PROPOSAL OF EXPOSITIONS AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO COINAGE FOR THE ROYAL SEGOVIA MINT

MAY 7, 2012

TEMPORARY EXPOSITIONS (3 YEARS*) ABOUT HISTORIC COINAGE, MINTS AND MINTING MACHINERY AND OPENING OF THE ROYAL SEGOVIA MINT LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE UPPER PATIO BUILDING

[* The Mint Museum project will not be developed immediately; it may take two, three or four years*.
-Pedro Arahuetes (mayor of Segovia), El Adelantado de Segovia, 13-01-2012]
The primary objective of the Association’s proposal is to immediately provide the first expositions at the Segovia Mint, related to coinage, the history of the building, minting technologies and other European mints, as an introduction, advance or preview to, as well as base for developing, the definitive and permanent contents of the future Royal Segovia Mint Museum. The Association already has the knowledge, materials and financing necessary to undertake this venture on its own, without having to rely on external sources. Following the example of other Museums and their associations, we propose to open the exposition, library and research center, as well as offer visits to the site, using our own volunteer base.

Why do we present this proposal now?

Shortly after the start up of the Mint’s restoration (Feb. 14, 2007) by Segovia City Hall, the Ministry of Development and the Assembly of Castile and Leon, the mayor of Segovia named a person of his confidence to supervise the building’s reconstruction and to design a new Museum Project. This new project would override the “General Museum Project”, drawn up by City Hall in 2004 and which served as a guide in the reconstruction of the buildings.

The new study, which took 3 years to produce, was finally handed over to the mayor on September 9, 2010 in a press conference (video YouTube: http://youtu.be/YQgE9I-WtKY), in which it was promised that “...the study will be presented to the press in October, and logically to all segovian citizens so that they can analyse, study or simply see it...”. “October” was repeated four times. This study was never made public nor has it been mentioned in the past year and a half. No public bidding was ever carried out among specialized companies to draw up a definitive budget for creating and installing the Museum, thus the entire project entered a technical deadlock.

In his reelection campaign, the mayor promised he would open the Mint Museum immediately after elections in May of 2012. Indeed, he declared the restoration project as being completed and officially received the keys to the building three days before elections. But the building still remains empty today.

In November of 2011, City Hall began negotiations with the IE University to offer them free usage of the Mint to expand their campus, blaming the “economic crisis” for the building being empty and conjuring up an urgent, but unreal need to fill the building with people, whatever be the usage. Converting the monument into a campus, would have gone against the founding principles of the Royal Segovia Mint Foundation (created in 2003 precisely to administer the building once restored). Thus, on December 19, 2011, the Foundation was dissolved.

Then, on January 13, 2012, the mayor announced that “the Mint Museum project will not be developed immediately; it may take two, three or four years”. The agreement with the IE University was signed on April 10, 2012, and took effect on May 1, giving the University usage of the upper patio level building at the Mint for a period of four years, free of rent.

Negotiations without transparency

The details of the negotiations which City Hall carried out with the IE University were not shared with the citizens of Segovia or with the opposition parties on the Municipal Council (PP and IU), and the approval of the agreement took place in the Government Commission where they have no vote. Apparently the idea was to hide the enviable terms -free rent- which may have attracted other proposals.
NO INTERNATIONAL CONTEST OR BIDDING FOR UNIQUE MONUMENT USAGE

It is deplorable that such a unique monument for all Humanity (the oldest industrial factory in the world for mechanized production) be converted into a university campus with no attempt whatsoever to look for other solutions related to the building itself and coinage in general, by way of an international call for ideas. The Association’s proposal in this booklet, unfortunately, is being made four weeks after the signing of the agreement between City Hall and the IE University, precisely because it was kept secret that the building was available and no public announcements were made for proposals.

VIOLATION OF THE LAW FOR FORCED EXPROPRIATION

The Mint building was expropriated from a private citizen (1988) and restored with public funding by three public administrations (2005) -City Hall, Assembly of Castile and Leon, and Ministry of Development- for the specific purpose of establishing a Museum of Minting Technology in the restored historic site, not for being handed over to a profit oriented, private university to convert into its campus. This action violates the Law of Forced Expropriation.

