

**Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**

**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**

**Additional Budget Estimates Hearings 2006-2007, 12-13 February 2007**

**Question: PM 6**

**Outcome 1, Output 4.7**

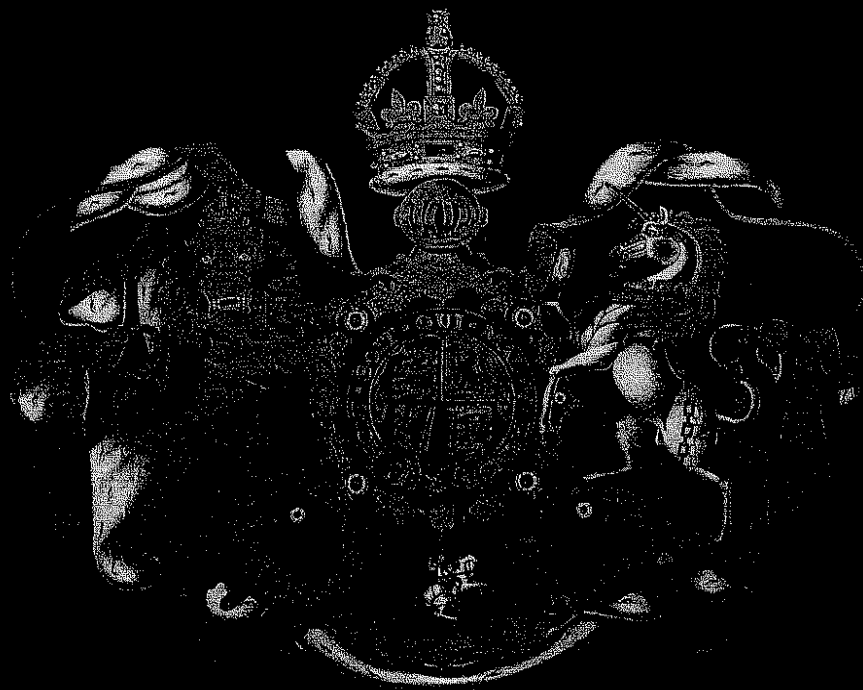
**Topic: State Coach**

**Hansard Page: F&PA 75**

**Senator Ray asked: Could the committee have a copy of the brochure produced by Mr Frecklington?**

**Answer:** Attached is a copy of the brochure "The State Coach Britannia" produced by Mr Frecklington.

THE  
STATE COACH



BRITANNIA



THE

STATE COACH

BRITANNIA

Cover image:  
Front: Detail from Exterior Decorations on the State Coach Britannia  
The Royal Coat of Arms by Artist Paula Church  
Back: Britannia by artist Paula Church



"I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do...let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

(Attributed to Stephen Grellet 1855)

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THE STATE COACH BRITANNIA  
Peterson, Rose

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## Preface

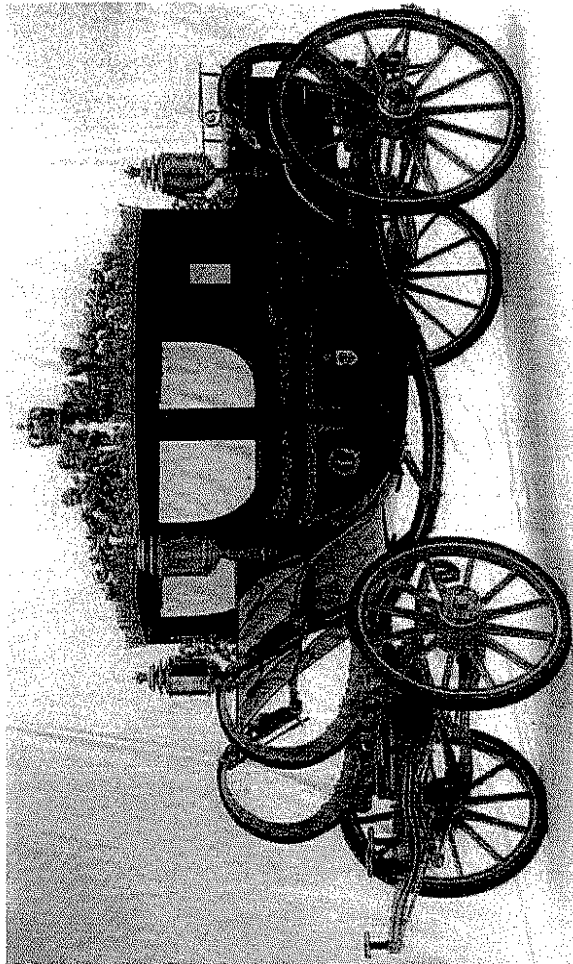
Each person is his own past. That is, each of us is the sum total of what has happened to us since our own beginning. Beyond that each of us is also the past of our ancestors through inherited customs, traditions and ideas. What personal experience is to the individual, history is to mankind.

It is this philosophy, this deep appreciation of the significance of history, its events and its importance to all of us that characterizes Jim Frecklington OAM and it is this philosophy that defines his creation of the State Coach Britannia on every level, informing the past and the present with the future.

With the State Coach Britannia, this extraordinary man manifestly demonstrates the amazing breadth of his philosophical understanding and of his creativity, not only through his personal development of the design and in building many aspects of the Coach himself, but also in bringing together a rare team of remarkably gifted artisans and master craftsmen, some possibly the last remaining exponents of their crafts, who have contributed their impressive talents to the project.

Together, they have brought to fruition a challenging and awe-inspiring project, but without doubt the most important factors in the creation of the State Coach Britannia have been Jim Frecklington's own unique talents, amazing inspiration and unfaltering determination and conviction.

The magnificent new State Coach Britannia brilliantly fuses elements of the greatest icons of British history and tradition with Third millennium technology, making it a new, spectacular embodiment of the history and visual imagery associated with the British Monarchy and People. It will no doubt stand the test of time as one of the most historic vehicles ever created.



Jim Frecklington OAM designed and created the Australia State Coach, which in 1988 became the Bicentennial gift from the people of Australia to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Now in the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace in London, the Australia State Coach is used regularly by the Queen for the State Opening of the British Parliament. The Australia State Coach is the first such carriage to be built for the British Royal Household since 1902.

Now in 2005 a new Coach has been designed and built -- the State Coach Britannia.

This fact alone clearly indicates the visionary dream that inspires Jim Frecklington. It also clearly demonstrates how rare the art form of Coach building has become and how uncommon are the amazing creativity and skills that Jim Frecklington possesses.

## THE STATE COACH BRITANNIA

Before construction of the State Coach Britannia could begin the personal endorsement of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for the project was obtained through the Comptroller of the Lord Chamberlain's Office at Buckingham Palace.

Mr Jim Frecklington OAM is particularly sensible to the privilege of naming the State Coach Britannia.

The choice of the title is most significant. In the first instance it was taken as a distinguished title from the stately Royal Yacht Britannia -- the naming of the Yacht had been a closely guarded secret until at the launch in April 1953, the Queen proudly announced "I name this ship *Britannia*". Though other titles had been suggested, the choice of *Britannia* stemmed from the Queen's personal philosophy of the role of the Monarchy in modern Britain. It so delighted the crowds that they broke into a spontaneous chorus of "Rule Britannia".

But the name resonates far beyond this single artefact.

"Britannia" is the ancient Latin name for the island of Great Britain, pre-dating the Roman invasion under Julius Caesar in the 1st century BC.

In the 1st century AD, in honour of his exploits there, the Roman Emperor Claudius named his newborn son Britannicus.

In the course of history Britannia became emblematic of Britain and has been poetically personified as a female figure, appearing in various forms such as on coins and as a carved figurehead attached to the bow of ships, which includes Admiral Horatio Nelson's ship, *HMS Victory*.

