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(54) Title: COFFIN AND ASSEMBLY JIG

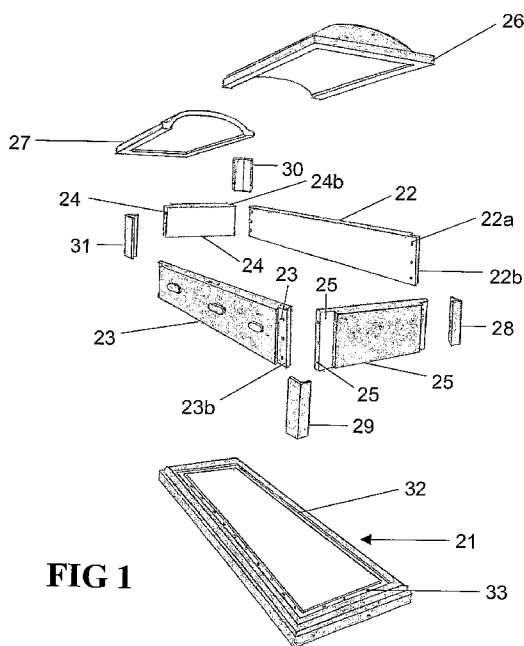


FIG 1

(57) Abstract: A coffin kit is provided comprising a base plate including side and end edges and grooves extending along the side and end edges of the base plate, a pair of sideboards and a pair of end boards for forming the sides and the ends of the coffin, the thickness of the side and end boards being such as to be receivable into the grooves during assembly, four L-shaped corner angles for covering the corners formed by the sides and end boards when assembled and a rigid liner composed of liquid proof material of a size and shape such as to line the coffin when the coffin is assembled.

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## **COFFIN AND ASSEMBLY JIG**

### **FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

This invention relates generally to coffin kits. It relates particularly to coffins, which are designed to ease the assembly process and apparatus for enabling the same.

### **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

Traditionally, coffins/caskets have been used to carry the mortal remains of humans. Coffins are usually made of wood, which provides a factor of elegance and sturdiness for the structure. Intricate designs and shapes can be carved on the outer surface of coffins, which enhances the appearance of the same. However, fully assembled coffins occupy considerable floor space, and their volume increases transportation costs since only a few can be shipped at a time. This also increases the delivery time. Moreover, the handling of the heavy and large assembled coffin is also difficult.

Ready to assemble coffins and kits have been disclosed in US Patent No. 4,170,054 and US Patent No.3,879,818 that are made of cardboard and self-skinning urethane, respectively. The cardboard coffins pose a problem of

lack of sturdiness and elaborate designs and engravings cannot be made on them. Urethane requires a higher temperature to burn. Thus it is not economical for crematoriums, and the byproducts from burning of urethane are toxic to the atmosphere.

Other ready to assemble coffin kits pose the problem of being very heavy for the assembler. Thus, even though they are designed to be assembled at the point of use, handling the weight of the coffin during assembly can cause substantial discomfort and possible injury to the person assembling it and such prior art kits are complex and therefore require skilled persons to assemble them. Also such prior art coffins require two or more persons to assemble them due to the difficulty in moving it and trying to access the nooks and corners during assembly. The prior art coffins also pose the problem that the side and end boards have to be manually supported by the assemblers once they are positioned on the base plate before and while fastening them to the same. This causes additional and substantial discomfort and effort on the part of the assemblers. Even though the ready to assemble prior art coffins make the coffins more modular, handling the elongated sideboards and the base plate poses additional difficulties. The present invention solves this problem by constructing the longer, heavier

components in half-sections, which are then joined during the overall assembly.

Thus, it is one object of the present invention to make the process of assembly easier, and reduce the amount of labour required to assemble the coffin. It is another object of the invention to enable the base plate to self-support the sideboards and end boards by suitable supporting means, before and while they are fastened to the former by the assembler. These and other objects and advantages of the present invention, such as for example, solving the problem of decomposing fluids of the body, will become more fully apparent from the following description of the embodiments illustrating the principles of the present invention.

### **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

The present invention describes coffin kits and a means for facilitating the assembly of the same.

In an embodiment, the coffin kit comprises of a base plate having side and end edges and grooves along the side and end edges of the plate. There is a pair of sideboards and end boards for forming the sides and ends of the

coffin, the thickness of the boards such that it is receivable into the grooves in the base plate. It also consists of four corner angles for covering the corners formed by the assembly of the sideboards and end boards. A rigid liner is also included to line the coffin, to perform the functionality of retaining liquids.

In another embodiment, the kit comprises of a base plate assembly, which consists of a plurality of base plate sections and connecting members, the base plate sections having grooves along the sides and ends. It also contains of a pair of sideboard assemblies, each assembly consisting of a plurality of sideboard sections and connecting members. It also further included end boards for forming the ends of the coffin and corner angles for covering the corners formed by the assembly of the sideboards and end boards.

An apparatus for facilitating the assembly of the above said coffin is also discussed. The apparatus consists of a pair of rigid bottom frames, which act as load bearing members, a suitable rotating member to rotate the load on the apparatus and a supporting member to support the rotating member. It also consists of a base, on which is placed the load and consists of a plurality of axial members and a plurality of members joined to the axial members at

a suitable angle. The apparatus further consists of a pair of end assemblies, each assembly consisting of vertical and horizontal members joined by suitable means, a suitable supporting member, which helps in supporting the said end assembly against the bottom frame and suitable holding means to hold the said base of the apparatus.

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

The objects, advantages and details of this invention will be more clearly understood from the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

Fig 1 is an exploded perspective view of an embodiment of the coffin.

Fig 2 is an exploded perspective view of another embodiment of the coffin.

Fig 3 is a perspective view of a part of the coffin with the moisture impervious liner.

Fig 4 is a perspective view of the fully assembled jig.

Fig 5 is a front elevation view of the fully assembled jig.

Fig 6 is a view of the base assembly of the jig taken along Section 6-6 of Fig 5.

Fig 7 is a side elevation view of the end assembly of the jig taken along Section 7-7 of Fig 5.

Fig 8 is a front elevation view of the end assembly of the jig.

Fig 9 is a side elevation view of the A-frame of the jig taken along Section 9-9 of Fig 5.

### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION**

As illustrated in **Fig 1**, the coffin assembly consists of a base plate **21**, two identical sideboards **22, 23**, two identical end boards **24, 25**, two lid sections **26, 27** and four corner angles **28, 29, 30** and **31**. While the parts may be composed of solid wood or particleboards, it is preferred to be molded from composite wood. Composite wood comes under the category of engineered

wood, which is made from waste wood chips collected as a manufacturing by-product and saw dust. The moulding process employs glue, which acts as a binder and imparts strength and rigidity to the parts. One of the advantages of using molded parts is that designs can be imparted to the mould, so as to provide a decorative appearance looking like engraved wood. Also composite wood is environmentally more sustainable and results in no wastage of material.

