are not recognised for their safety and comfort. This new State Coach has been specially engineered and designed to the highest standards and includes all the latest technology and modern innovations. It is said to be, perhaps, the safest State Coach ever constructed as the security aspect is paramount for the safety of the Queen and other visiting Heads of State.

As you would appreciate, this year is Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee and celebrations will take place to commemorate Her Majesty being our sovereign for 60 years. In the last 1,000 years, there has only ever been one other Diamond Jubilee celebrated in Britain, that being Queen Victoria's in 1897.

Email: [REDACTED]

Tel no. + [REDACTED]

In recent weeks, I have returned home to Australia after talks with Buckingham Palace officials in London to discuss the presentation of the new State Coach to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. It was recommended that, being the new State Coach will become one of the most high profile items ever exported from Australia, and for the Royal Household to accept it as a gift; they need to be extremely sensitive to who donates it.

My contacts in England have been speaking with a variety of potential sponsors throughout the UK. However, it has been suggested that, seeing the Australian Government have made an initial contribution of \$245,000 to its manufacture and how it was built in Australia, it should be gifted by the Commonwealth of Australia.

We understand the Australian Government has made a pledge to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Trust in London. The Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH, Chairman of this Trust, has advised us that the Australian Government must nominate how this money is to be distributed and spent.

Subsequently, it has been suggested that our Australian Governor General, Her Excellency, Ms. Quentin Bryce AC., CVO, have the honor of presenting this new State Coach to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, on behalf of the Australian people, as a gesture of goodwill and friendship between our nations to commemorate this important milestone in British history.

When reaching a figure for this rare work of art, one has to be realistic and consider many aspects. As you can appreciate, the Coach being a prototype, and by using quality materials sourced from around the world, time and costing will always escalate. Eight years of sourcing and collecting the many different historical materials to enhance the historical significance of the Coach, must also be considered in the final costing. Commissioning the rare skills of master craftspeople has also taken time and money.

Therefore, we feel a realistic price for this special gift would be in the vicinity of A\$5 million.

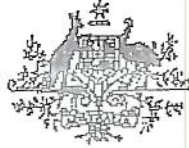
I would like to extend a formal invitation for you and your colleagues to view the Coach in my workshop in [REDACTED] to enable you to consider the endorsement of my Proposal as a contribution to Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee.

I do hope the Australian Government can support and give the necessary financial commitment to this unique Australian-made project.

Yours sincerely,

W.J. Frecklington O.A.M., (F.A.I.H.A.)

Enc;



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Mr W J Frecklington OAM
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

17 DEC 2010

Dear Mr Frecklington

Thank you for your letter of 21 September 2010 to the Prime Minister regarding the State Coach Britannia. The Prime Minister has asked me to reply on her behalf, I apologise for the delay in responding.

I would like to confirm the advice sent to you in a letter of 6 February 2009 by Mr Matthew Jose, Senior Adviser to the then Prime Minister, that the government notes that the State Coach Britannia is a private initiative and consequently is of the view that any ongoing or future matters should properly be resolved between you and Buckingham Palace.

I wish you well with your endeavour.

Yours sincerely

George Thompson
Senior Adviser

CGRHOS

W.J. FRECKLINGTON OAM

Australia

Fax: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP
c/- Amanda Lampe
Chief of Staff
Office of the Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2601

21st September 2010

Dear Prime Minister,

I understand your government is aware that I have completed the building of the new State Coach Britannia for Her Majesty Elizabeth II. In the near future it is planned it will be air freighted to London where it will become part of the Royal Collection kept in the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace. This project was endorsed by the Queen at the outset and assistance and approval was given by the Royal Household to obtain priceless artifacts and relics for inclusion in the coach. The interior is lined with marquetry assembled from over 100 pieces of significant historic material from iconic historic buildings, institutions, transportation etc. representing the great events, places and figures of British history.

Confidentially, Britannia is a highly secure vehicle designed to provide unprecedented levels of safety, comfort and security when visiting Heads of State ride out with Her Majesty in public. It will join the Australian State Coach which I also built as gift from Australia to commemorate our Bicentennial, and which is used extensively by the Royal Household on public occasions such as visits by Heads of State and for ceremonial events such as the Opening of the British Parliament. These two State Coaches are the only two new vehicles built for the Royal Family since 1901.

The Government (under Mr Howard) made a contribution of \$245,000 towards the building of Britannia and also agreed to contribute a further \$100,000 to cover the cost of air-freighting the coach to London. I have sought advice from professional shipping agents and requested they fully assess the shipping requirement and



provide competitive quotes from various air-freight companies, and I am pleased to advise total cost is well below the originally estimated allocation. A copy of their response, detailing quoted prices from the various airlines and any associated costs, charges or contingencies is enclosed. The costs of preparation and packing prior to handover to the shipping company are estimated at \$5040.00. Please find enclosed also copies of a number of recent articles relating to the project that may find of interest. These provide a general overview as well as detailing some of the unique features that distinguish this vehicle from its predecessors.

However, if it were possible to enlist the assistance of the RAAF and RAF significant savings may be possible whilst affording excellent security for the vehicle. I understand that both air forces routinely fly to the same base in the Middle East. It may be that other options or alternatives exist, and we would of course welcome any constructive suggestion, particularly so if the reputation and international standing of Australia and its people were collaterally enhanced in the process.

