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(54) **THIN HEAT PIPE STRUCTURE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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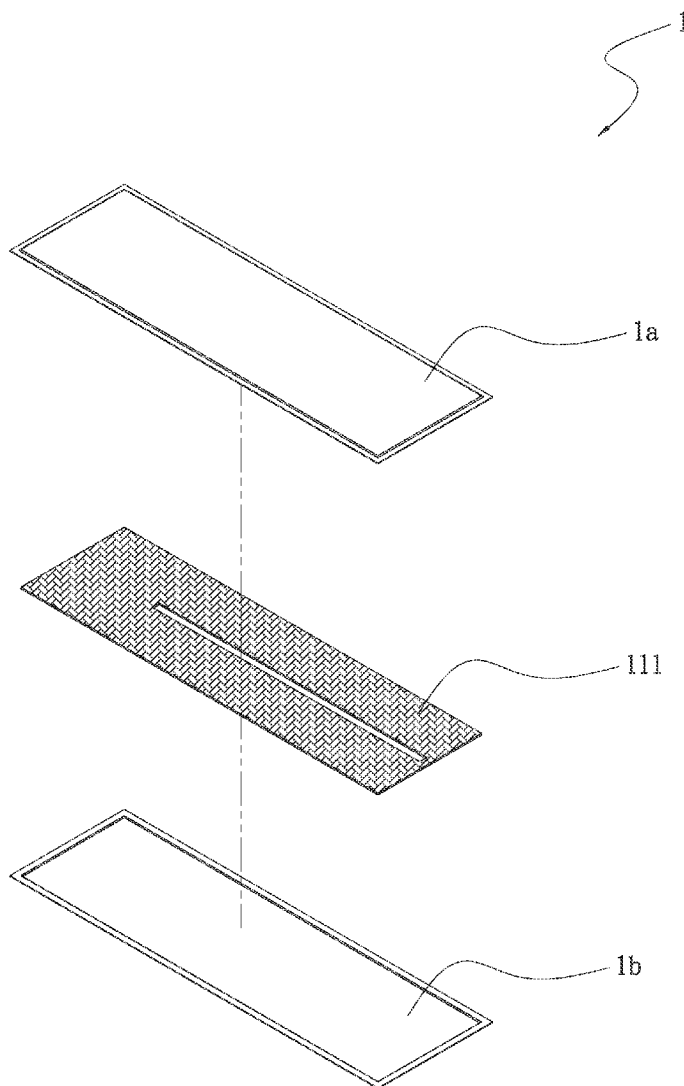
A thin heat pipe structure includes a main body having a chamber. The chamber has a wick structure and a working fluid provided therein, and internally defines an evaporating section and at least one condensing section. The condensing section is extended towards at least one or two ends of the evaporating section. The wick structure is provided with at least one groove. The groove is extended through the wick structure along a thickness direction of the main body to connect to two opposite wall surfaces of the chamber, and also extended along a length direction of the main body to communicate with the condensing section and the evaporating section. With these arrangements, the thin heat pipe structure has an extremely small overall thickness and is flexible.

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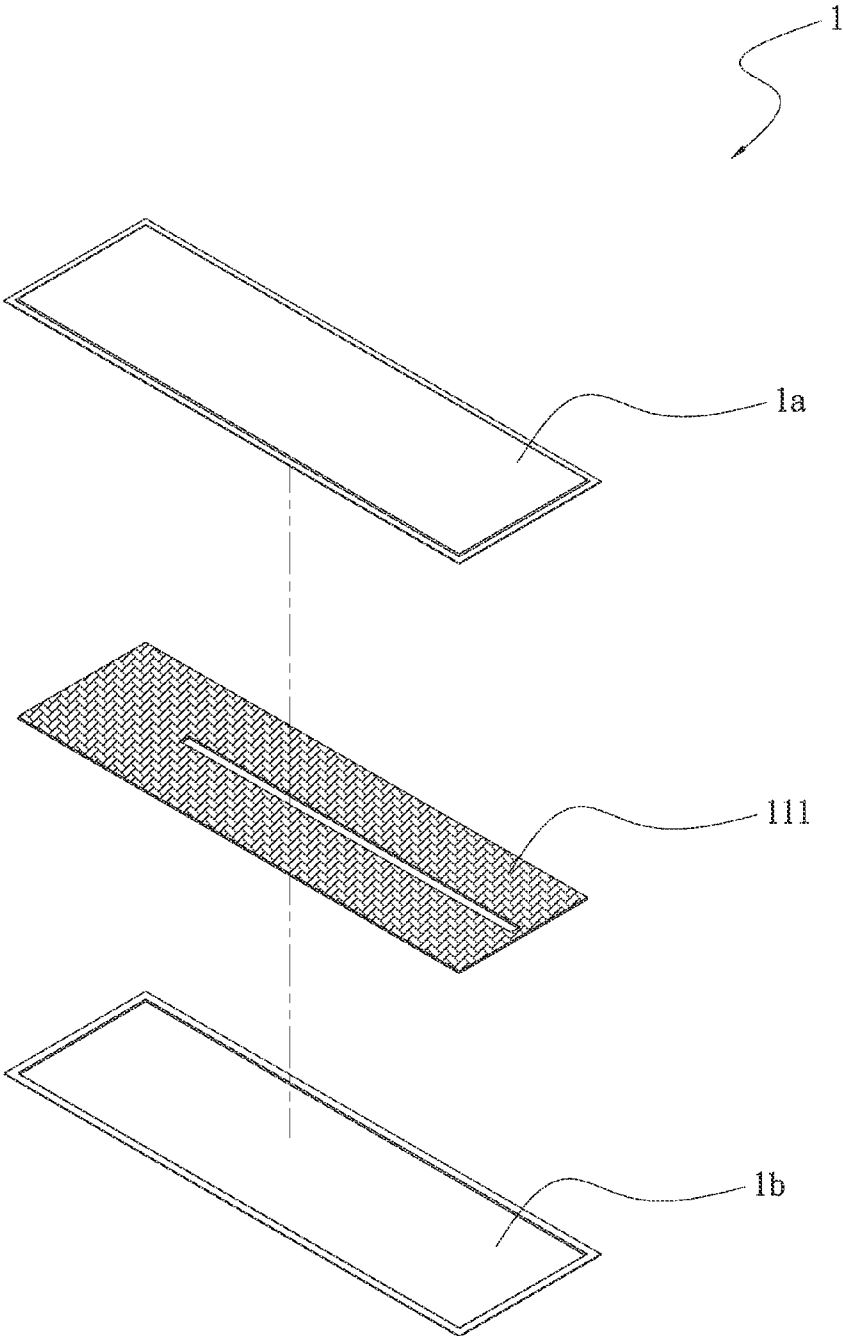