As further shown in **Fig 1**, the base plate **21** provides the base support for all the other members. The base plate has grooves **32** on all the four sides into which the bottom edges of the sideboards **22, 23** and end boards **24, 25** are inserted one by one. The grooves have vertical predrilled holes **33** extending through the bottom which enables screwing the end boards and sideboards to the base plate. The edges of the sideboards and end boards have predrilled holes **22a, 23a** and **24a, 25a** respectively. The predrilled holes in the sideboards and end boards are machined in such a way that when the boards are inserted in the base plate, the holes are in line and enable joining the boards by means of screws. The corner angles **28, 29, 30** and **31** serve to camouflage the joints resulting from joining the end boards and sideboards, thus providing an aesthetic appearance. The end boards **24, 25** and side



boards **22, 23** have L shaped cuts **24b, 25b and 22b, 23b** at their edges, which serve to receive the ends of the corner angles, so that the outer surface of the corner angles are flush with the outer surface of the sideboards and end boards. The corner angles also help in improving the overall appearance of the coffin by enabling designs to be engraved on it. The grooves in the base plate **21** serve the novel purpose of self-supporting the sideboards and end boards during assembly, which reduces the effort to be put in on the part of the assembler.

Two lid sections **26, 27** serve to cover the coffin, and as depicted in **Fig 1**, they maybe in two equal halves. In the embodiment shown in **Fig 1**, the upper side of the lid maybe flat, but it is preferred to be dome shaped to provide an overall aesthetic appearance. The lid sections **26, 27** are fitted to the sideboard **22** or **23** with hinges, which are not shown. The lid being in two sections makes opening the coffin easier, and allows for the lid at the foot end to be closed during the viewing of the deceased if desired.

The modular coffin kit is also provided with a rigid moisture impervious liner **36** as shown in **Fig 3** which lines the inside of the coffin up to a height of about 6 inches from the base of the cavity of the coffin. The preferred

material for the rigid impervious liner maybe plastic, and more preferably, PET (Polyethyleneterephthalate). The lining provided by the liner **36** serves to retain the liquids that are discharged from the mortal remains.

During assembly, the end boards **24, 25** are fitted into the grooves **32** of the base plate **21**. The sideboards **22, 23** are then slotted into the grooves and positioned at right angles to the end boards **24, 25**. The end boards and sideboards are then joined together with screws. The next step is to more permanently secure the sideboards **22, 23** and end boards **24, 25** to the base plate **21**. The securing is done by means of screws or the like, screwed upwardly from the bottom of the base plate **21**. This involves turning the semi-assembled coffin upside down as will be more fully described hereafter. After assembling the side and end boards to the base plate **21**, the corner angles **28, 29, 30** and **31** are placed on the intersecting edges of the sideboards **22, 23** and end boards **24, 25**. The corner angles maybe fixed using double-sided tape, glue or screws. Next, the hinges on one of the sideboards **22** or **23** are fitted in place to enable supporting the lid sections **26, 27**. The lid sections are then fitted to the boards by means of the hinges. The rigid moisture impervious liner **36** is then mounted so as to line the lower portion of the cavity of the coffin. The steps in the assembly

procedure described above can also be interchanged with regards to the order of inserting the sideboards and end boards, and the order of fitting the corner angles and the lid sections and hinges.

Another embodiment as illustrated in **Fig 2** consists of two base plate parts **37a**, **37b** and a connecting member **37c**. Similarly the sideboards are also split into two sideboard parts **38a**, **38b** and **38'a**, **38'b**, connecting members **38c**, **38'c** and camouflaging members **38d**, **38'd**. There are two identical end boards **39**, **40** and four corner angles **41**, **42**, **43** and **44**. The corner angles can be fitted to the intersection of the edges as previously described. There are two lid sections **45**, **46**. The sideboard parts have a stepped cut surface **47**, which has predrilled holes for screws. The connecting member **38c**, **38'c** also has predrilled holes for screws corresponding to the ones in the side section parts **38a**, **38b** and **38'a**, **38'b** respectively. The side section parts are assembled into a complete side section by bringing both the side section parts together and holding them in place and screwing the connecting members. The camouflaging members **38d** and **38'd** are then fitted on the side just opposite to the connecting member so as to camouflage the joints. Similarly the base plate parts **37a**, **37b** have predrilled holes positioned corresponding to the ones in the connecting member **37c**. The base plate

parts and the sideboard parts are first assembled individually before the coffin is assembled. The coffin is then assembled in the same manner as described in the previous embodiment. Similar to the previous embodiment, the members may be made from particleboard or solid wood, but are preferably of moulded composite wood for the reasons previously discussed. As in the previous embodiment, a rigid moisture impervious liner is provided as a waterproof lining for the inside of the coffin. Because of the split sideboards and base plates, the length of the most elongated members is substantially reduced so as to make it more compact and thereby easier to be transported and handled.

In order to facilitate the assembly and reduce the required manpower, a jig **80** is provided as illustrated in **Figs 4 – 9**.

The jig consists of rigid A-frames **71** at the bottom, one on each end as illustrated in **Fig 9**. The A-frames are the load bearing members of the jig and for the coffin when it is assembled. The A-frame **71** consists of legs **72** in the shape of alphabet A. On the top portion of the legs **72** is fitted a supporting member **73**. The spindle **74** is supported firmly on the supporting member **73** in such a way that it allows rotation of the spindle. The spindle

**74** supports the end assembly **62** and base **59**, as will be more fully described hereafter through the frame-supporting member **66**.

The base **59** of the jig as illustrated in **Fig 6** consists of two identical, elongated channel members **60a**, **60b** connected to three identical channel members **61a**, **61b** and **61c** placed perpendicular to members **60a**, **60b**. The axial members **60a**, **60b** and members **61a**, **61b**, **61c** provide a flat, horizontally extending shelf to support the coffin during assembly. The channel members **60a**, **60b**, **61a**, **61b** and **61c** can be square or round or C shaped.