I wish to open the dialogue for the arrangements for transportation, as in the near future, I will be contacting Buckingham Palace again to seek direction as to when they would like Britannia to be brought to London for presentation to The Queen. At this time transportation and security, and any other details will need to be addressed and clarified. It is therefore necessary to seek the advice and input of the Government to ensure any negotiations follow the correct protocols and conventions as well as the best interests of the Australian people. I am of course available to travel to Canberra if required to discuss the matter further.

In addition I would like to invite you, the Ministers for Culture and Defence, together with the Attorney General, (who is familiar with this project), and others you may select to be present, to view Britannia in the workshop at Manly at a time of your choosing.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience as all parties are keen to resolve any outstanding issues and set a timetable, possibly thereby facilitating the involvement of the Coach in some of the significant events planned in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Frecklington



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
CANBERRA

Reference: C09/3260

8 FEB 2009

Mr W J Frecklington OAM
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr Frecklington

Thank you for your letter of 15 January 2009 to the Prime Minister about the current status of your project to construct the State Coach Britannia. The Prime Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

The Government is aware that the former Government made a significant financial contribution of more than \$245,000 towards the construction costs of the coach.

The Government notes, as you have said in your letter, that the State Coach Britannia is a private initiative, and consequently is of the view that any ongoing or future matters should properly be resolved between you and Buckingham Palace.

Yours sincerely

Mathew Jose
Senior Adviser

workshop, or to travel to Canberra to discuss the State Coach Britannia concept in more detail with you or your representatives. I look forward to hearing from your office at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

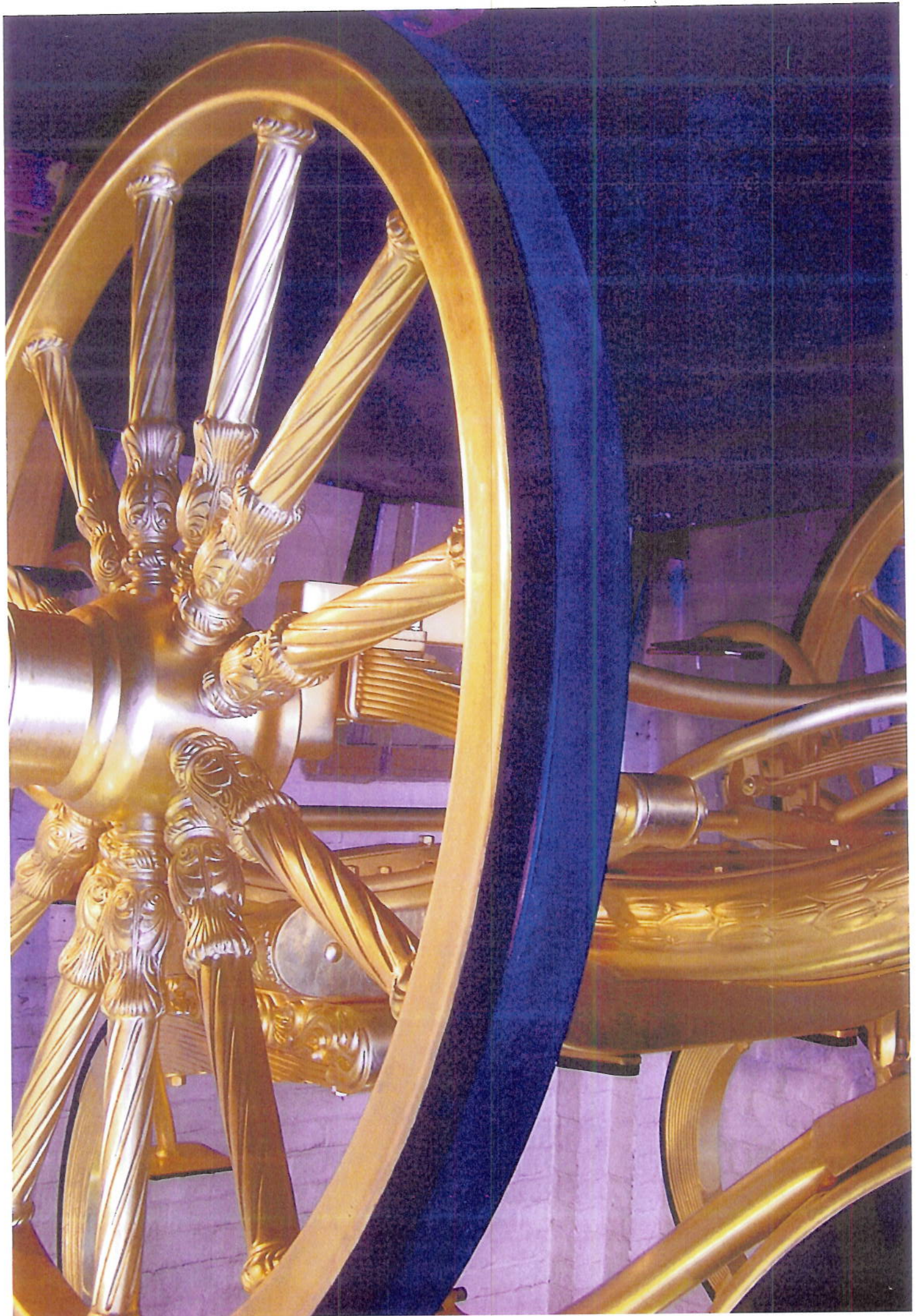
W.J. Frecklington O.A.M.









