

Case Study 23: Tungum History

Tungum® has been used in various decorative pieces in its history!

Early years of Tungum

For many years Tungum alloy has best been known for its strength and corrosion resistance in demanding applications. This has not always been the case!

Early records reveal that in the 10 years after the First World War a metallurgist was experimenting with a new copper-based alloy which he hoped would look like gold when polished and which would be durable in everyday use. In September 1930 Tungum Alloy Company Ltd was formed and 1st December 1933 Company number 282202 was registered.



The colour and finish of the metal made it very suitable for use in jewelry and other decorative applications. The handrails on the staircase in the Cumberland Hotel by Marble Arch in London were made from Tungum alloy and installed by the well-known Cheltenham Company of H.H. Martin. Cigarette cases were a popular line in the early years. The only modern application which has used Tungum tube for its cosmetic appearance is for the supply of highly polished formed tubes used as part of beer pumps in public houses!



Tungum alloy being a non-magnetic material has always been used on naval minesweepers. As an ancillary item on such vessels tool kits consisting of spanners, saws, scissors etc. were produced for the Royal Navy in wartime Britain.



The production of wire mesh from Tungum Alloy must have been a realistic commercial project. The use for which the mesh was sold is not totally clear.



Tungum used in sculpture



Bronze cast replica of the sculptured bust of the head of the King Edward VIII, HRH Duke of Windsor (1894-1972) by Clara Haas (b. New York City 1895) which had been cast in Tungum alloy and was presented to the Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, on his 80th birthday in 1954.

The sculpture is on show at Chartwell, Kent – the family home of Sir Winston Churchill, and is presented on a green marble plinth with presentation plaque.



'Museum of Tungum'