The jig further includes two end assemblies **62**, one of which is illustrated in **Fig 7**. The end assembly consists of two inner vertical channel members **63a**, **63b** and two outer vertical channel members **64a**, **64b**. There are two identical horizontal channel members **65a** and **65b**, one on the top and one on the bottom of the end assembly **62**. The end assemblies **62** are rigidly secured to both ends of the base **59**. The horizontal members **65a**, **65b** are firmly joined to the vertical members **63a**, **63b** and **64a**, **64b**. In the base of the inner vertical members **63a**, **63b** are attached holding members **67a**, **67b** respectively, which are substantially long with their axis perpendicular to the

plane of the end assembly **62**. Each of the holding members **67a**, **67b** have a substantial taper in their end. The taper **68b** in the holding member **67b** is illustrated in **Fig 8**. The inner dimensions of the holding members **67a**, **67b** correspond to the outer dimensions of the axial members **60a**, **60b**. The ends of the axial members **60a**, **60b** are inserted into the holding members **67a**, **67b** and held by screws. Thus the holding members **67a**, **67b** serve to support the base **59** of the jig.

A pair of clamp supports **69a**, **69b** is connected to the top of the outer vertical members **64a**, **64b** respectively. The clamp support **69b** is illustrated in **Fig 8**. The clamp supports **69a**, **69b** are screwed onto the upper horizontal member **65a** and support manual screw-type clamps **70a**, **70b** respectively. The manual clamps **70a**, **70b** help in clamping down the corners of the coffin during assembly. Attached between the bottom part of the inner vertical member **63a**, **63b** is the frame-supporting member **66**, which serves to support the base **59** and end assembly **62** on the A-frame **71**.

The spindle **74** enables rotating the end assembly **62** and base **59** freely. The supporting member **73** has a block projection **76** on its side on which is situated a lock pin **75** as illustrated in **Fig 5** and **Fig 9**. The horizontal

member **65b** and the inner vertical member **63a** in one of the end assembly **62** have holes **66b** and **66a** respectively for inserting the lock pin **75**. Once the end assembly and base assembly as a whole is rotated, it can be locked in place by inserting the lock pin **75** into either of the lock pin holes **66a** or **66b**, depending on the position of the combined assemblies. This enables locking the combined end assembly **62** and base **59** in place, which makes assembling the coffin easier without the need to hold the rotated coffin.

As illustrated in **Fig 4**, a side frame **90** is fitted on to one side of the jig assembly **80**. The side frame **90** is fitted to the sides of both the end assemblies with screws. The side frame **90** consists of three members, a top bar **92**, a middle bar **94** and base bar **96**. The bars prevent the partially assembled coffin from slipping when it is rotated during assembly. The base bar **96** supports the base plate of the coffin, and the middle bar **94** supports the sideboard of the coffin. The top bar **92** supports the lid section of the coffin when it is being assembled, preventing any slipping of the lid section when the hinges are screwed.

What is claimed is:

1. A coffin kit comprising:
  - (a) a base plate including side and end edges and grooves extending along said side and end edges of the plate;
  - (b) a pair of sideboards and a pair of end boards for forming the sides and the ends of the coffin; the thickness of said side and end boards being such as to be receivable into said grooves during assembly;
  - (c) four L-shaped corner angles for covering the corners formed by the sides and end boards when assembled; and
  - (d) a rigid liner composed of liquid proof material of a size and shape such as to line said coffin when the coffin is assembled.
  
2. A coffin kit as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the said base plate, said sideboards and end boards are made of moulded wooden products.
  
3. A coffin kit as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the four corner angles are fastened to the side and end board intersections with double sided tape.



4. A coffin kit as claimed in Claim 2, wherein at least some of the said sideboards and end boards are decoratively moulded.
5. A coffin kit as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the liner is made of Polyethyleneterephthalate (PET).
6. A coffin kit comprising:
  - (a) a base plate assembly consisting of at least the first and second base plate sections and connecting members for joining the said sections; the said base plate sections including grooves extending along the side and end edges;
  - (b) a pair of sideboard assemblies for forming the sides of the coffin and consisting of at least the first and second sideboard sections and connecting members for joining the said sections; the thickness of said sideboard sections being such as to be receivable into said grooves during assembly;
  - (c) a pair of end boards for forming the ends of the coffin; the thickness of said end boards being such as to be receivable into said grooves during assembly;

- (d) four corner angles for covering the corners formed by the side and end boards when assembled.
7. A coffin kit as claimed in Claim 6, wherein the said base plate sections, said sideboard sections and end boards, said connecting members are made of moulded wooden products.
8. A coffin kit as claimed in Claim 6, wherein the four corner angles are fastened to the side and end board intersections with double sided tape.
9. A coffin kit as claimed in Claim 7, wherein at least some of the base plate sections, sideboard sections, end boards and connecting members are decoratively moulded.
10. A jig comprising:
- (a) a pair of rigid bottom frames performing the function of bearing the load; the said bottom frame consisting of frame legs for support, a suitable rotating member to rotate the load on the jig and a supporting member to support the rotating member;

- (b) a base consisting of a plurality of members placed axially and a plurality of members placed at a substantial angle and joined by suitable means to the said members placed axially;
  - (c) a pair of end assemblies; each end assembly consisting of a plurality of vertical members and a plurality of horizontal members; a frame supporting member fitted on to the bottom portion of each said end assembly; a clamping means to clamp the load placed on the said base of the jig; holding members to hold the said base of the jig; and each end assembly supported on the said bottom frame through the said frame supporting member.
11. A coffin and jig kit comprising a coffin kit as claimed in Claim 1 and a jig as claimed in Claim 10.
12. A coffin and jig kit comprising a coffin kit as claimed in Claim 6 and a jig as claimed in Claim 10.