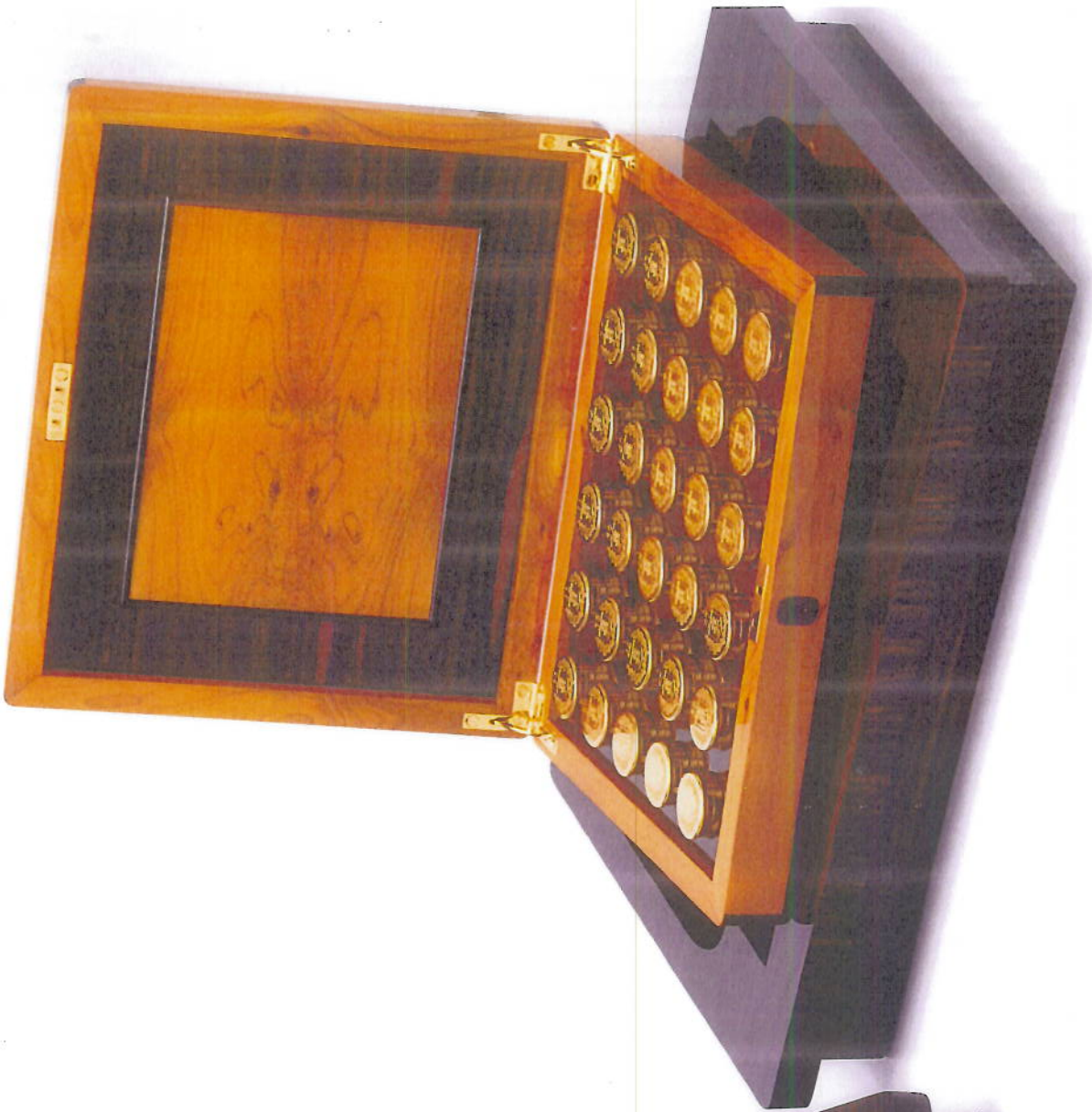


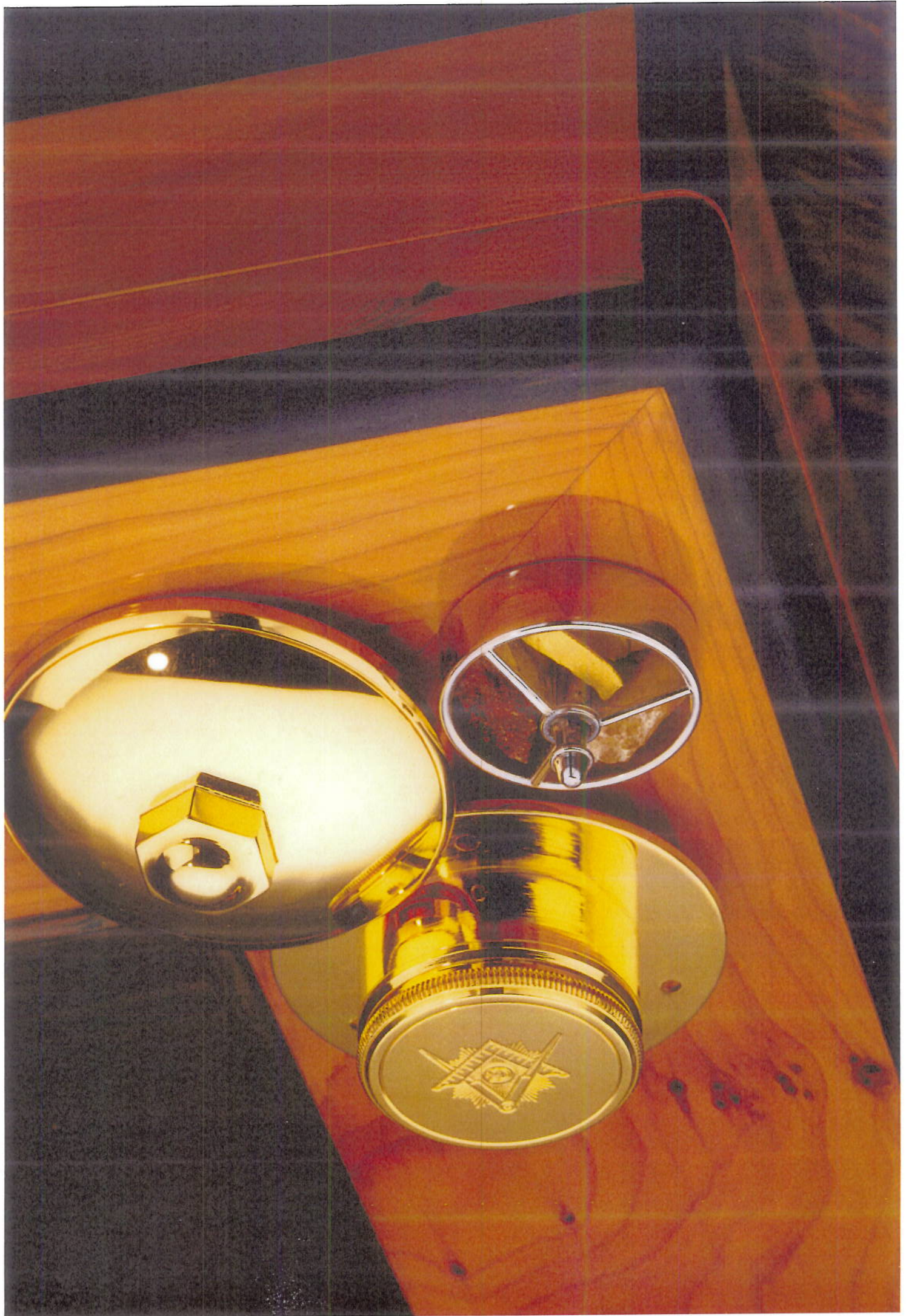