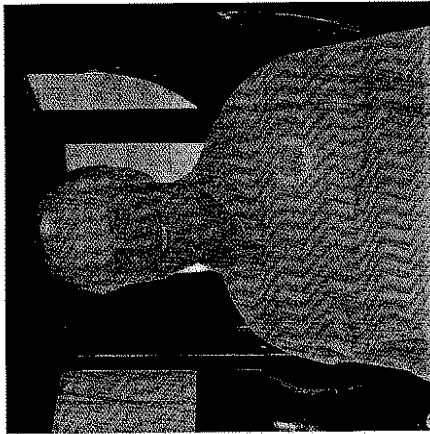
Poetic inspiration also led Lord Byron to describe Nelson, the hero of the Battle of Trafalgar as "once Britannia's god of war."

The name has resonated musically over the ages in "Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves" when a great Empire was forged, and it continues to define both the Country and its Sovereign Head.

There is no doubt that the Royal Yacht Britannia gave a "magical majesty" and a regal drama to the Queen's travel on matters of State that nothing else could rival.

Now all the poetry, regal and historic tradition and symbolism embodied in this title has rightly devolved on a new and unique creation designed to carry it through the New Millennium - the magnificent State Coach Britannia.

## The Man Behind the Project.



### Jim Frecklington OAM

Jim Frecklington was born in Parkes in country NSW, Australia. His family ran sheep and cattle on their Peak Hill property. It was there they acquired a stubborn little Shetland pony that refused to tolerate a rider, so, nothing daunted, Jim, who was aged eight at the time, built a little cart for the pony to pull him around in, which incidentally also added carriage driving to his horse riding skills. It was his first horse drawn project and little did he know then where these skills would eventually lead him. Over the years Jim acquired other carriages and buggies, mostly four wheeled, which he restored as a hobby, but it would be many years before he would develop his skills into a major talent and build his first real masterpiece.

As an adult, Jim left the family property and Australia for the adventurous life of working in the Arctic, just sixty-seven miles from the Magnetic North Pole. There, for several years he operated heavy equipment used in the construction of airstrips, built for transport planes used by oil drilling companies and for passenger jets to utilise in case of an emergency.

From the Polar North, Jim moved to England and, in a career change more in keeping with his early experiences, he was initially engaged at Windsor Castle, looking after the Duke of Edinburgh's four-in-hand team of horses. Later he moved to the Royal Mews in London where he looked after the Royal ceremonial horses of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Having been appointed to the team that looked after the Queen's show horses, he travelled around England, France and Switzerland to various shows and competitions. During his time at the Royal Mews, Jim also drove the carriages on ceremonial occasions and served as an outrider at Ascot.

Next his adventurous spirit led him to Canada where he worked for a time taking tours through the Canadian Rocky Mountains from Banff to Jasper but he was not forgotten by the Royal Household and in 1977, he was invited to manage the Queen's

Silver Jubilee Exhibition during its tour of Australia. Included in the exhibition were two of perhaps the most famous of the Royal carriages - the Glass Coach and the Edward VII Landau. Following that exhibition, Jim revived his carriage-building skills and built a replica of the Landau. The Australian State Postilion Landau toured the eastern states of Australia during 1982-83.

In 1981 Jim Frecklington returned to London and assisted with the procession at the wedding of His Royal Highness Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer.

In 1986, the concept of a new Queen's Carriage was born. Jim felt that something special was needed to commemorate Australia's Bi-centenary and with his characteristic purposeful determination set about making his dream a reality.

When Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II gave her permission, and the Australian Government added its endorsement, he set about building the superb Australia State Coach, an achievement made all the more remarkable by the unavoidable delays which reduced the total construction time to just eleven months! The Australia State Coach became Australia's Bi-centennial gift to the Queen. It is an enduring showcase of Australian materials and craftsmanship, a fantastic fusion of traditional arts and cutting edge technology and a tangible expression of Australia's historic connection with the British Monarchy.

The Coach proudly stands on display in the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace and is used by Her Majesty on important State occasions.

In 1991 Jim Frecklington was awarded the OAM in recognition of his outstanding achievements. But Jim has never been one to rest on his laurels. In less than a decade, his quest for challenge and desire to contribute would lead him into another extraordinary project.

On the night when rapturous celebrations throughout Australia greeted the announcement of the President of the I.O.C., Mr Juan Antonio Samaranch: "And the winner is... Sydney", Jim Frecklington's thoughts immediately turned to some concept which would carry the ideal of the Olympic Movement into the new millennium. It was then that the idea of the Gold Chariot was born. In making this choice, Jim rightly felt that the Gold Chariot, connecting as it does so successfully with the historic past and with the modern tradition, would naturally fit in with the ritualistic symbolism that already had been established as part of the modern Games.

The project took three years, the assistance of supporters and the work of some expert craftsmen to make the concept a reality, but what stood out most remarkably through all this process was the hard work, the dedication and the steadfast conviction of Jim Frecklington himself, characteristics which in themselves showcase the best of the Olympic ideal.

It is these characteristics, together with his unerring resolve to fuse the traditions of the historic past with the technology and developments of today that Jim Frecklington has applied with such success to the State Coach Britannia and that mark him out as a man of great discernment and inspiration.

## THE DESIGN

### CREATING THE STATE COACH BRITANNIA:

It has taken the combined talents of Jim Frecklington together with the master craftsmanship and brilliant skills of artists and artisans, sourced from around the world, to produce this masterpiece.

Some of the traditional skills used in creating the State Coach Britannia have all but disappeared from the modern world - one example is the process of gold-beating (turning gold bullion into gold leaf) which was carried out by W. Habberley Meadows Ltd of Birmingham, the one of the only such companies left in Britain. Showcasing and utilising such endangered skills and arts as well as sourcing new millennium ones has been a particular passion for Jim Frecklington in all his projects. In addition, immense thought has been given to the identification of the State Coach Britannia with the greatest breadth of the historical past.

### THE BODY:

In his design Jim Frecklington chose to build a traditional position vehicle that indiscernibly integrates New Millennium technology sourced from around the world.

The body of the State Coach Britannia was built in Australia and is essentially of aluminium because, unlike timber, aluminium is relatively impervious to extreme variations in temperature and humidity and is unlikely to crack or splinter over time. The body of the Coach incorporates two doors and is fitted with modern conveniences such as electric windows as well as interior lighting and a Webasto heating system from Germany. These modern requisites are controlled through an interior hand panel from special batteries housed within the footman's seat.

All of these modern conveniences are most skilfully and unobtrusively integrated so that the traditional setting is never even slightly compromised.

### THE PAINT:

Traditionally, lead paint and varnish were used on earlier timber coaches. For the State Coach Britannia, advances in modern materials demanded the latest in modern paint solutions. These came by way of Owen Webb, a leading expert in modern specialty paints working with Meguiar's Australia. They had produced the magnificent finish on the Australia State Coach using eleven coats of specialist paint.

For this project the very latest two component Acrylic Enamel technology was used. Paint products were supplied by Glasurit paints, a German company that supplies finishes to leading motor manufacturers around the world, including Mercedes and BMW.

As in all brilliant paint jobs, preparation of the surface was crucial. It took Owen Webb and his team two days to remove all imperfections from the aluminium panels, which were then primed with epoxy primer, ensuring longevity, maximum adhesion and nil moisture penetration. Four coats of Grundfiller (primer and filler combined) were then applied and allowed to settle and cure for several days before being sanded

with 360 grit wet & dry sand paper, then guide-coated and sanded with 800 wet & dry. These steps took approximately two and a half weeks to complete and were essential in preparing the body of the Coach for the topcoat.

Owen Webb chose to paint the State Coach Britannia with basecoat colour and a clear topcoat for durability and supreme finish. Above the top moulding he applied three coats of black basecoat and below the mould, three coats of Royal Mews Jubilee Claret. The different colours become visible in different lights, creating a distinctive chromatic effect and adding to the superb style of the State Coach Britannia.