FIG 1

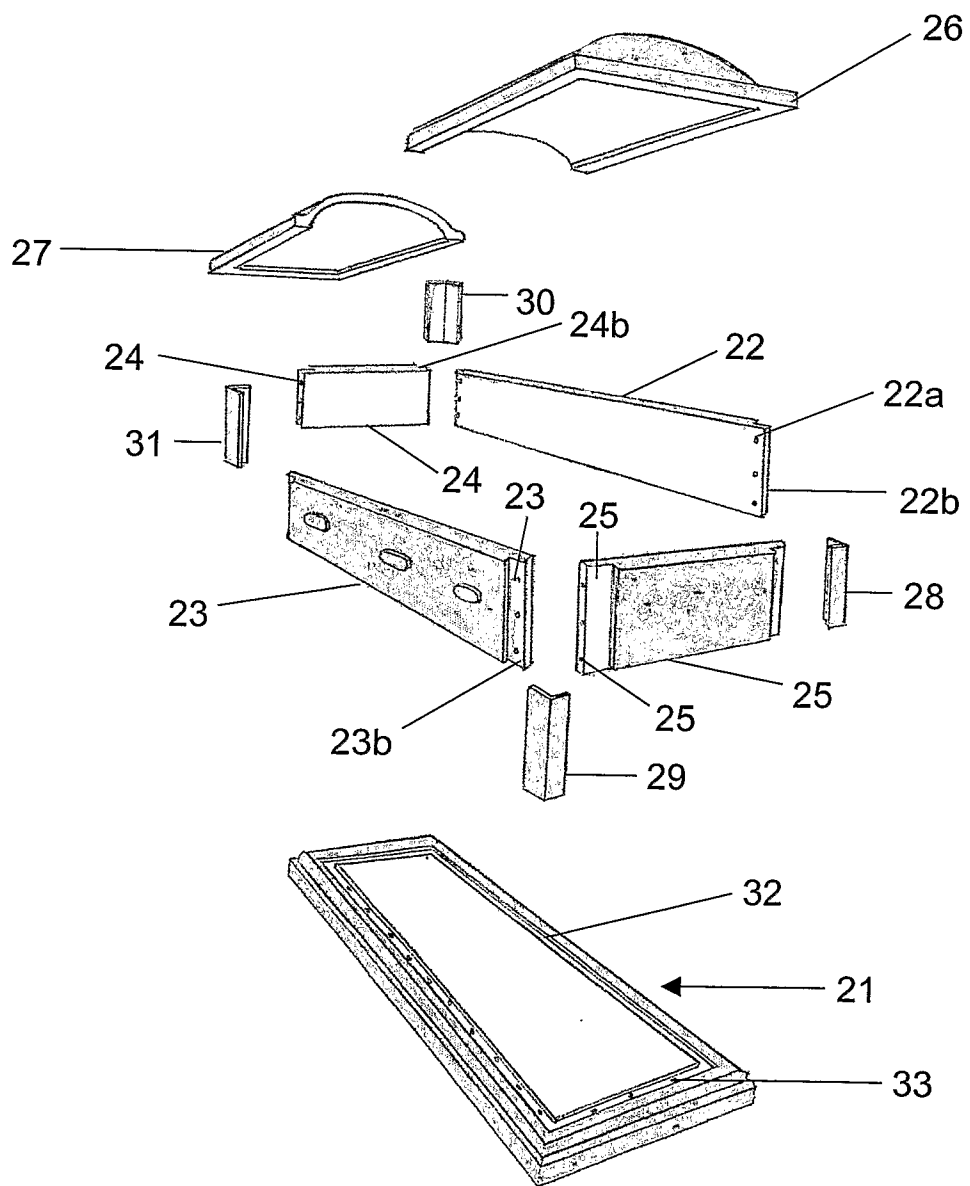