Fig. 1

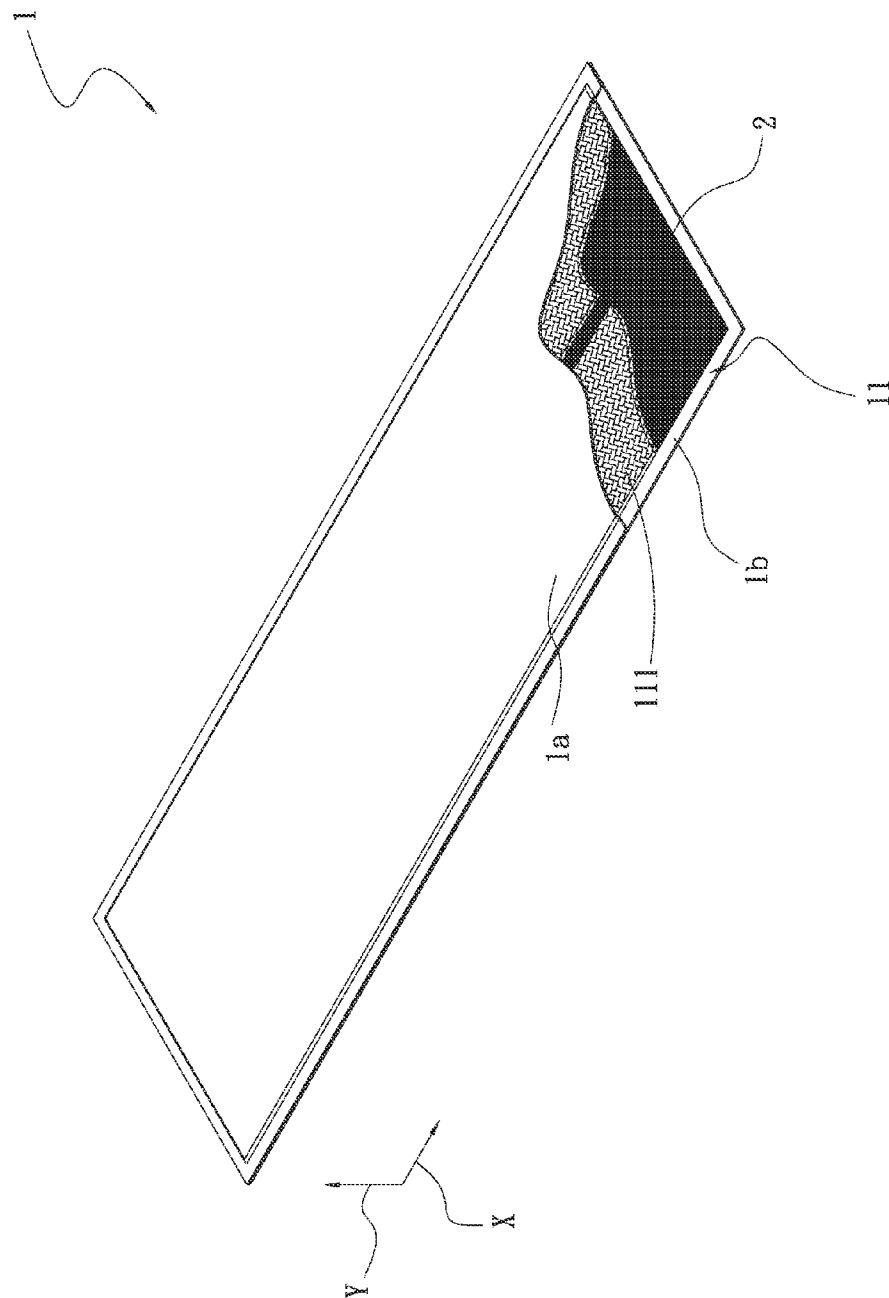


Fig. 2

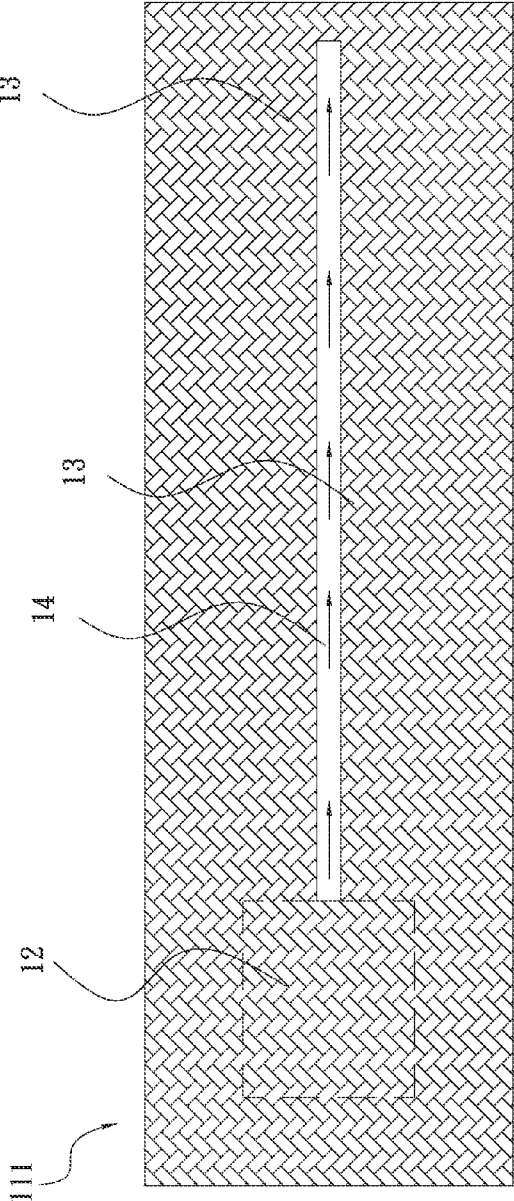


Fig. 3

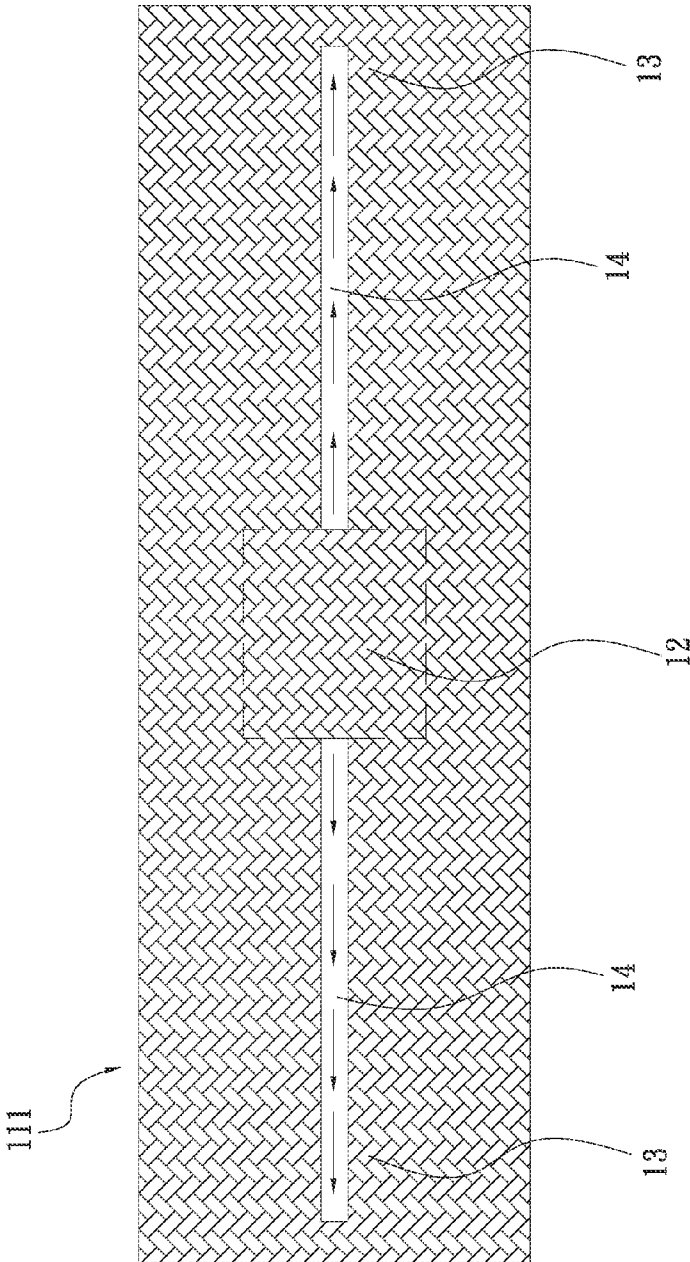


Fig. 4

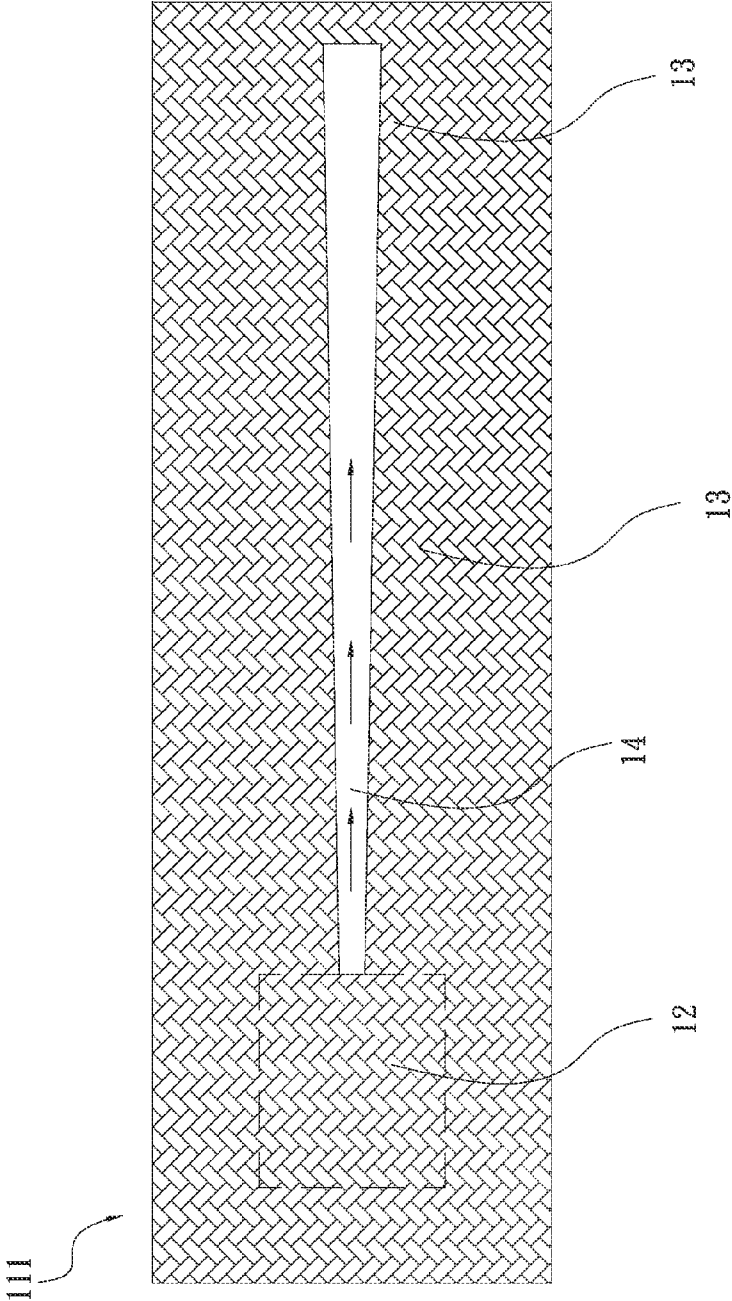


Fig. 5

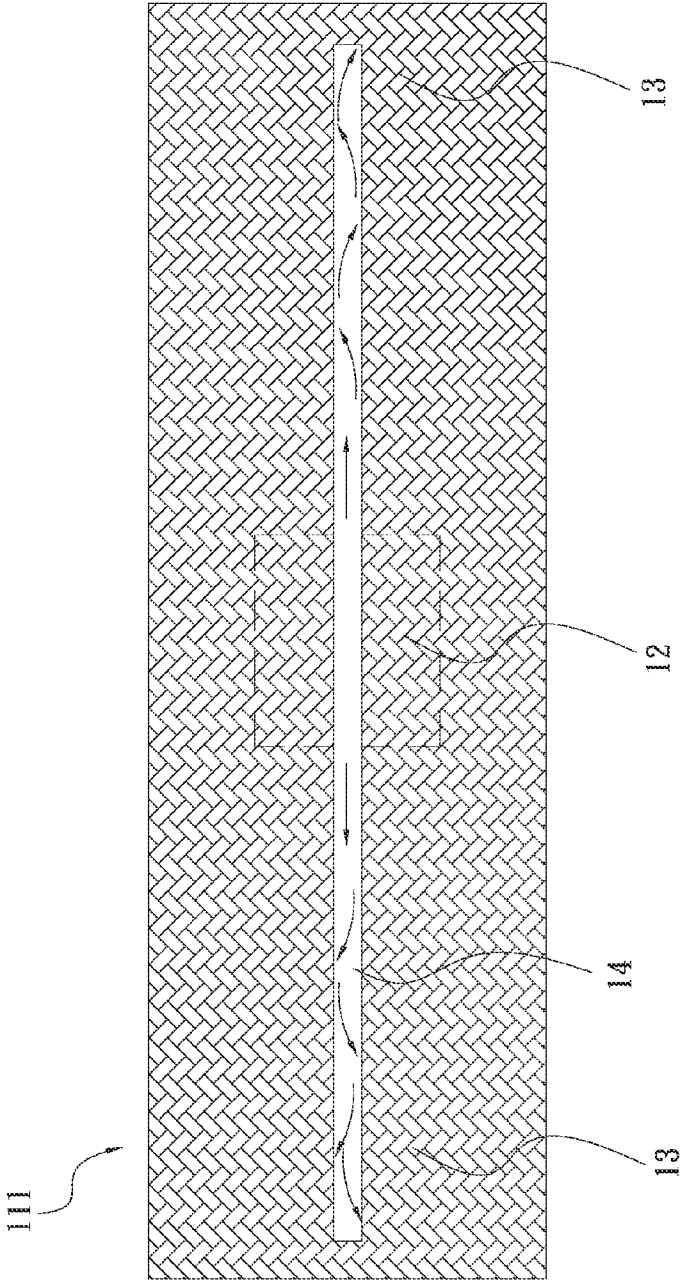


Fig. 6

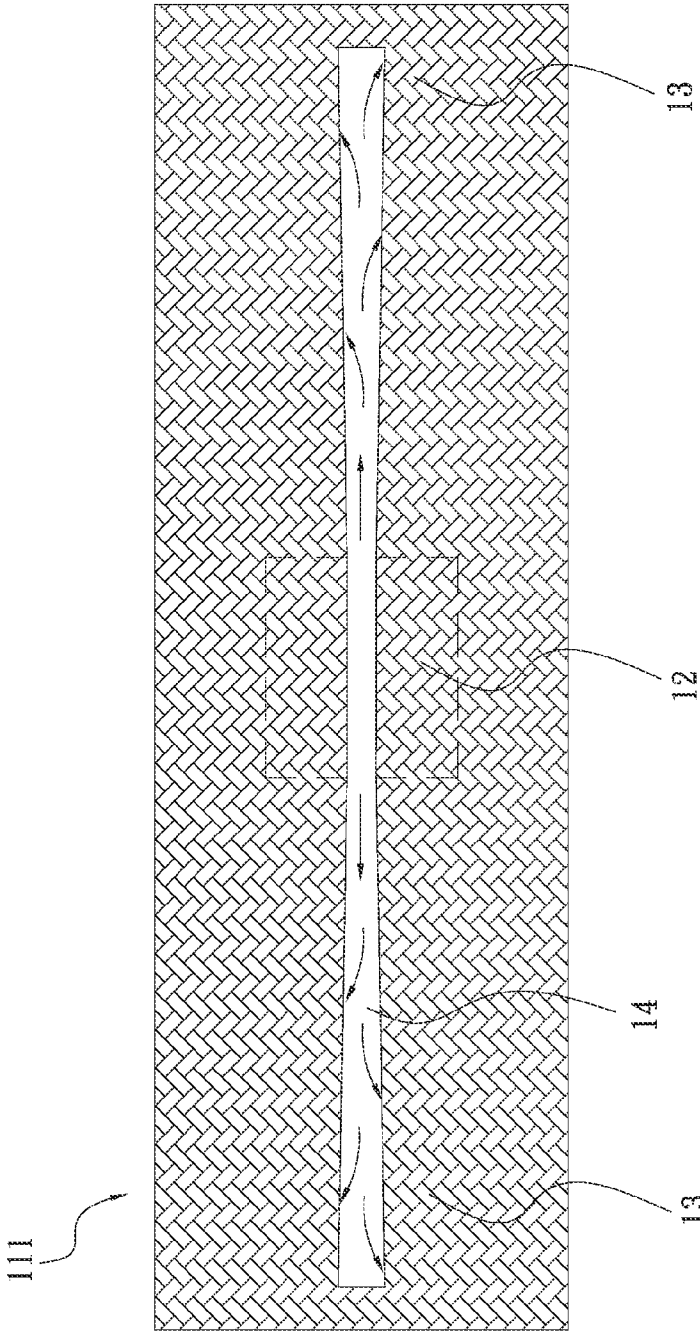


Fig. 7

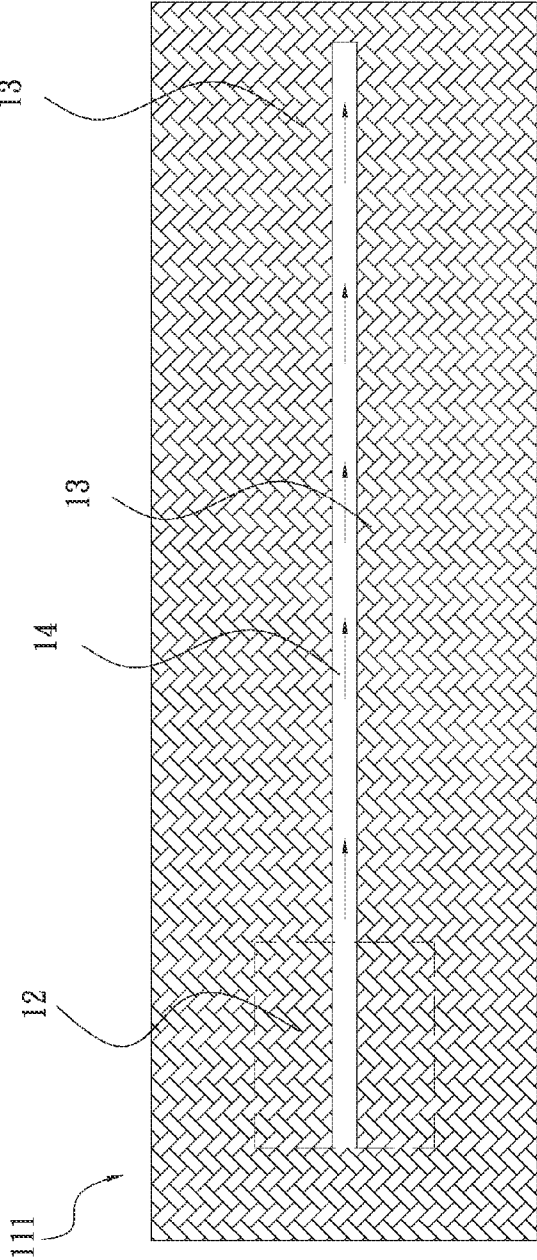