Finally, four coats of premium clearcoat were applied and allowed to cure for two weeks before being sanded and then buffed to a mirror finish using Meguiar's speciality compounds and wax.

As in all the elements that constitute the Coach Britannia, the workmanship and skill of perfectionists has created a finish of the greatest splendour and enduring beauty.

### THE UNDERCARRIAGE:

One of the great challenges in building the State Coach Britannia was to faithfully reproduce from new-age skills, workshops and materials the antique, classic style of a bygone era. In an age when computer aided design and machine generated precision are the driving forces of manufacture and production, the creation of the traditional springs and suspension with no established templates to work from, relied on hand measurement, intuitive inspiration, and hand-forged methods to deliver perfectly precise lyrical curves exacted from the finest and strongest modern materials.

It took the amazing combined talents of Jim Frecklington himself, and the special team of Mario Burburan, Fares Elabed, Matthew Padinjarepedika and Ken Kemp, under the guiding hand of master spring-maker Robert Lovell who also worked on the Australia State Coach, to achieve this marvel.

The PERCH or main support beam of the Coach, which runs underneath the body from front to back, was designed and created by Jim Frecklington. It is composed of 22 layers of laminated spotted gum, steamed and then hand bent into flowing "goose-neck" curves. In a process requiring the greatest skill and finest judgement, the precise curvature of the beam is achieved by bending the wood over too far (in order to compensate for the inevitable "spring back"), so that when the wood is released after drying and setting, it will spring back to the exact proportions that suit the curve of the body of the Coach and so that the axles, suspension and steering mechanism are correctly aligned to one another. Failure to achieve this precision in the first instance would have caused several months' delay to the project because it would have meant starting the whole process from the beginning. It is a tribute to Jim Frecklington's immense skill that he has never experienced such a delay.

The back end of the perch is forked while the front ends in a turntable. Cross members, to which the springs are attached, are also made of laminated wood layers and are connected to the main support beam. The wood is then plated for extra strength.



The STEEL CEE SPRINGS are made from the richest ore mined in Whyalla in South Australia and rolled in Newcastle in NSW. Each six metre long sheet or "leaf" of steel had to be cut individually to specific size, specially curved and the ends specifically shaped. The process relied on the experience and distinctive skills of Robert Lovell and his team, whose genius in using hand tools, forges and "line of sight" rather than modern machines and technologies, proved essential to the task. Because the State Coach Britannia is larger than the Australia State Coach, 12 instead of 10 "leaves" have been used to create the beautiful ornamental curve of these cee springs around which pass leather straps that support the body of the Coach. These straps, made of specially selected leather from England, are connected to a winch, allowing the height of the body to be adjusted and isolating the body of the Coach from road shocks. Specially designed locking devices ensure great strength. Brass cast buckles, x-rayed to ensure against flaws are fitted with specially forged spring steel tongues and then brass plated. The axles were forged from special steel under a 10cwt blacksmith's hammer. A specifically designed undercarriage prevents body sway.

The FULL ELLIPTICAL SPRINGS that comprise the primary suspension were also sinuously shaped from tubular steel by Robert Lovell and his team of craftsmen using a hand-processing method.

The hubs for the wheels were precision machined from billets of aluminium by Tony and Robert Vlaje who also fitted the spokes - all these tasks requiring the greatest precision and skill from these exceptionally talented craftsmen.

The perch and springs are finished in gold in keeping with the sumptuous style of the coach.

In creating the WHEELS of the Coach, an innovation was made in the design, reflecting a specific suggestion from Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh who wrote: "I would certainly recommend 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, traditionally carved from wood, in this case have been cast in aluminium in Maryborough in Queensland by Peter Olds. This gives them the greatest strength and durability. The 10 spokes in the front wheels are each 12" (30.5cms) in length, while the 12 spokes in the rear wheels measure 20" (50.8cms) in length. The traditional, deeply carved design is gilded, creating a most spectacular effect and is, as noted by Prince Phillip quite "indistinguishable from wood."

On horse-drawn vehicles of this design, the wheels lean out at an angle of three degrees or more. This provides strength and deflects mud and water away from the body of the carriage. The wheels also have a certain "dish" in them which is corrected by the angle of the lean, allowing the spoke directly below the hub to remain constantly vertical.

The wheels were assembled by Terry Sainty, one of Australia's leading designers of Top Fuel Dragsters and High Performance Racing Engines. He has the distinction of having produced the fastest ever Australian built car. Terry Sainty and his team also produced and fitted the aluminium alloy rims of the wheels.

The wheels have been finished with tyres made from a highly specialised synthetic rubber. The mudguard or "splasher" is made of spring steel, covered in patent leather.

All these components serve a somewhat prosaic mechanical purpose, yet all have been so individually and so artfully crafted as to become themselves works of art contributing to the overall splendour of the State Coach Britannia

## THE INTERIOR:

The interior of the Coach is richly lined and upholstered in Australia by Brian Richardson using twenty metres of the finest pastel gold coloured silk brocade, especially woven in England by master silk weavers Steven Walters and Co. The overall design incorporates the Rose, the Flax, the Thistle and the Leek, respectively the heraldic representations of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, creating a breathtaking opulence.

To add to the opulence, in the silk used to upholster the backs of the seats, the Royal Coat of Arms has been woven as a special feature.

But without doubt the UNIQUE FEATURE OF THE INTERIOR is the way the dynamic notion of the "Time Capsule" has been adapted and integrated in the construction.

Items have been specially selected from a wide range of sites and from artefacts exceptionally significant to the history of the British people and to the British Monarchy. It fact, their histories are generally synonymous since apart from the brief interlude of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth, Britain has been ruled by Monarchs - from the Saxons, Normans, Plantagenets, Lancastrians, Yorkists, Tudors, Stuarts and Hanoverians through to the Saxe-Coburgs and currently the Windsors, over a period of about 1,150 years.

These treasured items have been brilliantly incorporated and artfully inlaid in various parts of the Coach, including in the special segments of the interior panels of the doors, a task brilliantly carried out by master craftsman Mike Lowe, who has a long history of involvement with unique vehicles such as the Queen's Railway Carriage, NSW Railway. Mike Lowe was also responsible for the exceptional woodwork that is a feature of the Australia State Coach.

The purpose of these revered relics is to permanently chronicle and present as an *aide-memoire*, a part of the rich tapestry of historical events, customs, achievements, heritage and tradition that is Britannia.

Never before has such a compendium of a great Nation's majestic journey through time been so splendidly assimilated into one creation, the State Coach Britannia, itself the epitome of majesty and historic grandeur. Without doubt, it is this fact that gives the State Coach Britannia its incomparable significance and prestige, making it an essential part of British heritage and one of the most historic vehicles ever created.

These historic treasures were drawn from sources that are as varied as they are important and include:



## SHIPS:

### *Royal Yacht Britannia*

Selected timber, bronze, brass and steel.

"A Palace of the waves", she has been as much a part of the Royal family as any of their other homes, yet she was designed on the lines of the humble North Sea ferry. Originally the idea of the Yacht was conceived in the vain hope of helping King George VI regain his fading health but he died in February 1952, four months before the keel was laid. Overseeing the process was then taken over by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip.

The *Royal Yacht Britannia* has always held a special place in Her Majesty's heart, and in the words of Prince Phillip she was "special for a number of reasons. Almost every previous sovereign had... [built] a church, a castle, a palace or just a house.... The only comparable structure built in the present reign is *Britannia*. As such she is a splendid example of contemporary British design and technology and much admired wherever she is seen, particularly on official visits overseas."