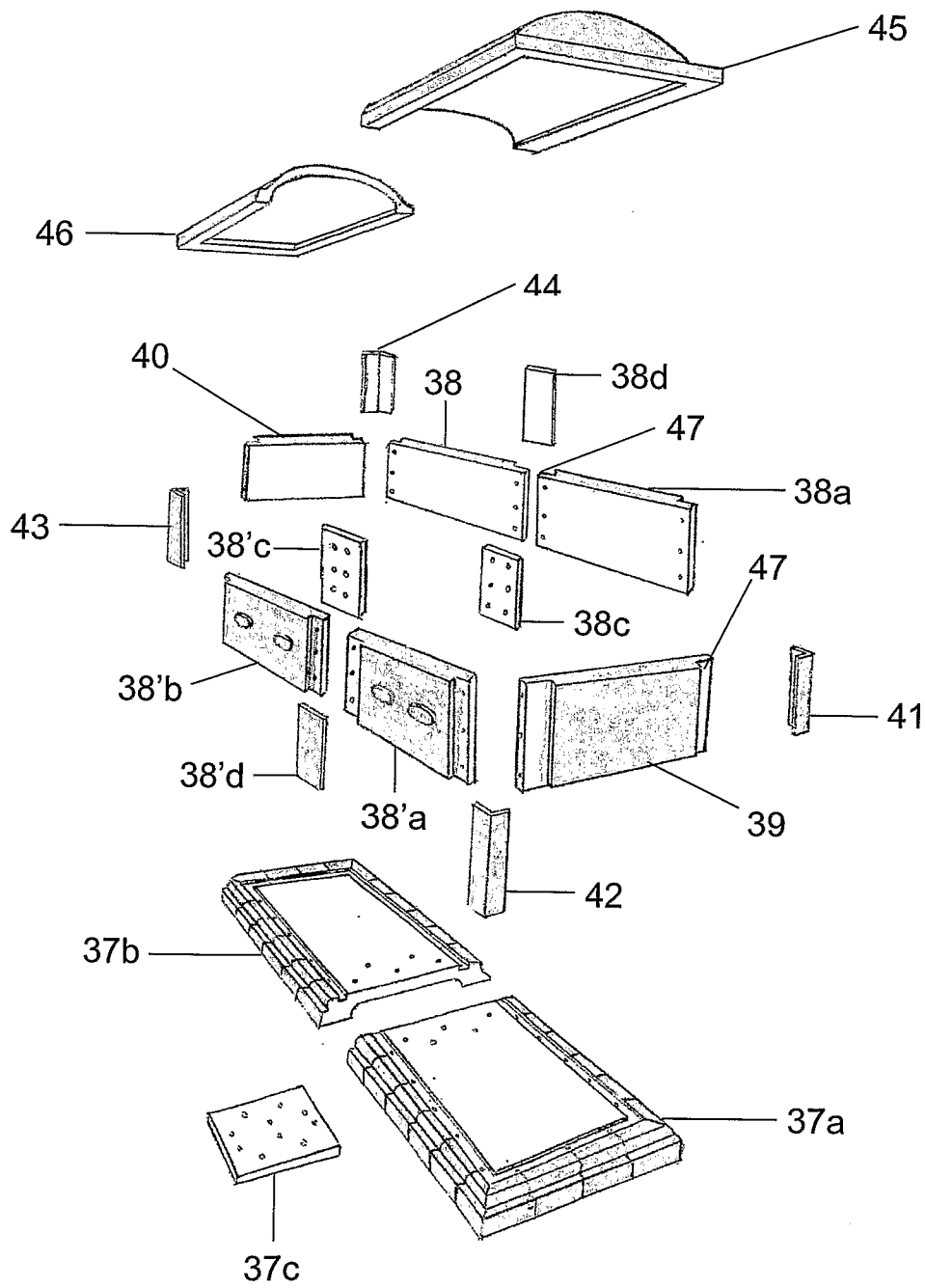
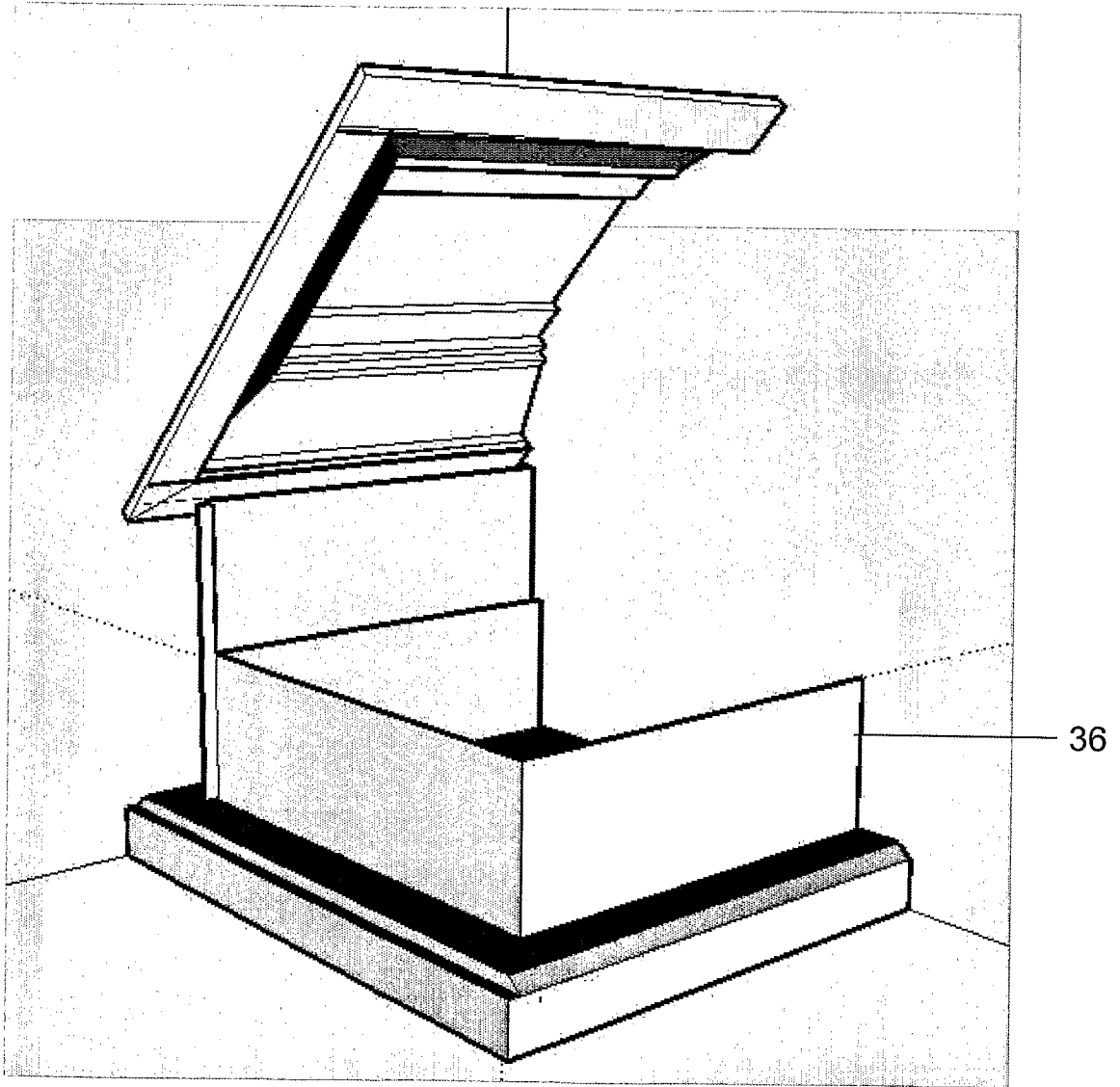