Fig. 8

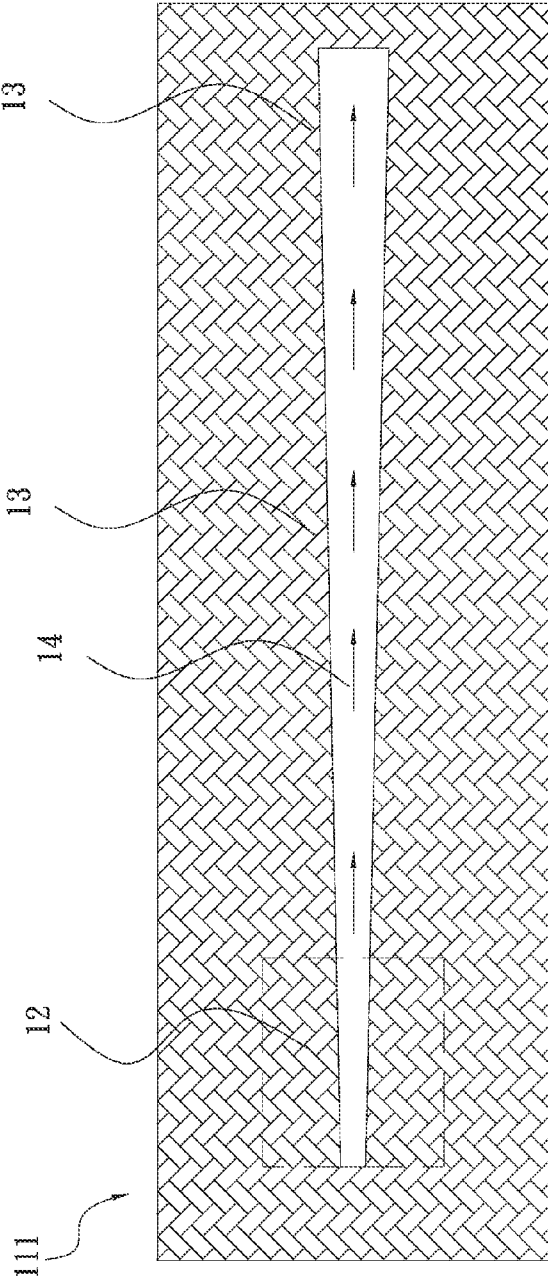


Fig. 9

THIN HEAT PIPE STRUCTURE

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to a thin heat pipe structure, and more specifically, to a thin heat pipe structure that has an extremely small overall thickness.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The currently available electronic mobile devices have become extremely thin and light. Apart from being thin and light, the new-generation electronic mobile devices have also largely improved computation performance. Due to the improved computation performance and the largely reduced overall thickness, an internal space of the electronic mobile devices for disposing electronic elements is also limited. The higher the computation performance is, the more amount of heat the electronic elements produce during operation. Therefore, heat dissipation elements are widely used to dissipate the heat produced by the electronic elements. Since it is difficult to provide cooling fans or other heat dissipation elements in such an extremely narrow internal space of the electronic mobile devices, copper sheets or aluminum sheets are usually used to increase the heat dissipation area. However, these arrangements have only very limited effect in improving the whole heat dissipation performance of the electronic mobile devices.