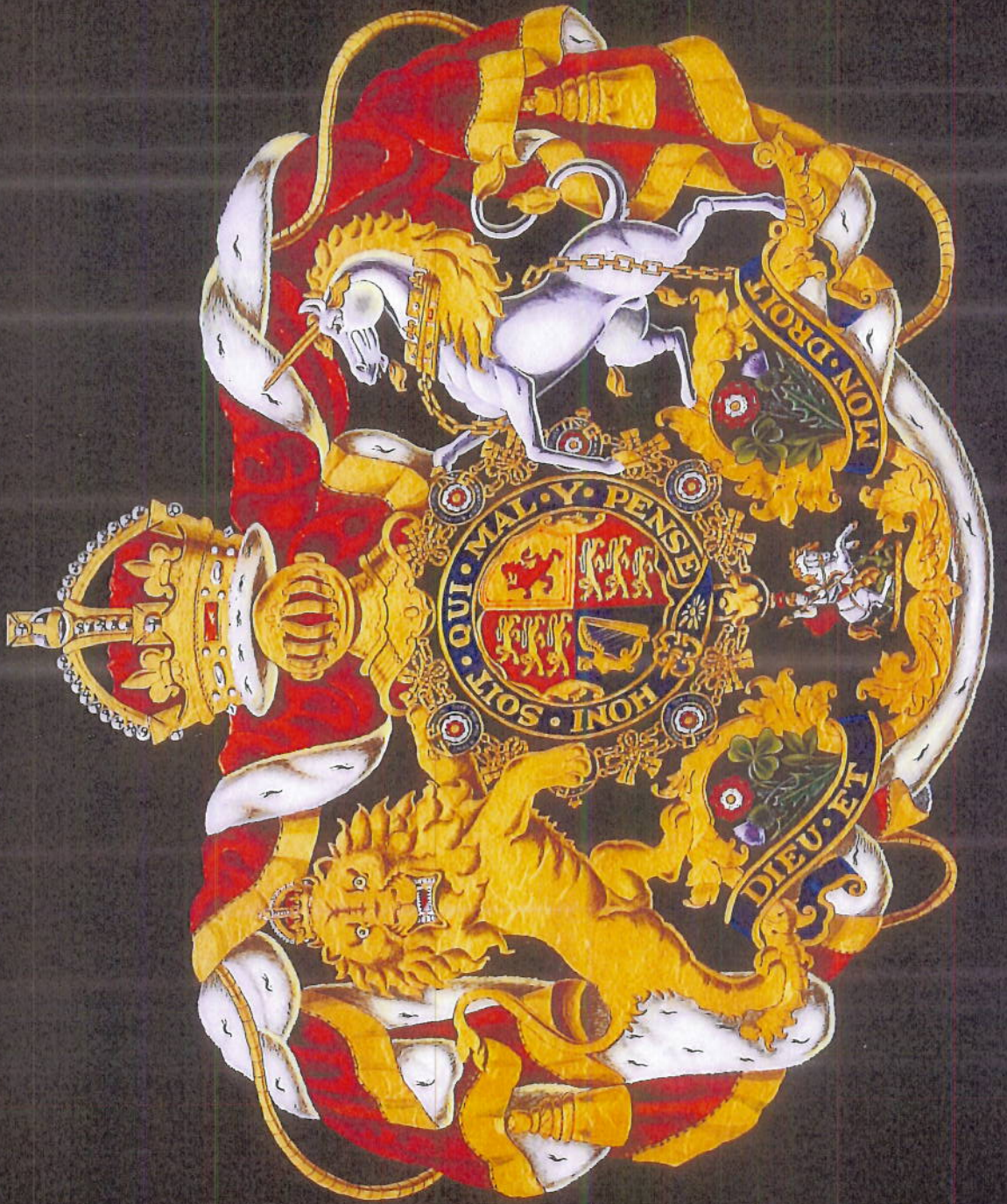




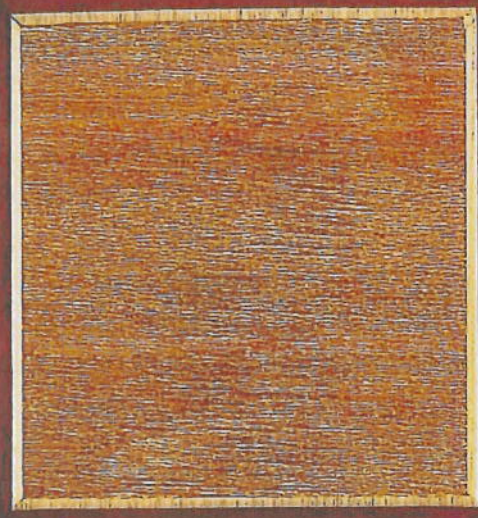