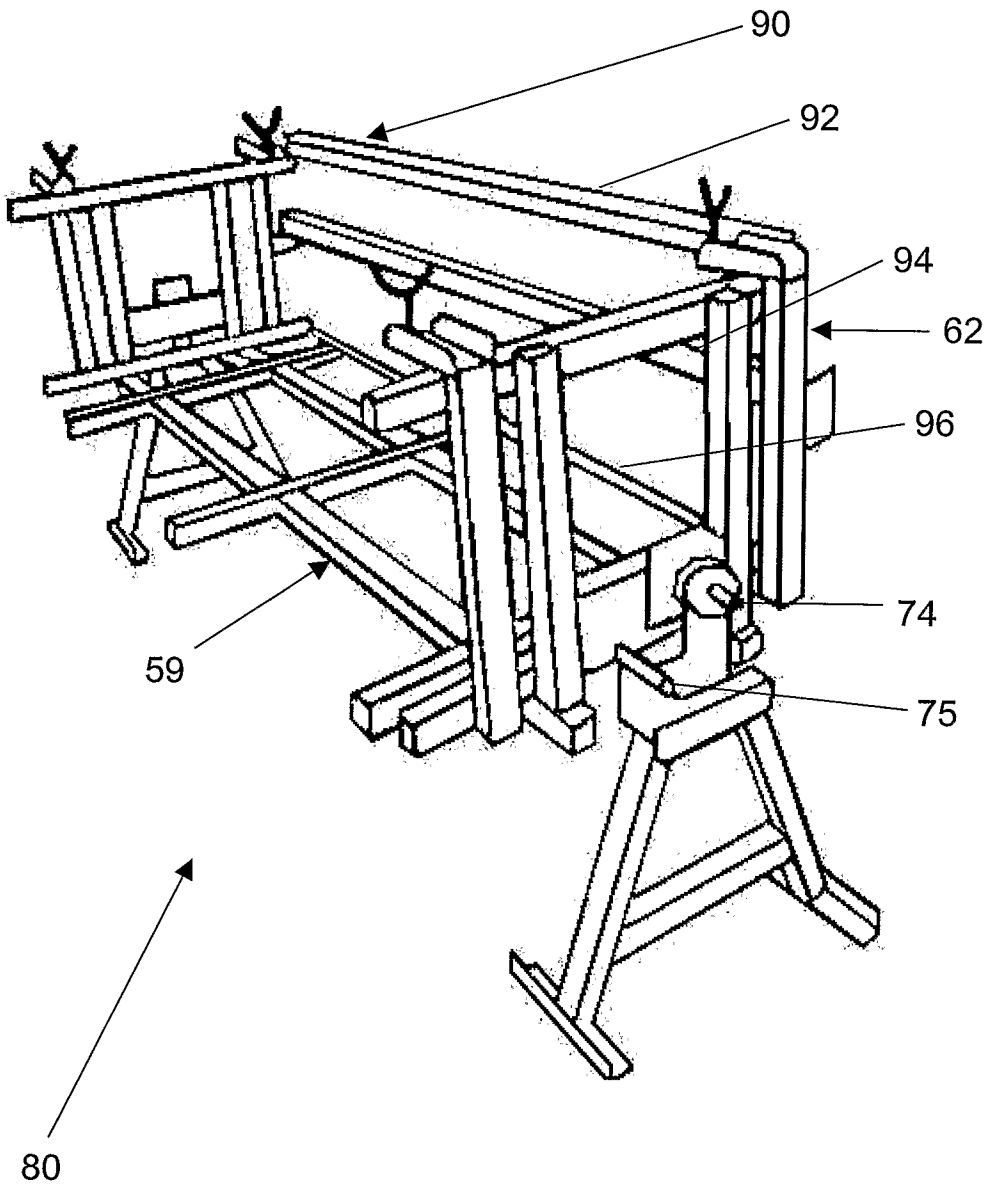
FIG 2



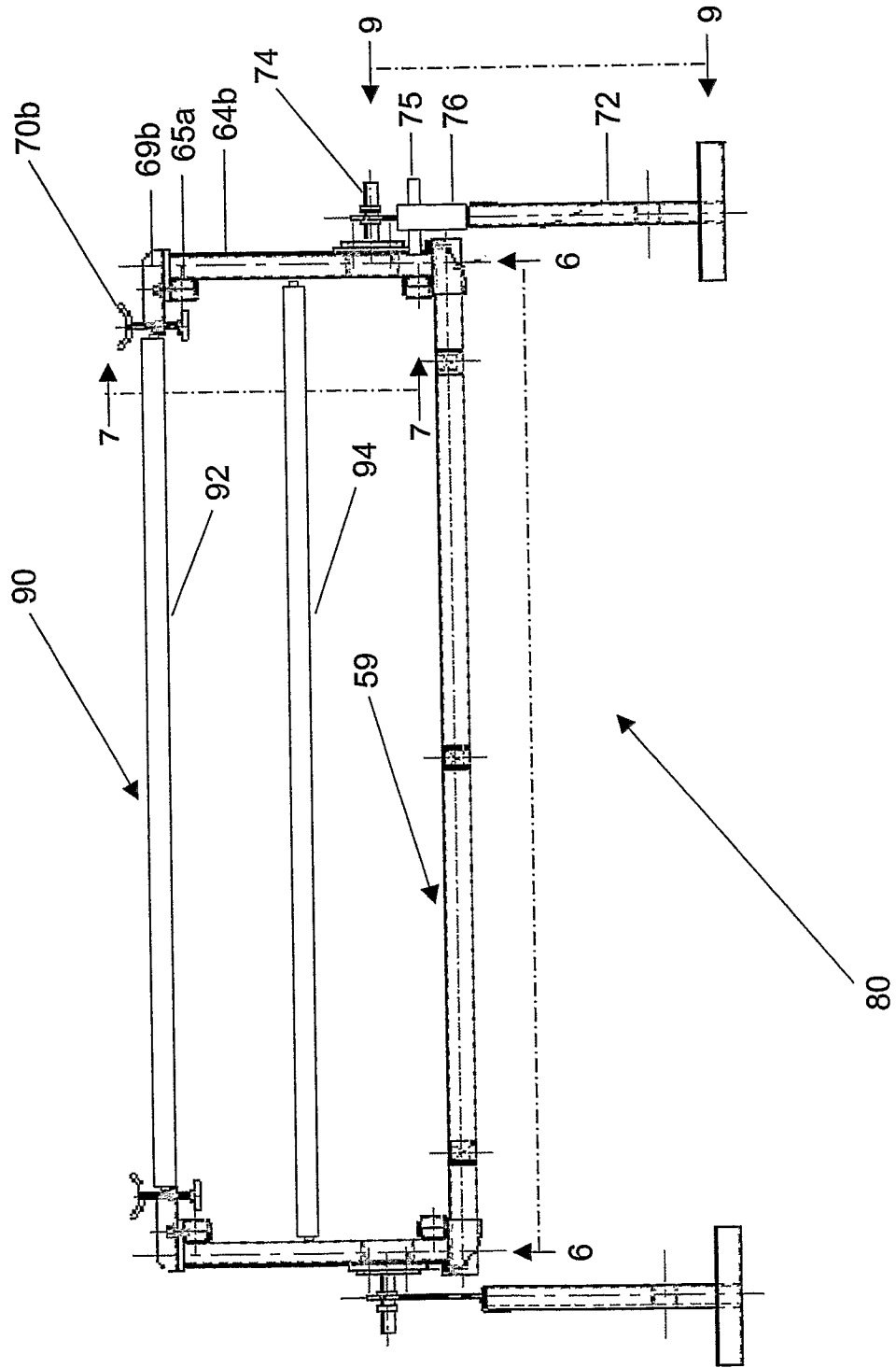
**FIG 3**



**FIG 4**



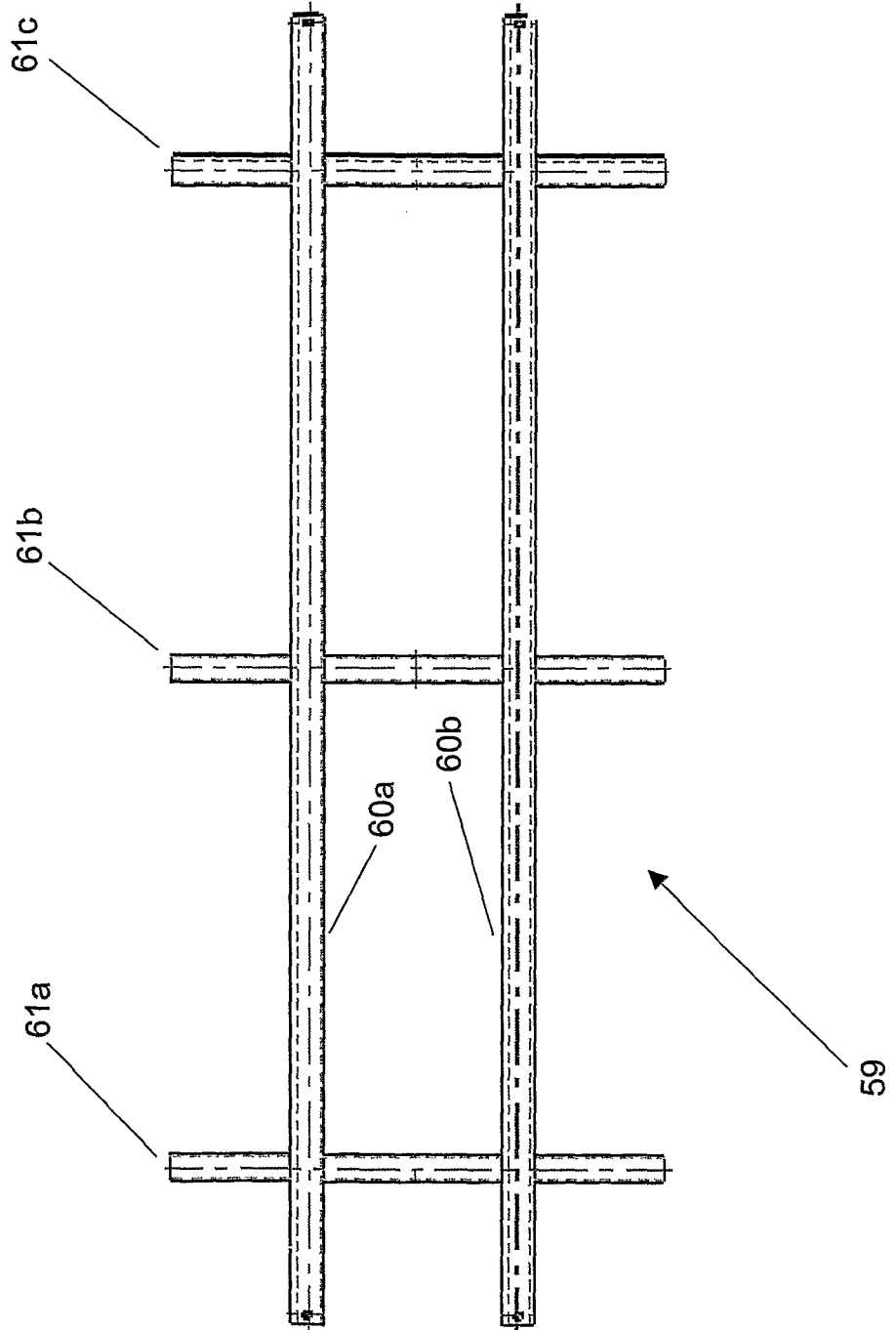
**FIG 5**



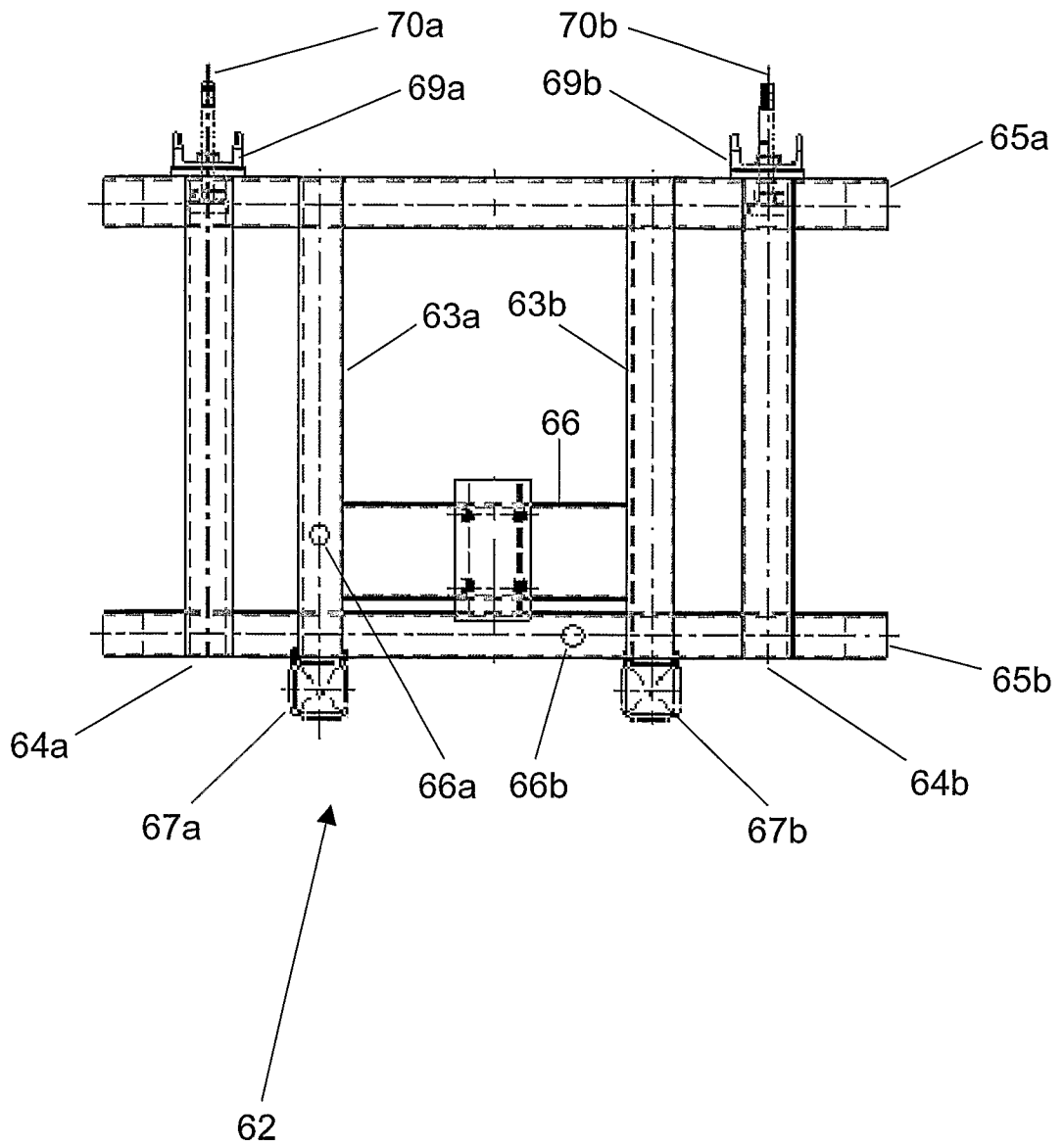


6/9

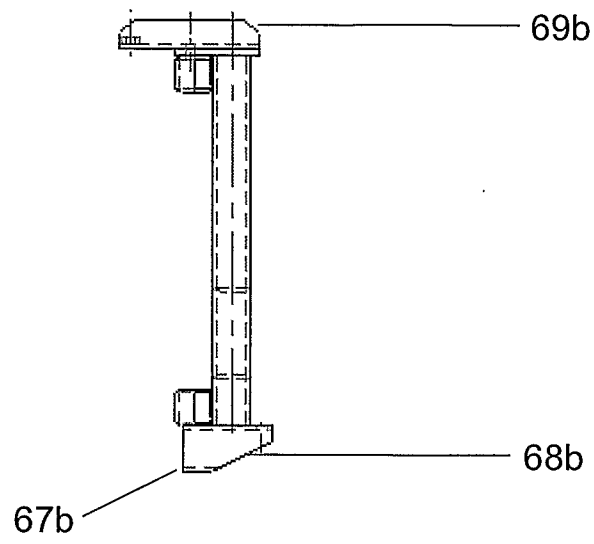
**FIG 6**



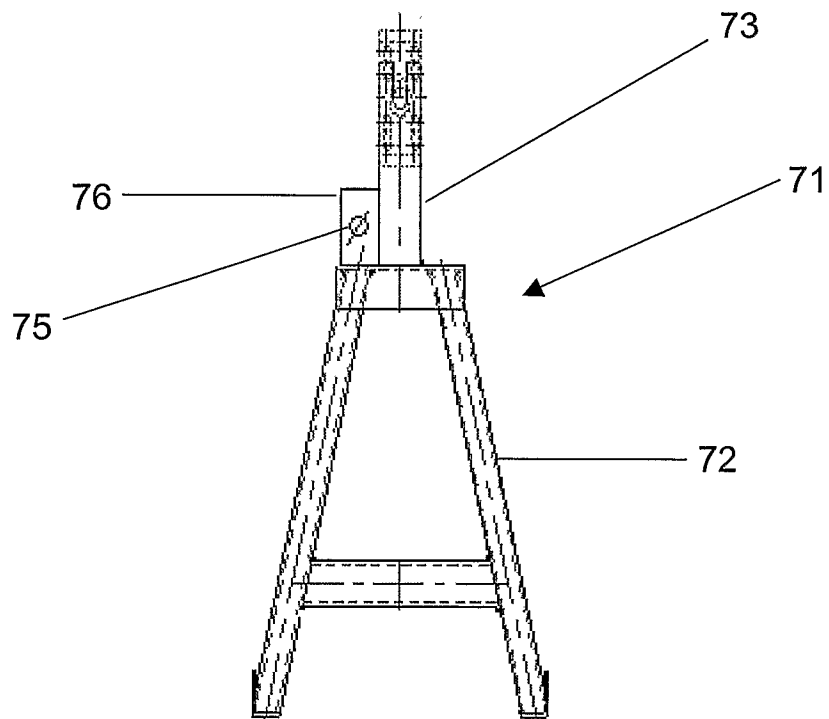
**FIG 7**



**FIG 8**



**FIG 9**



## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/SG2008/000384

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
Int. Cl.		
A61G 17/013 (2006.01)		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
WPI and IPC mark A61G 17/- and keywords: coffin and and similar terms.		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 6745442 B2 (BIONDO et al.) 8 June 2004 Column 10 lines 25 to 57 Column 7 lines 29 to 36	1 - 5
Y		6 - 9
Y	US 6018853 A (CHEN et al.) 1 February 2000 Column 2 line 40 to column 3 line 53	1 - 5
Y	DE 202005007729 U1 (SEECK) 2 November 2006 Figures 1 to 6	1 - 5
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex		
* Special categories of cited documents:		
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention	
"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date	"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone	
"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art	
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&" document member of the same patent family	
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		
Date of the actual completion of the international search 15 December 2008	Date of mailing of the international search report 24 DEC 2008	
Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaustrialia.gov.au Facsimile No. +61 2 6283 7999	Authorized officer DAVID MELHUISE AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE (ISO 9001 Quality Certified Service) Telephone No : +61 2 6283 2426	

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/SG2008/000384

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 3879818 A (ROWLAND) 29 April 1975 Figures 6 and 12	1 - 5
