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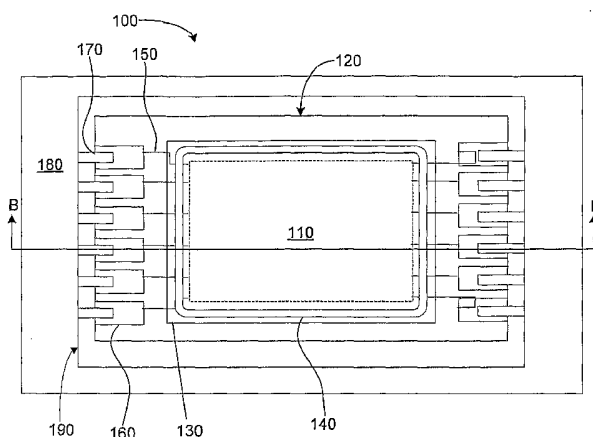
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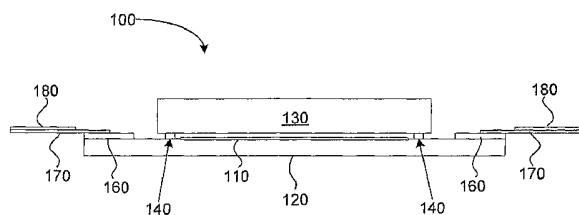
(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: ASSEMBLY



A



B

(57) Abstract: A micro-electromechanical assembly (15, 100) including a substrate (35, 120), a micro-electromechanical device (30, 110) coupled to the substrate (35, 120); a seal ring (140) formed on the substrate (35, 120); and a plurality of bonding pads (40, 160) formed on the substrate (35, 120), wherein the seal ring (140) and bonding pads (40, 160) are formed of the same material.



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Declarations under Rule 4.17:

- *as to the identity of the inventor (Rule 4.17(i))*
- *as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii))*
- *as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii))*

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MEMS ASSEMBLY WITH SEAL RING AND BONDING PAD

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] The present application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) from the following previously-filed Provisional Patent Application, U.S. Application No. 60/620,529, filed October 19, 2004 by David M. Craig et al., entitled "Assembly".

BACKGROUND

[0002] Electrical connections to integrated circuits and micro-electromechanical (MEMS) devices are often made through aluminum pads. In particular, gold wires frequently extend from the MEMS devices and are coupled to external circuits via aluminum pads. Connecting gold wires directly to aluminum pads is typically achieved by the use of wire bonding and/or the application of thermosonic energy to attach the wires. This thermosonic energy may be harmful to some fragile MEMS devices. Further, aluminum pads may be subject to corrosion in certain environments, which can cause early device failure.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0003] The accompanying drawings illustrate various embodiments of the present apparatus and method and are a part of the specification. The illustrated embodiments are merely examples of the present apparatus and method and do not limit the scope of the disclosure.

[0004] Fig. 1 is a schematic of an electronic device according to one exemplary embodiment.

[0005] Fig. 2A illustrates a top view of a micro-electromechanical system according to one exemplary embodiment.

[0006] Fig. 2B illustrates a cross sectional view of the micro-electromechanical system shown in Fig. 2A taken along section B-B, according to an example embodiment.

[0007] Fig. 3A illustrates a top view of a micro-electromechanical device according to one exemplary embodiment.

[0008] Fig. 3B illustrates a cross sectional view of the micro-electromechanical device on a substrate of Fig. 3A taken along section C-C, according to an example embodiment.

[0009] Fig. 4A illustrates a top view of seal ring and bonding pads formed of the same material on the substrate according to one exemplary embodiment.

[0010] Fig. 4B illustrates a cross sectional view of the seal ring and bonding pads of Fig. 4A taken along section D-D, according to an example embodiment.

[0011] Fig. 5A illustrates a top view of a glass lid placed over a micro-electromechanical device according to one exemplary embodiment.

[0012] Fig. 5B illustrates a cross sectional view of the glass lid placed over the micro-electromechanical device of Fig. 5A taken along section E-E, according to an example embodiment.

[0013] Throughout the drawings, identical reference numbers designate similar, but not necessarily identical, elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0014] A system and method are provided herein for forming a seal ring and bonding pads of substantially the same material on a substrate at substantially the same time. The seal ring is used to couple a glass lid or cover to the substrate while the bonding pads may be used to couple device leads to circuit leads.

[0015] As used in the present specification and the appended claims, the term "hermetic seal" is meant to be understood as any seal that is substantially impervious to moisture and gases. A "photo resist" is meant to be understood as any photo-active polymer or material that may become more or less soluble in a particular solvent due to a physical or chemical change after exposure to light, electromagnetic radiation, or high energy particle beams. "Exposure" is meant to be understood as a process in which photo resist is selectively subjected to light or electromagnetic radiation or a particle beam and subsequently experiences a physical or chemical change. The term "develop" is meant to be understood as a process in which a solvent or developer is introduced to a previously exposed photo resist in order to remove a portion of the photo resist. The term "developer" is meant to denote a solution in which a previously exposed photo resist may be developed.