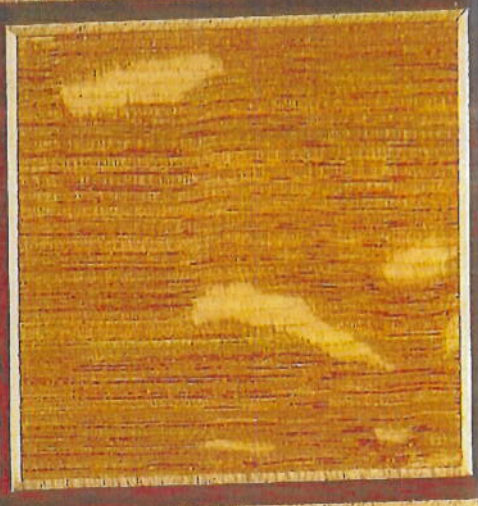
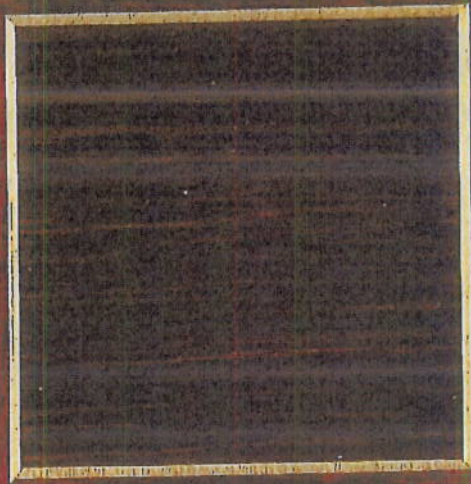