Y	US 5092020 A (MaGUIRE) 3 March 1992 Column 1 line 38 to column 2 line 37	1 - 5
Y	US 4800631 A (PELLMANN) 31 January 1989 Figures 2 and 3	6 - 9

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/SG2008/000384

**Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)**

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1.  Claims Nos.:  
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
  
2.  Claims Nos.:  
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
  
3.  Claims Nos.:  
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a)

**Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)**

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

See additional sheet.

1.  As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2.  As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying additional fees, this Authority did not invite payment of additional fees.
3.  As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
  
4.  No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:  
**1 to 9**

**Remark on Protest**

- The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest and, where applicable, the payment of a protest fee.
- The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest but the applicable protest fee was not paid within the time limit specified in the invitation.
- No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

**Supplemental Box**

(To be used when the space in any of Boxes I to IV is not sufficient)

**Continuation of Box No: III**

This International Application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention because it does not relate to one invention or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept.

In assessing whether there is more than one invention claimed, I have given consideration to those features which can be considered to potentially distinguish the claimed combination of features from the prior art. Where different claims have different distinguishing features they define different inventions.

This International Searching Authority has found that there are different inventions as follows:

- Claims 1 to 9 directed to a coffin kit comprising a base plate with grooves and sideboards that fit into the grooves, and corner brackets to connect the sideboards. It is considered that this combination of features comprises a first distinguishing feature.
- Claims 10 to 12 directed to a jig comprising frames for supporting a load and a rotating member to rotate the load on the jig. It is considered that this combination of features comprises a second distinguishing feature.

PCT Rule 13.2, first sentence, states that unity of invention is only fulfilled when there is a technical relationship among the claimed inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features. PCT Rule 13.2, second sentence, defines a special technical feature as a feature which makes a contribution over the prior art.

Each of the abovementioned groups of claims has a different distinguishing feature and they do not share any feature which could satisfy the requirement for being a special technical feature. Because there is no common special technical feature it follows that there is no technical relationship between the identified inventions. Therefore the claims do not satisfy the requirement of unity of invention *a priori*.



**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

International application No.

Information on patent family members

**PCT/SG2008/000384**

This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

Patent Document Cited in Search Report	Patent Family Member
US 6745442	US 6301758      US 2003029008      US 2005005410
US 6018853	NONE
DE 202005007729U	NONE
US 3879818	CA 984127
US 5092020	NONE
US 4800631	NONE

Due to data integration issues this family listing may not include 10 digit Australian applications filed since May 2001.

**END OF ANNEX**