Aluminium alloy was used for the superstructure above the bridge and for the funnel, elsewhere steel was used as a cost-cutting measure in keeping with post-war austerity. Her shape was also modified to give her extra speed as a hospital ship. The overall cost was 2.1 million pounds.

In the fitting out of the Yacht, the Queen had definite views on everything from door-handles to the shape of the lampshades.

The Yacht was launched in April 1953 at John Brown's shipyard on the River Clyde and personally named *Britannia* by her Majesty the Queen – a choice which surprised and delighted the onlookers who broke out in a chorus of "Rule Britannia". Since then she has circumnavigated the globe seven times and visited over 580 ports.

In 1968 the Queen gave permission for the *Britannia* to be used in NATO exercises. The yacht's sophisticated radar and satellite systems made her an ideal command centre or merchant ship. The Yacht has also been used as a floating Conference centre.

In January 1997 *Britannia* set out from Portsmouth on her last and longest voyage – to Hong Kong for the handing over of the island to China. After returning to Britain, on 11th December *Britannia* was decommissioned in Portsmouth in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Duke of Edinburgh and 14 senior members of the Royal Family, ending a proud service of 44 years.

*Britannia* is now permanently moored in Edinburgh's historic port of Leith, the city having been chosen for that purpose against fierce competition from cities around the UK, and is open to visitors by the owners, The *Royal Yacht Britannia* Trust, a charitable organisation whose sole remit is to maintain the yacht in keeping with her former role.

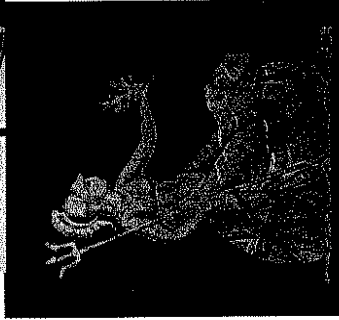
### *HMS Victory*

Selected timber and copper sheeting.

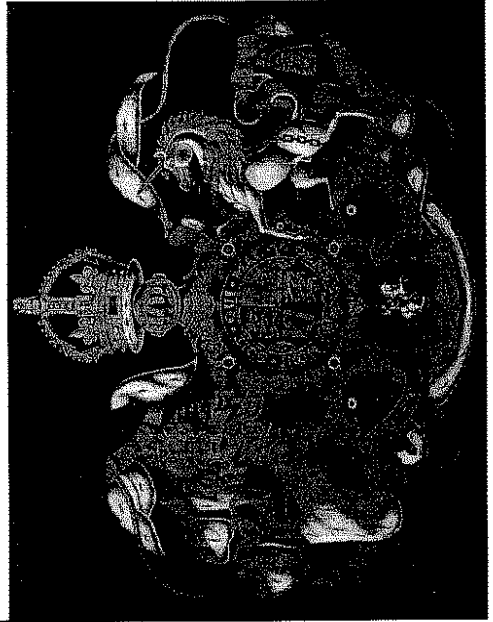
Still flying the flag of the Commander-in-chief of the Royal Navy and still moored at Portsmouth, *HMS Victory* has been preserved and continues to proudly serve the British Monarchy and People.



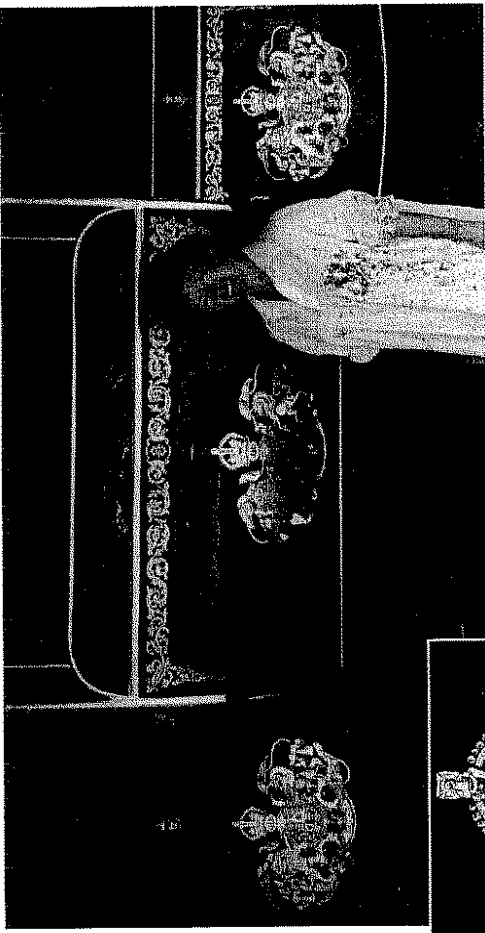
Jim Frecklington OAM  
with State Coach *Britannia*



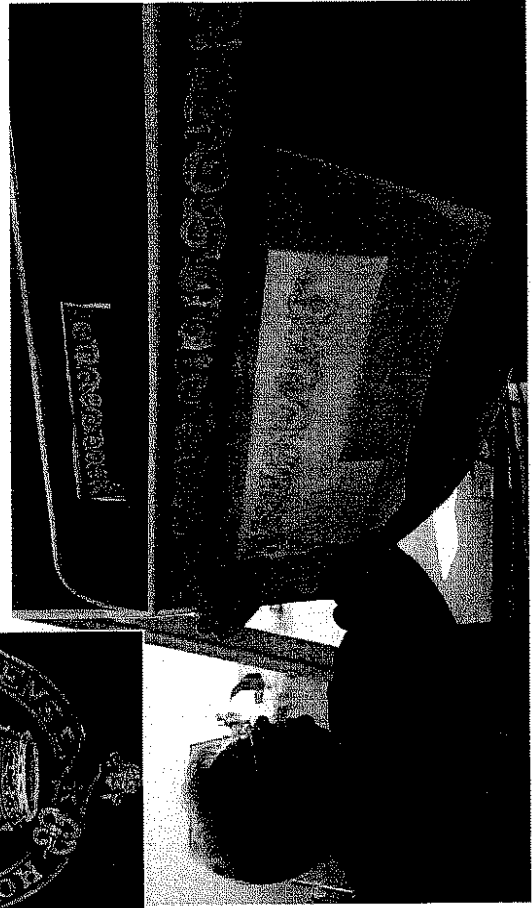
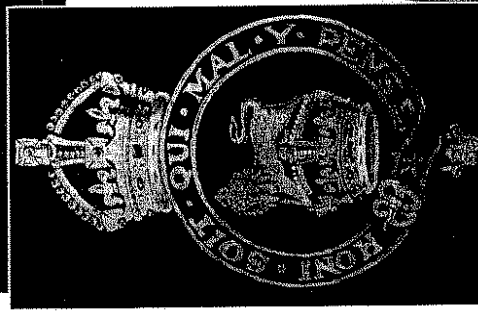
Royal Coat of Arms  
by artist Paula Church