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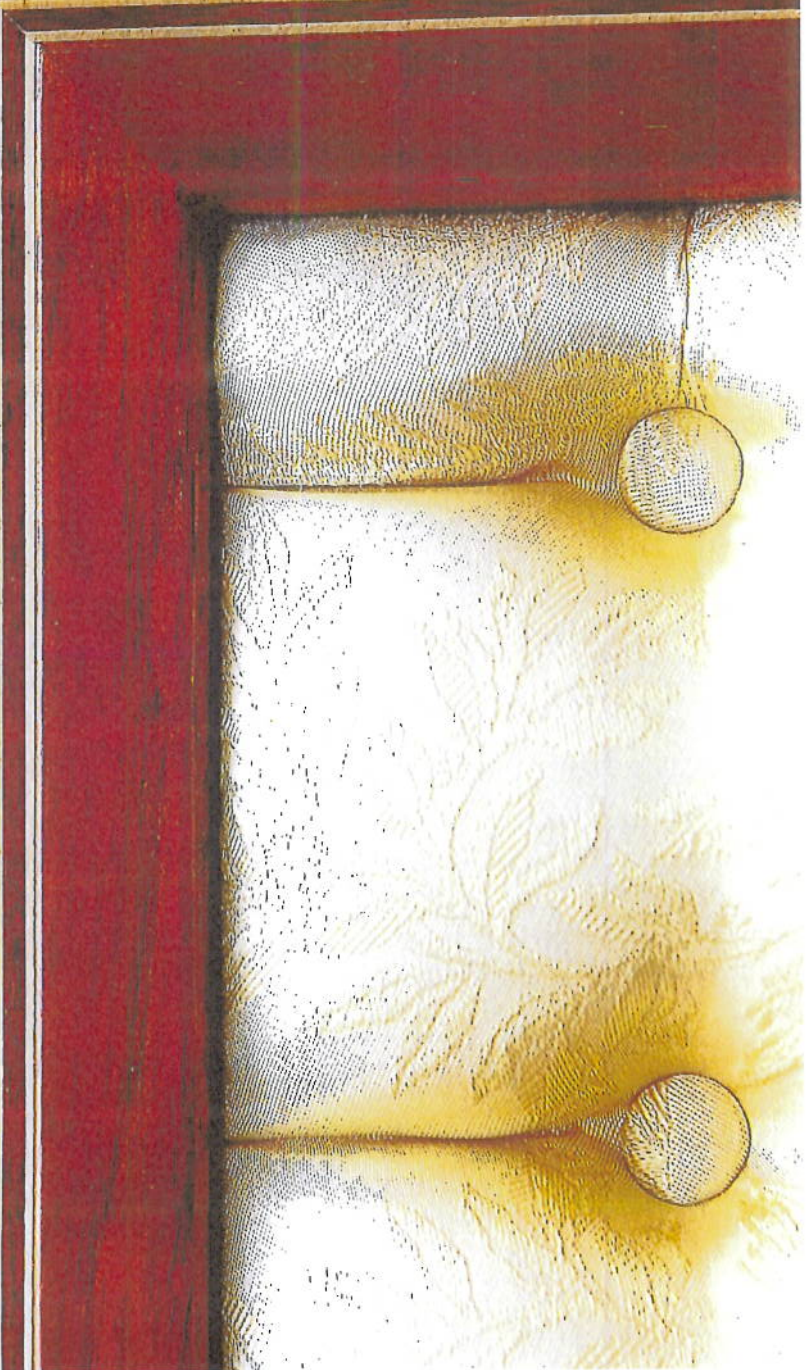
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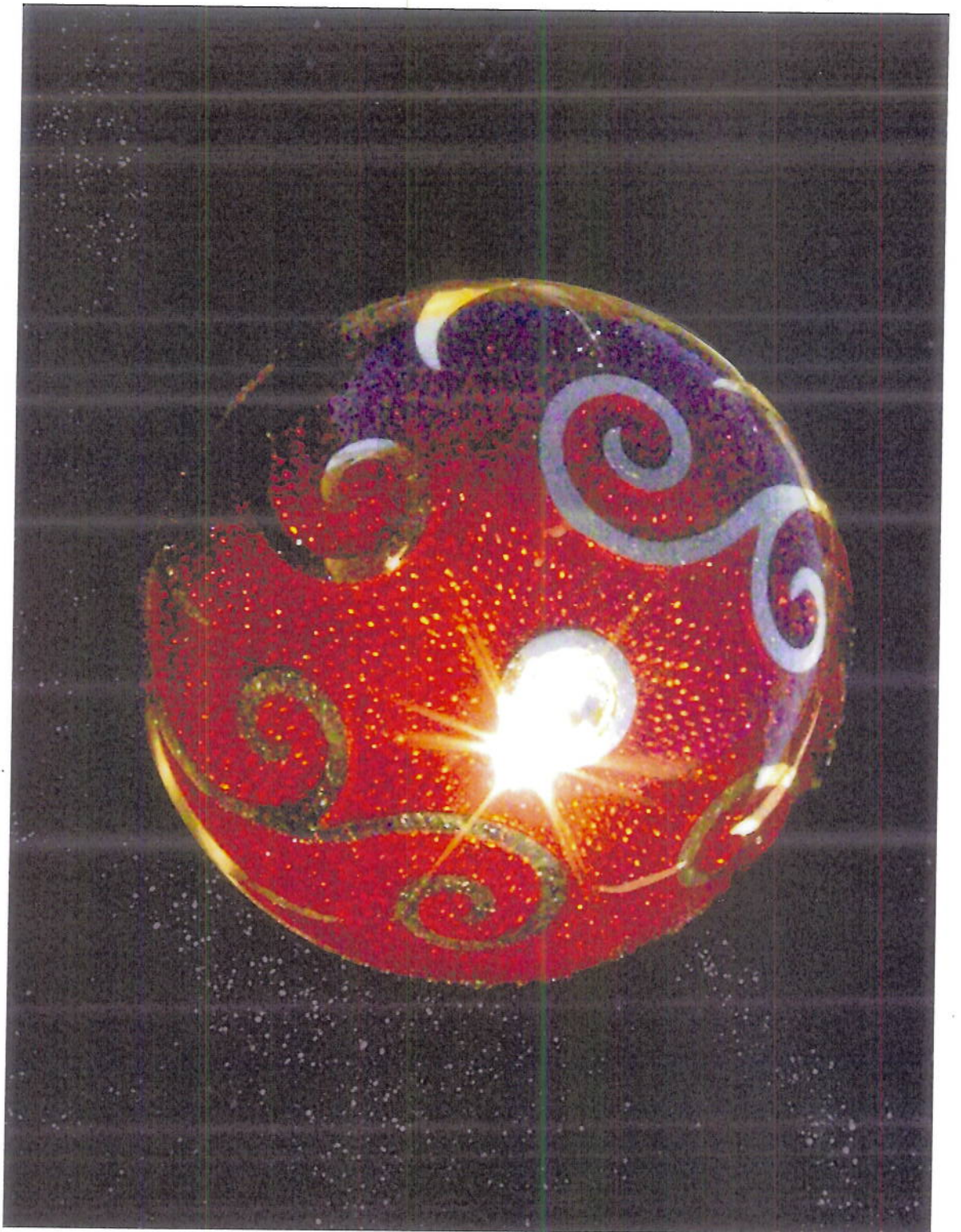
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HOUSE







Regal Splendour Rules in the New State Coach Britannia

Words by Rose Peterson, photos courtesy of Jim Frecklington

The awe-inspiring beauty of the craftsmen-built new State Coach Britannia, designed and built in Australia and now receiving its finishing touches in its Sydney workshop, proudly displays the very best in traditional ceremonial pageantry and arts and is a great tribute to the recreation of the rapidly declining art of coach building.



Artist, Paula Church painstakingly paints the Royal Coat of Arms onto the body of the coach.

The new State Coach Britannia is the realisation of the unique vision of one extraordinary man, W J 'Jim' Frecklington OAM, a proud Australian and equally proud monarchist and a man of uncommon and amazing creativity and skill.