[0003] Also, other than the advancement in the electronic mobile devices, a great deal of progress has also been made in wearable smart devices. Wearable smart devices, such as smart watches, smart necklaces, smart rings and the like, are accessories with smart display interface and touch function and can be worn on the user's body. The wearable smart devices are thinner than the electronic mobile devices, so it is quite hard to provide heat dissipation elements in their internal space to dissipate heat. For example, the space in the smart watch is too narrow to mount general heat pipe or vapor chamber that provides relative good heat dissipation effect. Moreover, since the smart watch has a curvature and will be bent when being worn, the conventional rigid heat pipe or vapor chamber just could not be applied thereto. Therefore, it is desirable to adapt the conventional heat pipe or vapor chamber to the wearable smart devices.

[0004] Furthermore, in the conventional technique, when the heat pipe or vapor chamber is made with a thin configuration, the vapor passageway in the heat pipe or vapor chamber is also extremely reduced in size or even omitted to largely adversely affect the whole vapor/liquid circulation efficiency in the heat pipe or vapor chamber. In conclusion, it is an important issue at the present time as how to improve the vapor/liquid circulation in the very thin heat pipe and vapor chamber.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] To solve the above problems, a primary object of the present invention is to provide a thin heat pipe structure that is flexible and has an extremely small overall thickness.

[0006] To achieve the above and other objects, the present invention provides a thin heat pipe structure including a main body.

[0007] The main body includes a chamber. The chamber has a wick structure and a working fluid provided therein, and internally defines an evaporating section and at least one condensing section. The condensing section is extended

towards at least one or two ends of the evaporating section. The wick structure is provided with at least one groove. The groove is extended through the wick structure along a thickness direction of the main body to connect to two opposite wall surfaces of the chamber, and also extended along a length direction of the main body to communicate with the condensing sections and the evaporating section.

[0008] With these arrangements, the thin heat pipe structure of the present invention can reserve an internal space for maintaining smooth vapor/liquid circulation. Furthermore, since the heat pipe is largely reduced in its overall thickness, it not only can be used in a narrow space, but also can be freely bent by an external force.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] The structure and the technical means adopted by the present invention to achieve the above and other objects can be best understood by referring to the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments and the accompanying drawings, wherein

[0010] FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view of a first embodiment of a thin heat pipe structure according to the present invention;

[0011] FIG. 2 is an assembled and partially sectioned perspective view of FIG. 1;

[0012] FIG. 3 is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according the first embodiment of the present embodiment;

[0013] FIG. 4 is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a second embodiment of the present embodiment;

[0014] FIG. 5 is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a third embodiment of the present embodiment;

[0015] FIG. 6 is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a fourth embodiment of the present embodiment;

[0016] FIG. 7 is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a fifth embodiment of the present embodiment;

[0017] FIG. 8 is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a sixth embodiment of the present embodiment; and

[0018] FIG. 9 is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a seventh embodiment of the present embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0019] The present invention will now be described with some preferred embodiments thereof and by referring to the accompanying drawings. For the purpose of easy to understand, elements that are the same in the preferred embodiments are denoted by the same reference numerals.

[0020] Please refer to FIGS. 1 to 3, which are exploded perspective view, assembled and partially sectioned perspective view, and assembled sectional view, respectively, of a thin heat pipe structure according to a first embodiment of the present invention. As shown, the thin heat pipe structure includes a main body 1.

[0021] The main body 1 includes a chamber 11. The chamber 11 has at least one wick structure 111 and a working fluid 2 provided therein, and internally defines an evaporating sec-

tion 12 and at least one condensing section 13. The condensing section 13 is extended towards at least one or two ends of the evaporating section 12. The wick structure 111 is provided with at least one groove 14. The groove 14 is extended through the wick structure 111 along a thickness direction Y of the main body 1 to connect to two opposite wall surfaces of the chamber 11, and also extended along a length direction X of the main body 1 to communicate with the condensing section 13 and the evaporating section 12. In the first embodiment, the groove 14 has a uniform width.

[0022] Please refer to FIG. 4, which is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a second embodiment of the present embodiment. As shown, the second embodiment of the thin heat pipe structure is generally structurally similar to the first embodiment except that, in this second embodiment, there are two condensing sections 13 respectively extended from two ends of the evaporating section 12, and the groove 14 is extended through the wick structure 111 in the condensing sections 13 along the thickness direction Y of the main body 1 (as defined in FIG. 2), but not through the wick structure 111 in the evaporating section 12.

[0023] Please refer to FIG. 5, which is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a third embodiment of the present embodiment. As shown, the third embodiment of the thin heat pipe structure is generally structurally similar to the first embodiment except that, in this third embodiment, the width of the groove 14 is gradually increased from the evaporating section 12 towards the condensing section 13. That is, the width of the groove 14 in the evaporating section 12 is smaller than that of the groove 14 in the condensing section 13, which means that the groove 14 used as a vapor passageway has a gradually increased width towards the condensing section 13.