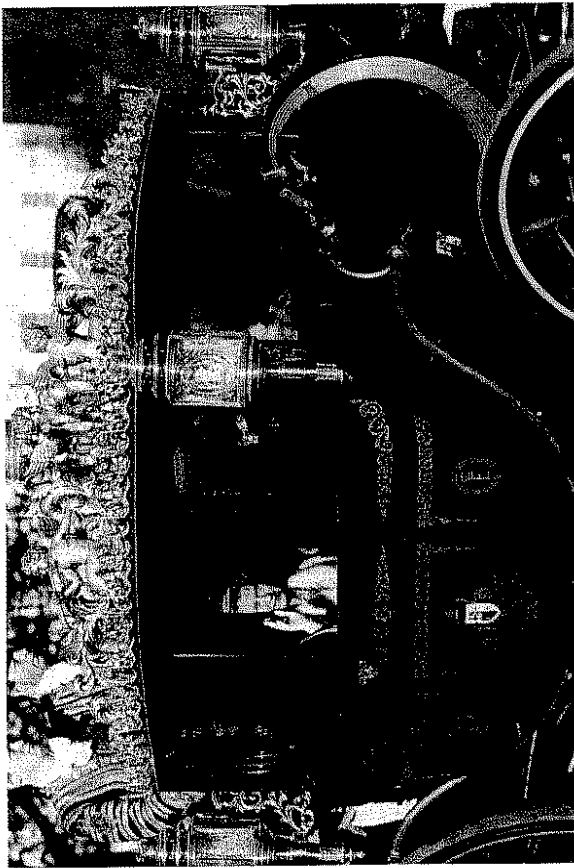
Britannia  
by artist Paula Church



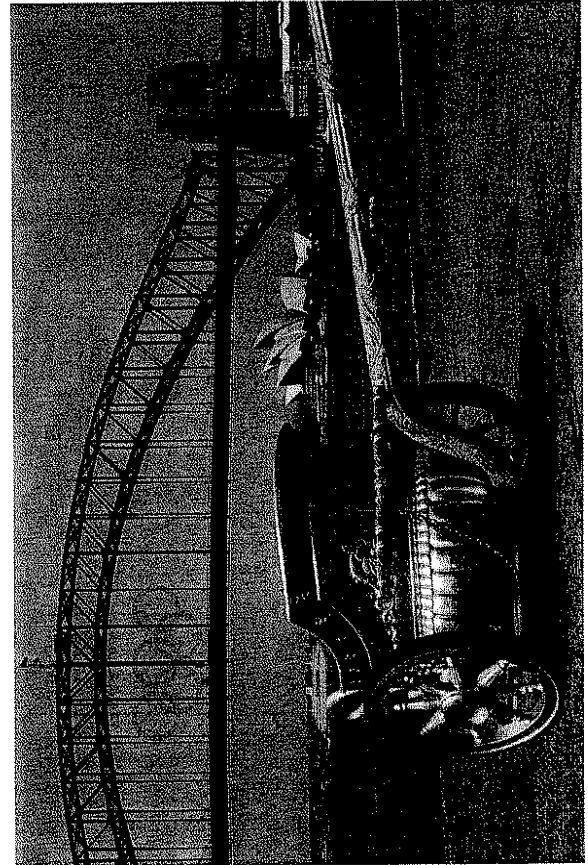
Artist Paula Church with her paintings of the Royal Coat of Arms (above) and the Royal Insignia (left)



Artist Helen Eyre Pikler applying highlights in relief of brown oil-based glaze over scroll work



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in the Australia State Coach on her way to the opening of the British Parliament



The Spectacular Gold Chariot - Sydney 2000 Olympics

*HMS Victory*, a typical three-decker with wear reducing copper bottom added to the hull and, during Nelson's command a carved figurehead of Britannia on her bow, was launched at Chatham on 7th May, 1765. It served as the flagship of Commanders such as Howe at the relief of Gibraltar (1782), Hood at Toulon (1793) and Jervis at St Vincent (1797), before passing to Horatio Nelson when he was appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean on 18th May, 1803. It became the most celebrated warship of the age.

Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson, born 1758 and noted for his personal courage, diplomatic skills, audacity, tenacity, and for the loyalty and affection he inspired in those who knew him, achieved eternal fame at the Battle of Trafalgar on 21st of October, 1805 on board *HMS Victory*, by decisively defeating the combined French/Spanish forces of Napoleon. Although Nelson had already achieved the status of the Royal Navy's most renowned man of action by 1797, his greatest glory came at Trafalgar. The importance of his victory is clearly demonstrated by the fact that it ended any serious threat to the British Navy for the rest of the century. It also imposed permanent geographical and economic limits on French imperial expansion. It was before the battle of Trafalgar that Nelson sent the famous message: "England expects that every man will do his duty".

Tragically, Nelson was mortally wounded during the battle, but learned of the British success before his death. He was given a posthumous earldom and a state funeral. His body was laid to rest in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral on 9th January, 1806.

### *Mary Rose* Selected timber.

She was a favourite of King Henry VIII who laid the foundations of the powerful British navy. Built between 1509-1511 and named after King Henry's favourite sister Mary who later became Queen of France, the *Mary Rose* was a hugely expensive epitome of Renaissance splendour.

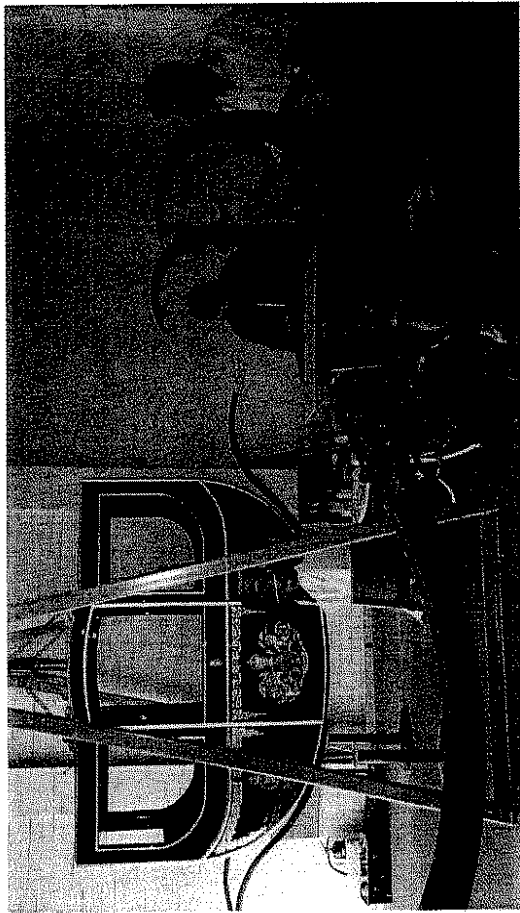
She led the English against the French fleet in an engagement off Brest in 1513 that was indecisive. However, it was the first battle fought by an English fleet in which gunpowder played an important role with the guns of the *Mary Rose* damaging the French flagship and forcing the French Admiral to retire.

She was rebuilt in 1536 and her main operations were in the English Channel. On the evening of July 1545 the *Mary Rose* again led the English fleet out of Portsmouth Harbour to engage the French Fleet. As she put about to fire her broadside guns, a sudden gust of wind caused her to heel over. Her low gun-ports had not been closed and as he watched, Henry's prized flagship quickly filled with water and sank before his eyes, with the loss of most hands on board.

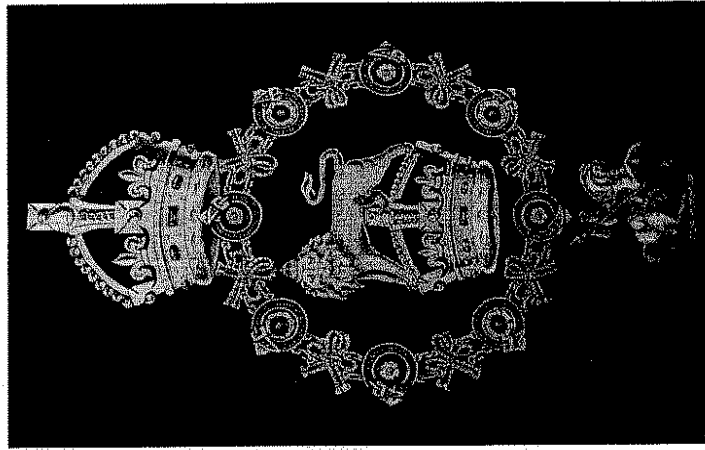
There she remained for centuries until she was recovered from the seabed in 1982. Her hull still lies at Portsmouth, along with thousands of 16th century objects also recovered from the site.