Jim Frecklington was born in the town of Parkes, New South Wales, Australia and built his first horse-drawn vehicle at the age of eight – a small cart to be pulled by a Shetland pony that refused to accept a rider. As an

adult, after an adventurous working life that also took in the Polar North, Jim Frecklington was engaged at Windsor Castle as part of the team looking after the Duke of Edinburgh's four-in-hand team of horses. Later he moved to the Royal Mews in London where he drove the carriages on ceremonial occasions. In 1977 he was invited to manage the Queen's Silver Jubilee Exhibition which included the Glass Coach and the Edward VII Landau during its tour of Australia. In 1981 he assisted with the processional at the wedding of His Royal Highness Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer.

In 1986, with his characteristic purposeful determination, Jim Frecklington set about making his dream of designing and building a new State Coach for Queen Elizabeth II a reality. It would be the first such vehicle to be built for the Royal Household since 1902.

With Her Majesty's permission and the Australian Government's endorsement, the building process began but unavoidable delays meant that the superb Australia State Coach had to be completed in less than a year – an almost impossible challenge that was flawlessly met. In 1988 it officially became Australia's Bi-centennial gift to Her Majesty. It is an enduring showcase of Australian materials and craftsmanship, a fusion of traditional arts and cutting edge technology and a tangible expression of Australia's historic connection with the British Monarchy. The Australia State Coach is housed in the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace and is used by Her Majesty on important State occasions.

After working on a project for the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Jim Frecklington finally turned his attention to an idea he had been nurturing for some time of creating one more addition to the fleet of

Royal coaches – a postilion carriage that integrates New Millennium technology from around the world and that is a visual embodiment of history, heritage, pageantry and great artistic beauty with the distinguished title of the State Coach Britannia. A labour based on inspiration and perfection had begun.

Jim Frecklington has scoured the world for the finest materials and for craftsmen and women from the most diverse backgrounds and nationalities who have contributed their rare, even unique skills and talents to the pursuit of excellence in building the coach.

It's all in the detail

The project has the approval of Buckingham Palace and Prince Phillip has played a part in some innovations such as recommending "metal wheels using an appropriate alloy. They can be made indistinguishable from wood and they are safer and more reliable." Following this suggestion the spokes were cast in aluminium in Queensland, then gilded, creating a most effect, and making them "indistinguishable from wood."

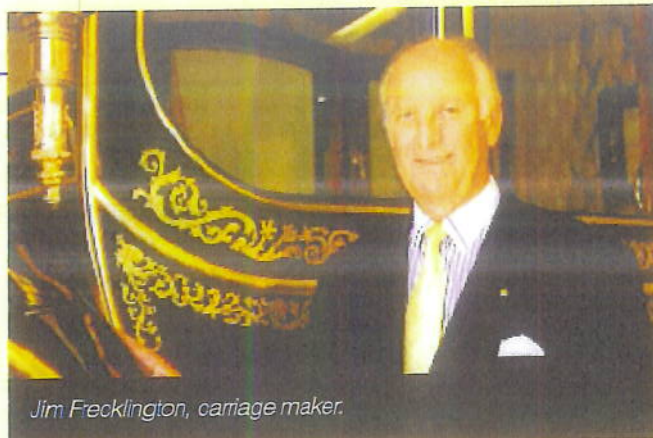
The State Coach Britannia is over 18 ft long and 10ft 6in high and weighs 2.5 tons. The body is essentially aluminium and for the paintwork the very latest two component acrylic enamel technology was used. Three coats of black basecoat were applied above the top moulding, and below three coats of Royal Mews Jubilee Claret. The different colours become visible in different lights, creating a distinctive chromatic effect and adding to the style of the coach.

The perch, designed and built by Jim Frecklington himself, is composed of 22 layers of laminated spotted gum, steamed then hand bent into flowing 'goose neck' curves and finally gilded.

The steel cee springs, made from the richest ore mined in Australia, were individually cut to size and curved by Robert Lovell and a team whose genius in using hand tools, forges and "line of sight" proved essential to the task.

The Royal Coat of Arms has been exquisitely emblazoned by hand four times directly on to the body of the coach; along with other heraldic symbols, by accomplished Irish-born Sydney artist Paula Church, making each a unique work of art in its own right. Paula is a perfectionist who also extended her artistic skills, learning to gild under the expert tutoring of Erik West FRSA, the retired coach restorer at the Royal Mews and closely studying the symbols of heraldry in order to create works of great historic and artistic merit

The sumptuous interior is lined with finest gold silk brocade; woven into its design again are the symbols of the rose, flax, thistle and leek. While the seat backs also feature the Royal Coat of Arms. Inlaid into the door panels and interior are numerous artefacts from British history.



Jim Frecklington, carriage maker.

before applying her newly acquired skills to the coach.

The beautiful design of the gilded scroll or filigree pattern, highlighted in relief over the whole design in shades of brown oil-based glaze over the gilding, enriches the decorations of the coach.

Symbols of a nation

Four magnificent lamps were spun in brass and the tops adorned with the Imperial Crown and then plated with 22-carat gold. The lamps incorporate the finest crystal glass panels hand-blown and cut by Edinburgh Crystal. The crystal in each lamp is individually etched with a symbol – the rose, the flax, the thistle and the leek – thereby creating a lamp of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales respectively.

The interior is richly lined and upholstered with 20 metres of the finest pale gold silk brocade especially woven in England by master silk weavers.

The fabric also incorporates the heraldic symbols of the rose, the flax, the thistle and the leek, while for the backs of the seats the Royal Coat of Arms has been woven into the silk as a special feature.