Glenn Stephen Murray Fantom
President, Friends of the Segovia Mint Association (Founded in 1993)
[European Union Grand Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award 2009]

The present proposal is compatible and complimentary in all aspects with our previous proposal of March 13, 2012, made to the Ministry of Culture, to have the restoration of the coins of the “Odyssey Treasure” be carried out as a live and working public display in the lower patio building (red) of the Segovia Mint. In any case, the lower patio building is reserved for the definitive Mint Museum displays, which the mayor has recently put on hold for up to four years, still has no budget allocation, and will require several years to create and install.

In this booklet we describe our proposed contents for the temporary exhibits or panel displays for the upper patio building (green), designed and intended as an introduction and basis for scientific collaborations for the creation of the definitive Museum displays.
The upper floor and attic levels of the upper patio building were designed and rebuilt as a space for the future ROYAL SEGOVIA MINT LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTER. The Association proposes to establish and open this center for investigations for numismatics, minting, monetary policy, and science and technology of historic industries in general. This usage figures in all the official project documents since 1988 and is the reason why these rooms are equipped with receptacles for lamps and internet connections (photos) for nearly 100 individual desks.

The Association has books and documentation on the specialized subject matters, mostly donated by members over the course of our 18 year history. Most donations were accompanied by requests that the materials given be made available to the public in the SEGOVIA MINT MUSEUM.

The Research Center will promote studies and collaborations related to the three proposed panel exhibits in an attempt to “internationalize” efforts for the creation of the future Museum.

The president of the Association, Dr. Glenn Murray, whose doctoral dissertation was on the history of the Segovia Mint, is the recipient of the European Union Grand Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award - 2009. He as worked 10 years cataloging historic documents on coinage, mints and monetary policy in the General Archive of Simancas, under a grant from the Spanish National Mint in Madrid. He is uniquely qualified to establish and manage the Library and Research Center in its initial phase.
EXPOSITION I: COINS STRUCK IN SEGOVIA

We already have all the photos and descriptions necessary.

In the old Mint foundry, we propose to set up a display consisting of panels showing and explaining all of the historic coins struck at both Segovia Mints, just as we have published in our latest book (above). Nothing is able to reflect the history of Segovia over the centuries as well as the coins which were produced here, but this needs to be explained and shown to people using didactic methods.

We already have the coining press and have used it for over six years. People love to strike their own coin!

In this same room, we will let visitors strike their own coin on our hammer press, built at the Hall in Tirol Mint (Austria), the same Mint which produced the first machines for the Segovia Mint in 1584. We have already struck over 10,000 coins of different types, some via contracts with City Halls (Segovia, Sepulveda and Cuellar), schools (CEIP Peñascal) and for charity benefits (CARITAS and APADEFIM). Our main goal is to have people participate so they can learn about the historic and present day importance of the coining industry in our city. This is one of the most important, and always foreseen activities to be established at the restored Segovia Mint.
EXPOSITION II: COINING TECHNOLOGY

We already have thousands of photographs of minting machines never before published, guaranteeing that this exposition will be unique in all the world.

The Association has been carrying out investigations for years now in museums and mints around Europe to gather images and data regarding all types of old minting machines, tools and coining dies. The vast majority of these items are stored in the warehouses and basements of museums, and are not on display for the general public. Most are unknown even to experts on the subject and have never before been published. This exposition would be the perfect preview or advance introduction to the future Museum contents and serve as a focus of technical and scientific debate and collaboration for its creation.

Book by Glenn Murray, published by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Segovia in 2009, in which explains in detail why the Segovia Mint is the “oldest, most advanced and complete industrial factory remaining anywhere in the world today”, with ample chapters dedicated to all types of minting machines.
EXPOSITION III:
HISTORY OF THE SEGOVIA AND EUROPEAN MINTS

The history of the Royal Segovia Mint is closely linked with that of other European and world mints. In this panel display we will explain the history of the two Segovia mints and show interesting photographs of other European Mints. We will transport visitors to their places of origin, be it one of the 18 cities in Spain or hundreds of other European cities which had mints.

We already have hundreds of photographs of other mints, gathered by our team under the auspices of TICCIH (The International Commission for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage) where the Association heads up the section on historic world mints.
BUDGET:
For the Library and Research Center:

-We already have most of the materials necessary, including an important collection of specialized publications, computers, bookstands and other basic start up materials.

For the three panel expositions:

-We already have all the graphic material and texts necessary, as well as computers, programs and in house experts to do all of the layouts.
The only foreseen expense is the printing of the panels and their support stands, which would be approximately the following:

3 expositions
X 25 panels each exposition
= 75 panels at 200 euro = **15,000 euro**

Author: Glenn Murray [European Union Grand Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award 2009].

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