### *RMS Queen Mary* Selected timber.

A Royal Mail Steamer of the Cunard Line, she was the most successful of all the superliners. She sailed for 31 years, carried over 2 million passengers and made



(above) work in progress showing the Perch, the Cee Springs and Body - Jim Frecklington and crafts people



(left) Detail of artwork on quarter panels by artist Paula Church - The Collar of the Most Notable Order of the Garter with the Great George suspended

1,000 crossings of the North Atlantic. Named by Her Majesty Queen Mary at the John Brown dockyards at Scotland's Clydebank, she was launched in September, 1934. Her maiden crossing to New York was in May, 1936.

Every member of the British Empire contributed some element to this "ship of state" as the flagships were often called. The laurel wood flooring in the 1st class lounge came from India. Other woods came from Canada, Australia, Ceylon, South Africa and New Zealand.

In 1938 the *Queen Mary* gained the record for speed in the Atlantic crossing which stood until July 1952.

During World War II, along with the *Queen Elizabeth*, she was stripped to carry as many as 15,000 troops at a time -- on relay from Australia to the Middle East in 1940. In 1942 the ships returned to the North Atlantic with the "GI shuttle" between New York and Scotland, operating blacked-out, radio-silent and highly-secret courses until the late spring of 1945. With warnings, the *Queen Mary* could outpace any U-boat or torpedo. Termed the "grey ghosts" the *Queen Mary* and the *Queen Elizabeth* transported nearly 2 million wartime personnel thus helping, according to Winston Churchill, to lessen the war in Europe by at least a year.

After the war, much publicised celebrity passengers on these superliners, including Churchill, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and the Queen Mother caused Noel Coward to complain of "too many celebrities".

The advent of jet plane travel ended the reign of the *Queen Mary*. She made her last voyage in late 1967 and was sold to the City of Long Beach, California to become a museum, hotel and conference centre, and a monument to the great days of ocean liner travel.

Timber from all the immensely significant historic sites listed below has also been specially selected and incorporated in the State Coach Britannia.

## CATHERDRALS:

### *Canterbury Cathedral*

In 1070 the first Norman archbishop, Lanfranc ordered a new Cathedral to be built on the ruins of an Anglo-Saxon one to match Canterbury's growing importance as a centre for Christianity. It has been enlarged and rebuilt many times and contains examples of all styles of medieval architecture.

Its most poignant historical moment was the murder in 1170 of the Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas a Becket, by King Henry II's knights during the struggle between Church and King for ultimate control of the country.

Following Becket's canonization in 1173, Canterbury Cathedral became a major centre of pilgrimage, immortalised by Geoffrey Chaucer in his "Canterbury Tales" of 1387.

In 1174 a fire devastated the Cathedral and Trinity Chapel was built to house Becket's remains.

The Cathedral also houses the Black Prince's Tomb.

### *Lincoln Cathedral*

Built on the highest part of the city, the lower portions of its western towers date from about 1073. Lincoln Cathedral has been rebuilt many times, including in 1141

after a disastrous fire -- the three richly decorated Norman doorways date from this period and in 1185 after an earthquake when it was rebuilt by St Hugh of Avalon in the Early English Style with the characteristic use of a rib along the ridge as part of the vaulting plan.

The central tower completed 1307-11 stands at 82 metres, one of the tallest in England. In it hangs the "Great Tom", a bell weighing over 5,000kg.

The west front is a harmonious mix of Norman and Gothic styles. Inside, the best features include the Angel Choir, with the figure of the Lincoln Imp.

The Cathedral also houses one of the four original copies of Magan Carta.

### *St Pauls Cathedral*

After the Great Fire of London in 1666, which left the medieval Cathedral of St Paul's in ruins, the architect Christopher Wren was commissioned to design a new cathedral.

Although he'd never visited Italy, Wren was greatly influenced by Roman, Baroque and Renaissance architecture.

When his Greek Cross plan (where the four arms are equal) met with fierce opposition, a conventional Latin Cross (with a long nave and short transepts) was adopted instead.

Built between 1675 and 1710, St Pauls is a magnificent example of the Baroque style, with one of its outstanding features being the "Whispering Gallery" in the dome where words whispered against the wall can be heard clearly on the opposite side.

It has formed the lavish setting for many state ceremonies including the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer on 29th July, 1981.

### *Wells Cathedral*

Wells is named after St Andrew's Well, the sacred spring that bubbles from the ground near the Bishop's Palace -- the residence of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. The Palace moat is home to swans which ring the gatehouse bell when they want to be fed.

The Cathedral was begun in the late 1100's and its most striking features are the "scissor arches" installed in 1338 to support the tower.

### *Westminster Abbey*

One of the most beautiful and historic buildings in London, it is composed of an exceptionally diverse range of architectural styles.

The first church was established as early as the 10th century, but the present Gothic structure was begun in 1245 by Henry III.

The burial place of Britain's monarchs since the 11th century, Westminster Abbey also contains tombs and monuments honouring some of Britain's greatest public figures -- from politicians to poets, including William Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer and T. S. Eliot.

It has also been the setting for many coronations eg William the Conqueror on Christmas Day, 1066 and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 2nd June, 1953 -- the first to be televised. It was watched by 20 million people.

Westminster has also been the setting for royal weddings.

### **York Minster**

Considered the largest Gothic church north of the Alps, York Minster houses the largest collection of medieval stained glass in Great Britain. The variety of subject matter reflects the fact that some were paid for by laymen, others reflect ecclesiastical patronage. One is a beautifully executed portrait of King Edward III. It began as a wooden chapel used to baptize King Edwin of Northumbria in 627. Other structures on the site followed, including an 11th century Norman structure. The present Minster was begun in 1220 and completed 250 years later. The Choir Screen depicts kings of England from William the Conqueror to Henry VI.

### **RESIDENCES:**

#### **Althorp**

The family home of the Earls Spencer. It is on a 15,000 acre estate at Althorp in Northamptonshire and has been the family seat for more than 450 years with the Earl tracing his ancestry back to the fifteenth century. The relationship between the Spencers and the Royal family is demonstrated by the fact that Lady Diana Spencer and Prince Charles are 11th cousins once removed.

Lady Diana Spencer became the Princess of Wales after he marriage to Prince Charles on 29th July 1981.

Today, Althorp is probably best known as her final resting place.

#### **Blenheim Palace**

Queen Anne gave John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough the Manor of Woodstock in Oxfordshire after he had defeated the French at Blenheim in 1704 during the War of the Spanish Succession and had a palatial house built for him there, a present from a grateful nation.

The Palace is a Baroque masterpiece, designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor and Sir John Vanbrugh, the latter noted as the most theatrical of English architects. The building was surrounded by a park containing suitably heroic monuments. Later, as King George III gazed on its gardens, terraces, towers and pinnacles he was heard to sigh, "We have nothing to equal this."

The ceiling in the Great Hall, created by Thornhill in 1716, shows the 1st Duke of Marlborough presenting his plan for the Battle of Blenheim to Britannia.

In 1874 Blenheim Palace was the birthplace of Britain's Prime Minister during World War II, Winston Churchill.

#### **Edinburgh Castle**

Dating from the 1100's is a group of buildings built on the basalt core of an extinct volcano, though the original fortress was built in the 6th century by the Northumbrian King Edwin, from whom the city takes its name. It was used as a royal residence from the 12th century until 1603 when James VI of Scotland also took the crown as James I of England (the union of the Crowns) and chose to reside in England.

The Castle has been much altered over time. It still symbolizes the Scottish monarchy and contains the regalia of Scotland which, after the Union of Parliaments in 1707, was walled up in the palace for over 100 years. It also contains the so-called "Stone of Destiny", a relic of the ancient Scottish Kings seized by the English and

not returned until 1996.

The Castle is also the setting of the famed Military Tattoo and contains the siege gun "Mons Meg" which was made in Belgium in 1449 for the Duke of Burgundy who later gave it to his nephew King James II of Scotland.