Proudly adorning the roof of the State Coach Britannia is the gloriously carved and gilded Imperial Crown. It is supported by four lions statant guardant, the heraldic symbols of strength. These lions are derived from the Royal Lions on the front gates of Buckingham Palace. There has been an interesting departure from the generally accepted protocol that the lions look over their left shoulders in that two of them are represented with heads turned to their right. These have been cast in brass and then gilded, along with the English rose, the Scottish thistle, the Irish flax and the Welsh leek which also form part of the 'gallery' or roof decoration.

Two door handles, designed by Jim Frecklington and inlaid by New Zealand jeweller Mike Baker, are each decorated with 24 diamonds and 130 sapphires.

A time capsule

It is interesting to note that the style, decorations and symbols used follow with few exceptions the traditional artistry of the Royal coaches, yet remarkably the State Coach Britannia also makes a very important departure. It seamlessly fuses the history, the visual imagery and the traditional artistry with all that is best in Third millennium technology. It features electric windows, hydraulic independent suspension, electric lighting and electric heating, with all the controls cleverly concealed in the armrests made from timber taken from the former Royal Yacht Britannia.

It is obvious that no amount of labour, expense or ingenuity has been spared in perfecting every aspect of the State Coach Britannia, but what gives it an even greater dimension and truly sets it apart is Jim Frecklington's unique idea of also making the State Coach Britannia a time capsule. The coach showcases elements of some of the greatest icons of British history and tradition,

CARRIAGE DRIVING

spanning millennia – sourced both nationally and internationally through the goodwill of many individuals and the governments of Britain, Scotland, Canada and Australia. Never before has such a compendium of a great nation's heritage been incorporated in a vehicle that is itself the epitome of majesty and historic grandeur.

History in the making

More than a hundred treasured items, all authenticated with supporting documentation, have been incorporated and artfully inlaid in various parts of the coach, including the special segments on the interior panels of the doors. In this way the State Coach Britannia is a monument not only to current endeavours and achievements, but also to many of the outstanding endeavours and achievements of bygone eras.

The scope and diversity of these historic items is breathtaking. They range from palaces, castles and stately homes such as Holyrood, Glamis, Hampton Court, Althorp and Kensington to battlefields as far afield in time and space as Gallipoli, the Western Front, and Waterloo. Many Cathedrals including Canterbury, Lincoln, St Pauls and York Minster; sporting grounds such as Lords and Wimbledon, and halls of power such as 10 Downing Street and Westminster are represented. There are items from ships such as the Cutty Sark, Captain Cook's Endeavour, the Mary Rose, the former Royal Yacht Britannia and the c3,800-year-old Ferriby Boat.

Items recalling great writers, explorers, scientists and inventors: such as a wooden gear from one of the clocks created in 1726 by John Harrison, famous for his invention of the chronometer; a piece of apple tree from Sir Isaac Newton's home and William Shakespeare's mulberry tree; Sir Robert Scott's sledge from his 1912 South Pole expedition and a piece of barrel from Sir John Franklin's ill-fated 1845 Northwest Passage Expedition. Items relating to Sir Joseph Banks and to Charles Darwin all take their place alongside artefacts of great significance, such as a Micro card of the Magna Carta and the Domesday Book; such symbols of the RAF as a Lancaster bomber that once flew with the 617 Squadron known as 'the Dambusters' and a Spitfire from the time of the D-Day raids.

Past and present combine

Proudly centred on the roof of the State Coach Britannia is the gilded Imperial Crown, previously mentioned. The wood, from which this crown was carved by Lincolnshire based master wood sculptor O H Boyd, came from Lord Nelson's ship HMS Victory. The cross on top of the crown is a symbol that the Royal authority is derived from the Divine and in keeping with this symbolism a small capsule set into the top of the cross houses a quantity of gold (from Peak Hill, NSW) and Frankincense and Myrrh from the East, the traditional origins of the Three Wise Men associated with the Nativity of Christ.

The interior of the crown has also been hollowed out allowing for the installation of the latest in third millennium technology – media cameras – a masterful synergy of past and future.

Another item related to monarchy is the Stone of Scone, also referred to as the "Stone of Destiny", the "Coronation Stone" and in tradition as the pillow stone used by the Biblical Jacob.

Again, the scope and the breadth of British heritage and endeavour represented by these historic inclusions are breathtaking.

For a complete list of the items please refer to the website: www.downau.com/britannia.



The top of the coach is decorated with the gilded Imperial Crown, supported by four lions statant guardant.

There is no doubt that the innate and intuitive design skills of Jim Frecklington, working without the assistance of Computer Aided Design (CAD), without plans or models has resulted in an inspired, authentic and regal coach that combines craftsmanship, engineering and romance. Interestingly, measurements and calculations show that its proportions converge with the Golden Mean, the ancient mathematical formula for excellence and beauty.

In every sense of the word then, the State Coach Britannia is truly an inspired work of fine art.

Master coach builder Jim Frecklington has worked tirelessly to try and preserve the vanishing art of coach building but he very much doubts there will ever be a coach like Britannia built again. He strongly feels that, "Great processions involving royal carriages have been so much a part of British tradition and I want to see that tradition continue for a long, long time." Undoubtedly, with the completion of the State Coach Britannia that hope and that tradition will remain well preserved for posterity for centuries to come.



The finest crystal glass was hand blown and carved by Edinburgh Crystal for the four lamps. Each is etched with a symbol of the British nation – the rose, England; the flax Ireland; the thistle, Scotland and the leek, Wales. Each lamp is of spun brass topped with 22-carat gold plate and adomed with the Imperial Crown.