[0024] Please refer to FIG. 6, which is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a fourth embodiment of the present embodiment. As shown, the fourth embodiment of the thin heat pipe structure is generally structurally similar to the first embodiment except that, in this fourth embodiment, there are two condensing sections 13 respectively extended from two ends of the evaporating section 12, and the groove 14 is extended through not only the main body 1 along the length direction X, but also the wick structure 111 in the condensing sections 13 and the evaporating section 12 along the thickness direction Y of the main body 1 (as defined in FIG. 2). In the fourth embodiment, the groove 14 has a uniform width.

[0025] Please refer to FIG. 7, which is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a fifth embodiment of the present embodiment. As shown, the fifth embodiment of the thin heat pipe structure is generally structurally similar to the fourth embodiment except that, in this fifth embodiment, the width of the groove 14 is gradually increased from the evaporating section 12 towards the condensing sections 13. That is, the width of the groove 14 in the evaporating section 12 is smaller than that of the groove 14 in the condensing sections 13, which means that the groove 14 used as a vapor passageway has a gradually increased width towards the condensing sections 13.

[0026] Please refer to FIG. 8, which is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a sixth embodiment of the present embodiment. As shown, the sixth embodiment of the thin heat pipe structure is generally structurally similar to the first embodiment except that, in this sixth

embodiment, the groove 14 is extended through the wick structure 111 in the condensing section 13 and the evaporating section 12 along the thickness direction Y of the main body 1.

[0027] Please refer to FIG. 9, which is an assembled sectional view of the thin heat pipe structure according to a seventh embodiment of the present embodiment. As shown, the seventh embodiment of the thin heat pipe structure is generally structurally similar to the sixth embodiment except that, in this seventh embodiment, the width of the groove 14 is gradually increased from the evaporating section 12 towards the condensing section 13, meaning that the groove 14 used as a vapor passageway has a gradually increased width towards the condensing section 13.

[0028] In the above seven embodiments, the wick structure may be meshes, fibers, or woven threads. Also, the main body 1 further includes a first plate member 1a and a second plate member 1b. The first and the second plate member 1a, 1b are closed to each other to sandwich the wick structure 111 therebetween. In the present invention, the first and the second plate member 1a, 1b respectively have a thickness ranged from 0.01 to 0.1 mm and the wick structure 111 has a thickness ranged from 0.05 to 0.2 mm.

[0029] In the above illustrated embodiments, the thin heat pipe structure is provided with one groove 14. However, it is understood more grooves 14 can be provided without being limited to one. Further, the first and the second plate member 1a, 1b are made of a metal material, such as a copper-foil, an aluminum foil, a stainless steel sheet, or any other thermally conductive metal alloy sheet.

[0030] The present invention has been described with some preferred embodiments thereof and it is understood that many changes and modifications in the described embodiments can be carried out without departing from the scope and the spirit of the invention that is intended to be limited only by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A thin heat pipe structure comprising:

a main body including a chamber; the chamber having a wick structure and a working fluid provided therein and internally defining an evaporating section and at least one condensing section; the condensing section being extended towards at least one or two ends of the evaporating section; the wick structure being provided with at least one groove; and the groove being extended through the wick structure along a thickness direction of the main body to connect to two opposite wall surfaces of the chamber, and also extended along a length direction of the main body to communicate with the condensing section and the evaporating section.

2. The thin heat pipe structure as claimed in claim 1, wherein there are two condensing sections extended from two ends of the evaporating section; and the groove being extended through the wick structure only in the condensing sections along the thickness direction of the main body.

3. The thin heat pipe structure as claimed in claim 2, wherein the groove has a width gradually increased from the evaporating section towards the condensing sections, meaning that the groove in the evaporating section has a width smaller than that of the groove in the condensing sections.

4. The thin heat pipe structure as claimed in claim 1, wherein there are two condensing sections extended from two ends of the evaporating section; the groove being extended along the length direction of the main body, and the groove

also being extended through the wick structure in the condensing sections and the evaporating section along the thickness direction of the main body to connect to the two opposite wall surfaces of the chamber.

5. The thin heat pipe structure as claimed in claim 4, wherein the groove has a width gradually increased from the evaporating section towards the condensing sections, meaning that the groove in the evaporating section has a width smaller than that of the groove in the condensing sections.

6. The thin heat pipe structure as claimed in claim 1, wherein the wick structure is selected from the group consisting of meshes, fibers, and woven threads.

7. The thin heat pipe structure as claimed in claim 1, wherein the main body further includes a first plate member and a second plate member; the first and the second plate member being closed to each other to sandwich the wick structure therebetween; the first and the second plate member respectively having a thickness ranged from 0.01 to 0.1 mm; and the wick structure having a thickness ranged from 0.05 to 0.2 mm.

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