#### **Hampton Court Palace**

In 1514 Cardinal Wolsey, the powerful Archbishop of York and chief minister of Henry VIII, leased a small manor house on the site and eventually transformed it into a magnificent country residence. The site had been selected by eminent physicians as having the best air within 20 miles of London.

In 1528, in order to retain his favour, Cardinal Wolsey gave it to Henry VIII. Henry extended it and later, in the 1690's it was again extended by William and Mary using the talents of the architect Christopher Wren. In about 1711, Queen Anne refurbished the Tudor Chapel Royal. George II was the last monarch to live at Hampton Court. Many of the state apartments contain paintings and furnishings from the Royal Collection.

A major feature of the gardens is the famous Baroque Maze.

#### **Holyooodhouse**

The name comes from the "rood" or cross which King David I saw between the antlers of a stag he was hunting in the area in 1128. The Palace was built in 1529 for James V and Mary of Guise, his French wife and later remodelled in the 1670's by Charles II.

In 1565, the unhappy Mary Queen of Scots married Lord Darnley in the chapel of Holyooodhouse. Barley a year later, in 1566, in a chamber in the tower, Mary witnessed the murder of her trusted Italian secretary, David Rizzio, by her jealous husband.

The Palace is also associated with Bonnie Prince Charlie whose court was based there during the Jacobite uprising of 1745 which ended with the defeat at the Battle of Culloden.

The palace is now the Queen's official residence in Scotland and the Royal Apartments are used for investitures and banquets when Her Majesty visits.

#### **Osborne House**

Osborne House on the Isle of Wight was built by Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert in 1851 as a seaside resort for their family. The royal children had the Swiss Cottage to play in while the Queen used the bathing machine allowing her to preserve her modesty while taking her to the edge of the water. Both Queen Victoria and her husband preferred it to the Royal Pavilion in Brighton.

Edward VII disliked the House and gave it to the nation in 1902, after which it became a convalescent home for officers.

Today the House is furnished much as Queen Victoria and her husband left it and is open to the public.

#### **Palace of Westminster**

The Palace of Westminster dates from the 11th century but today only Westminster Hall remains from that era. It was originally the principal residence of the English Kings from Edward the Confessor to Henry VIII.

Since the 16th century, after Henry VIII's move to Whitehall (which he forced



Cardinal Wolsey to hand over to him), the *Palace of Westminster* gradually became the meeting place of the two Houses of Parliament, the House of Commons and the House of Lords and the site of government offices.

Many changes have been wrought over time on the building as a result of fires and through insensitive demolition during Victorian times, such as the destruction of the 13th century Painted Chamber to make way for the present Houses of Parliament that were built in the neo-Gothic style after a disastrous fire in 1834. The House of Lords is a lavishly decorated Gothic Hall built in 1836-7 but the original chamber of the House of Commons was destroyed by fire in 1941. The clock tower holds the 14 tonne bell Big Ben which has kept exact time almost continuously since 1859.

### **Tower of London**

In 1066, soon after he became King, William the Conqueror built a fortress on the site to guard the entrance to London from the Thames Estuary. The White Tower, still standing at the centre of the complex was completed in 1097 and was the tallest building in London at that time. Since then, other fine buildings have been added over the centuries, including the Queen's House, a Tudor building that is the Sovereign's official residence at the Tower.

Over its long history, the *Tower of London* has served as a royal residence, armoury, treasury and perhaps most famously as a prison for the enemies of the monarch. Often high-ranking prisoners, accompanied by their own retinues of servants were held in Beauchamp Tower built by Edward I around 1281. Many prisoners were brought from their trial at Westminster Hall to the Tower through the infamous Traitors' Gate.

Today, among its attractions, the *Tower of London* houses the Crown Jewels, most of which date from the 17th century, including the Sceptre with the Cross (1660) which contains the world's biggest diamond and the Imperial State Crown, made for Queen Victoria in 1837 and used at every coronation since.

Thirty-seven Yeoman Warders, resplendent in their Tudor period uniforms, live there and guard the *Tower*. But perhaps its most celebrated permanent residents are the seven ravens whose residency is protected by the legend that the kingdom will fall if they desert the Tower.

In addition, the **State Coach Britannia** contains precious wooden pieces from **creations by English clockmaker John Harrison (1693-1776)** who achieved lasting fame as the inventor of the first chronometer – a clock for finding time at sea which enabled mariners to plot Longitude for the first time and thus revolutionising seafaring. His invention of the bi-metallic strip which he used in his watches, is still used today in thermostats.

Harrison was initially a carpenter by trade who began developing his clock making skills by repairing clocks in his spare time. He fought a heroic struggle against the Board of Longitude who raised every obstacle they could think of to prevent an "amateur" like him from claiming the 20,000 pound prize offered for the first successful invention, against other candidates such as the Astronomer Royal. Eventually, King George III himself tested one of Harrison's watches in his Observatory at Kew and Harrison was paid the award money, not by the Board of Longitude but by a special Act of Parliament.

In 1775, when he was 82 years old, John Harrison wrote an account of his life's work. He died the following year and is buried at Hampstead Parish Church.

## **THE EXTERIOR DECORATIONS:**

### **The Roof Decorations:**

Proudly adorning the roof of the State Coach Britannia is the gloriously carved and gilded Imperial Crown. It is arguably the most significant Crown ever carved, because it has been created from specially selected oak that came from Admiral Nelson's ship *HMS Victory* (see above). It is therefore also referred to as the "Victory Crown".

The Imperial Crown has been carved by British artist and master sculptor O. H. Boyd, who works almost exclusively in wood. One of his monumental works tells the story of John Harrison, who solved the navigational problem of measuring Longitude in the 18th century. Among his many other specialties are portrait busts that have earned him a reputation as one of the leading English wood portraitists, and wooden neckties or bowties, complemented by handkerchiefs carved from limewood and almost indistinguishable from their fabric counterparts. The realism and attention to detail of his work is breathtaking.

Now O. H. Boyd has applied his considerable talent to creating a historic masterpiece that literally crowns the State Coach Britannia.

In a fascinating innovation, the interior of the Imperial Crown has been hollowed out and lined with copper sheeting also from the *Victory*, allowing for the installation of the latest in third millennium technology – media cameras – a masterful synergy of past and present.

The Imperial Crown is supported by four lions *statant guardant*. The heraldic symbol 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 Lions have been cast in brass and then gilded.

The English Rose, the Scottish Thistle, the Irish Flax and the Welsh Leek are also part of the "gallery" or roof decoration. They have been carved in Australian beech by Australian master woodcarver Laurens Otto, then cast in bronze and gold-plated.

Laurens Otto is descended from a long line of woodcarvers. In 1979 he worked for four months with his father on the Australian Coat of Arms for the High Court of Australia in Canberra and they were presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at the Official

In 1988 Laurens also worked on the Australia State Coach, creating the master carving of the Australian wildflowers that adorn the gallery of the Coach. Laurens Otto's work is represented in public and private collections in Australia and overseas.

In creating all these decorative designs, great care was taken to ensure that correct protocol was followed and in all matters concerning innovations approval was obtained from The Garter Principal King of Arms, Peter Gwynn-Jones CVO, at the College of Arms in London.

### Heraldry:

The State Coach Britannia has been emblazoned with the Royal Coat of Arms and other Royal Insignia, exquisitely executed by Australian artist Paula Church. A most accomplished artist with many commissions and exhibitions to her credit, Paula originated from Ireland and came to Australia with her family in 1997.

She is a perfectionist who understood the absolute necessity of giving full regard to historical procedure and style. So, before embarking on the project, Paula Church spent six months learning to guild under the expert tutoring of Erik West FRSA, the retired Coach Restorer at the Royal Mews, Buckingham Palace in London, and closely studying the symbols of Heraldry in order to create works of the most distinguished historic and artistic merit.

