

The Royal Funeral chariots

The Royal chariot is built in honor of the King. It is specified as part of the royal coronation ceremony that the chief of the military will present the royal chariot named 'Pra Maha Pichai Ratcharot' to the new King. The shelter housing the Pra Maha Pichai Ratcharot was originally located on the grounds of royal grand palace. Evidence in the form of old documents containing a map of Ayutdhaya shows the existence of the shelter for the Maha Pichai Ratcharot the remains of the foundation can still be seen today. Although there is no evidence showing the location of the shelter during the beginning of the Bangkok period. It's guessed that it was located near the Rajvaradit Pier, west of the royal grand palace. In 1887 during the time of King Chulalongkorn the little prince of palace to the front or prince of Wang na, was abolished and the Wang na palace was abandoned. This palace today is part of the national museum Bangkok. In 1897, a structure was built to house the Maha Pichai Ratcharot on the ground of Wang na, and it can be assumed that the chariot was moved from the grand palace to Wang na at that time.

I. Pra Maha Pichai Ratcharot (The royal 'Great Victory' chariot)

Built in 1795 during the reign of King Rama I (1782-1809) to carry the King's father's royal cinerary urn to the royal crematorium (Phra Merumas) at Phra Meru Ground, or Sanam Luang as it is known today in 1776. This chariot was used for every King's funeral. It was most recently used for the royal cremation of Her Royal Highness the Princess mother at Sanam Luang in 1996.

II. Pra Vechayant Ratcharot

Built in 1799 four years after the construction of Pra Maha Pichai Ratcharot, for carrying the royal urn of Prince of Srisudarak, elder sister of King Ramal. It was originally named 'Vechaiyant Ratcharot' then renamed 'Vechayant Ratcharot' when used in the royal funeral of Princess of Sri Ratana Kosindra in 1923. The Vechayant Ratcharot was traditionally planned for the royal funeral of the prince or princess of the 'Som Det Chaofa' rank. However, it was used for royal funeral of King Rama VI, and took the name 'Maha Pichai Ratcharot', because the original chariot of name was the in need of repair, and not available for royal service. Since then it was used for the royal funeral by that name many times, most recently for the late Queen Rambhai Barni of King Rama VII in 1985.

III. Ratcharot Noi (3 Lesser Royal chariot)

Simultaneously built with Phra Maha Pichai Ratcharot for royal funeral of King Ramal's father in 1796. The leading chariot carried a venerated senior monk who read Abhidharm scripture. The second one carried King Ramal who held a white cord attached to the urn of his late father. The third chariot carried the King's younger brother, Maha Uparaja Surasinghanad, who threw flowers while proceeding to the crematorium.

IV. The Royal urn

The Royal urn is composed of two interlocking parts; the inner part is made of plain metal while the outer part made of richly decorated wood.

V. The sandalwood Urn of Her Royal Highness the Princess Mother

The Royal Urn is made of sandalwood connoting its royal status. It took the Fine Arts Department 3 months to complete the construction.

VI. Model of Royal Crematorium of King RamaVI

This is a model of the crematorium designed by Prince Narit specially constructed for the royal funeral of King RamaVI in 1925. It was commissioned by Rear Admiral Somphob Piromya R.N., The Director General of Fine Arts Department.

'Pictures'

I. Pra Maha Pichai Ratcharot



II. Pra Vechayant Ratcharot



III. Ratcharot Noi



IV. The Royal Urn



V. The sandalwood Urn of Her Royal Highness the Princess Mother



VI. Model of Royal Crematorium of King Rama VI