### The Royal Coat of Arms:

Originally, the purpose of a Coat of Arms was to enable soldiers to identify their own troops during battle and was thus designed to be easily seen and recognised. It must always be reproduced correctly and where possible, in colour.

Four large renderings of the Royal Coat of Arms have been painted directly on to the body of the State Coach Britannia by Paula Church – on the centre back, on the centre front, and one on each of the two doors.

Each element of the Royal Coat of Arms has a special significance – these have been developed over a period of 900 years:

The Royal helm or helmet (below the Crown) is depicted in gold with grilles and *affronté* – that is, facing forward (Knights always have the helmet facing in profile). It was introduced to the arms by Elizabeth I (1558-1603).

The Unicorn is a mythical beast, generally regarded as a Scottish royal beast in heraldry – it also symbolizes purity of heart.

The quartered shield in the middle displays the arms of England twice. It was Henry II (1154-89) who formalised his coat of arms to include three lions. This was developed by his son Richard I to become the *Gules three lions passant guardant or* as seen on today's arms.

The small Rampart (or red) Lion on the top right quarter represents Scotland, and Ireland's north is represented by the Harp. It is always depicted with silver strings. The blue circle around the central shield carries the motto *honi soit qui mal y pense* ("evil to him who thinks of evil") and is encircled by the collar of the Most Notable Order of the Garter established by King Edward III in 1348. The Blue Garter is the badge of the Order which comprises 26 Knights, including the Sovereign.

*Dieu et Mon Droit* ("God and My Right") appears on both sides of the lowest segment. It has been the Royal motto since the reign of Henry V (1413-22). Directly above the motto, are the Tudor Rose, the Leek, the Shamrock and the Thistle. The Tudor Rose was devised by Henry VII (1485-1509, a Lancastrian) after he won the

"Wars of the Roses". It blends the white rose of York with the red rose of Lancaster. The Crown, used heraldically to represent the State, is the Imperial Crown introduced in 1901 by Edward VII. It is based on a Tudor design. The high rounded arches are considered to be the mark of independent sovereignty. They are edged with rows of large pearls. The cap of the heraldic Crown is always crimson.

Traditionally, the red colour used in the Royal Coat of Arms is more that of brick red than scarlet and metal is always applied over a colour background, never directly on to metal.

The text is traditionally rendered in Lombardic Script.

With her characteristic attention to detail, Paula Church has also incorporated some special touches in her rendition of the Royal Coat of Arms.

These include:

Extending the Plantagenet *Gules three lions passant guardant or* in the quartering for England to fit the shield – the correct rendition not always followed.

Depicting St George and the Dragon in a more animated and spirited way, as opposed to the often more stylised version.

Painting the Lion Supporter so that his eyes gaze directly at the viewer, regardless of where the viewer may be standing – again probably the correct tradition, particularly since the Lion is the focal point of the Royal Coat of Arms. The viewer's gaze will always begin with the Lion Supporter and constantly return to him.

It is interesting to note that the lion is the most common beast in heraldry. It characterizes strength.

The Collar of the Most Noble Order of the Garter from which is suspended the Great George, is also painted on the quarter panels of the Coach.

Another Royal insignia repeats the Imperial Crown and the Motto *honi soit qui mal y pense*.

The end result of this brilliantly skilful, painstaking work and attention to detail is the creation of works of art that can only be regarded as conspicuously outstanding, even among so many other magnificent elements that constitute the Coach Britannia.

It is worth noting that such artistic brilliance is not always the norm when applying the Royal Coat of Arms. During the renovation of the Irish State Coach at the Royal Mews in London in 1988, hand-painted transfers of the Royal Coat of Arms were applied to the Body. The inferior nature of this process is clearly to be seen in the discolouration which has already occurred.



### **The Scroll Work:**

Additional artistic talent was called on to provide and execute the beautiful design of the scroll or filigree pattern that enriches the decorations of the State Coach Britannia.

The process of applying the scroll work is exacting and time-consuming requiring precision and considerable skill, not to mention artistic flair.

The panels of the Coach were first coated with a mixture of egg-white and water. All the scroll work design was drawn by hand and then transferred into pounces (ie the layouts were pin-pricked, leaving a dotted outline of the design on the Coach when rubbed with chalk).

Next, the design outline was hand-painted with a "size" – a mixture of goldsize and pigment.

When the "size" became "squeaky", that is almost dry, the gold leaf was applied. Excess gold was then removed leaving the scrolls to be burnished to give a high lustre.

This amazing, meticulous process was carried out by Brian Tetstall from Brookvale Signs in NSW. He produced a work that was itself of great artistic merit, but it was only a part of the overall process.

Award-winning Australian botanical artist and gemmologist Helen Eyre Pikler then adapted her considerable skills in botanical illustration to the painstaking task of applying highlights in relief over the whole scroll design in shades of brown oil-based glaze over the gilding.

Helen's work is acclaimed for its meticulous detail, accuracy, artistic composition and sensitivity to colour, and it is these very accomplishments that made her the perfect choice for this exacting task.

Such exquisite detailing further underlines the captivating splendour of the Coach Britannia.

### **Britannia:**

Visually one of the smallest of the decorations on the Coach, but its size belies its emblematic significance. The miniature, detailed figure of Britannia is a brilliant personification of the proud Land from which all has sprung.

### **The Lamps:**

The four beautifully crafted Coach lamps were spun in brass and the tops are adorned with the Imperial Crown. The lamps incorporate the finest crystal glass panels, hand-blown and cut by Edinburgh Crystal. They are individually referred to as the English Lamp, The Scottish Lamp, the Irish Lamp and the Welsh Lamp.

This is because in each lamp the crystal glass panel is exquisitely etched with one of the four specially selected heraldic symbols – the English Rose, the Scottish Thistle, the Irish Flax and the Welsh Leek, thus each lamp represents one of the four territories that comprise the United Kingdom, and they also further accent the imagery that appears on the gallery.

## **CONCLUSION**

The exquisite beauty of the new State Coach Britannia proudly displays in the modern world the very best of traditional ceremonial pageantry and arts. It is also a magnificent tribute to the recreation of the coach builder's art.

Even more importantly it is undoubtedly one of the most significantly historic vehicles ever created and therefore an impressive part of British Heritage.

But the new State Coach Britannia is even more than that. It stands as a permanent showcase of much that is best in human endeavour.

Beginning with one man's dream of building an enduring, visual embodiment of history, heritage, pageantry and great artistic beauty, the process of creating the State Coach Britannia grew to embrace the widest variety of people from the most diverse backgrounds, nationalities and locations, all brought together by their belief in that dream and united in the one aim of contributing their exceptional skills to the pursuit of excellence and to making that dream a reality.

Artists and artisans, crafts people possessed of rare, highly specific, even unique skills and talents, men and women with knowledge of processes past and present, of insights and understanding have all played their part in the course of building the Coach.

But the embracing diversity did not end here.

The State Coach Britannia has also brought together and preserved for the future in a unique way, significant historical relics from the widest and most diverse sources, each providing a precious, tangible link with the past. In this way the Coach is a monument not only to current endeavours and achievements but also to many of the endeavours and achievements of bygone eras.

It is a great tribute to Jim Frecklington that he has understood the need, the validity and importance of achieving this.

To have sought to bring together such a diverse collection of people, to have sought to preserve the physical history and heritage embodied in the Coach, as well as the amazing arts and skills of the present as well as of those of the past which are fast declining or are on the verge of being entirely lost, and to have succeeded, are the attributes that set Jim Frecklington apart.

It is in this and in his own pursuit of excellence that Jim Frecklington has been a source of inspiration to all who have worked with him. He will remain a source of inspiration to all who view the beautiful work of art that is the State Coach Britannia.