[0016] In the following description, for purposes of explanation, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding of the present method and apparatus. It will be apparent, however, to one skilled in the art, that the present method and apparatus may be practiced without these specific details. Reference in the specification to "one embodiment" or "an embodiment" means that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment. The appearance of the phrase "in one embodiment" in various places in the specification are not necessarily all referring to the same embodiment.

General Electronic Device with a Micro-Electromechanical System

Assembly

[0017] Fig. 1 illustrates an electronic device (10) that includes a system assembly, such as a micro-electro mechanical system assembly (MEMS assembly) (15), coupled to a circuit (20). The circuit (20) is in turn coupled to a controller (25). The controller (25) selectively sends electrical signals to the circuit (20), which in turn conveys the signals to the MEMS assembly (15). In particular, according to one exemplary embodiment, the MEMS assembly (15) includes a MEMS device (30) that is coupled to the circuit (20). The MEMS device (30) is operated in response to the signals conveyed thereto by the controller (25) by way of the circuit (20). In other embodiments, the MEMS device (30) may be replaced by a suitable integrated circuit or other semiconductor device.

[0018] The circuit (20) and controller (25) shown are each coupled to a single MEMS assembly (15). However, any suitable number of circuits, MEMS assemblies, and/or controllers may similarly be used in the electronic device (10). For ease of explanation, a tape automated bonding (TAB) circuit will be referenced throughout the detailed description. A TAB circuit includes TAB circuit leads that are patterned on a multilayer polymer tape. The tape is positioned above the MEMS assembly (15) so that the metal tracks (on the polymer tape) correspond to and are aligned with the bonding pads (40) on the MEMS assembly (15).

[0019] As shown in Fig. 1, the MEMS device (30) is coupled to a substrate (35). The substrate (35) has a hermetically sealed cover (42) coupled thereto that covers the MEMS device (30) to protect the MEMS device from damage or contamination and/or to maintain the desired operating environment. The MEMS assembly (15) also includes a plurality of bonding pads (40). The bonding pads (40) couple the MEMS device (30) to the circuit (20) and consequently to the controller (25). More specifically, a plurality of MEMS leads (45) extend from the MEMS device (30) and to the bonding pads (40). Additionally, a plurality of circuit leads (50) are coupled to the bonding pads

(40). As a result, electrical connections are formed between the circuit (20) and the MEMS device (30) through the MEMS leads (45) and the circuit leads (50).

[0020] The seal used to connect substrate (35) to the cover (42) is formed of substantially the same material as the bonding pads (40), and in the exemplary methods discussed below, may be formed with the same process steps and masks. This configuration may allow for thermocompression bonding between the MEMS leads (45) and the circuit leads (50) through the bonding pads (40). Further, the circuit (20) used may be a tape-automated bonding (TAB) circuit. A TAB circuit can be gang bonded such that all the electrical connections are made in one step. Exemplary embodiments will now be discussed with reference to Figs. 2A-5B.

Exemplary Micro-Electro Mechanical Assembly

[0021] Figs. 2A-2B illustrate an exemplary MEMS assembly (100) in further detail. In particular, Fig. 2A shows a top view of the MEMS assembly (100) and Fig. 2B shows a cross sectional view of the MEMS assembly (100) taken along section B-B. The MEMS assembly (100) includes a micro-electromechanical device (MEMS device) (110) supported by a substrate (120).

In some embodiments, the MEMS device (110) may be replaced by, a suitable integrated circuit or semiconductor device. The MEMS device (110) is covered by a glass lid (130), or other suitable material capable of withstanding the AuSn soldering temperatures, and/or performing other useful functions for the MEMS devices or package. Further, the MEMS device (110) is hermetically sealed with a seal ring (140). MEMS leads (150) extend from the MEMS device (110), below the seal ring (140), and to bonding pads (160). The bonding pads (160) are in turn coupled to circuit leads (170) that couple the bonding pads (160) to a circuit (180). As shown in Fig. 2, the circuit leads (170) extend from the bonding pads (160), across a gap between the MEMS device (110) and the circuit (180) to the edge (190) of the circuit (180).

[0022] The MEMS device (110) includes any suitable micro-electromechanical device that may be constructed on a substrate such as a semiconductor, like silicon or other material and which may be fabricated using

integrated circuit (IC) batch-processing techniques or other micro-processing techniques. These techniques may include the deposition of a layer of material, placing a photo-resist pattern on the layer of material, and subsequently exposing and developing the exposed layer to selectively etch the exposed material. Further, MEMS devices are not limited to single devices formed on a substrate, but may include several devices formed on a substrate. Such MEMS devices may be broadly classified as sensors, actuators, light modulators, printheads, a combination of these, or added circuitry for processing or control.

[0023] The MEMS device (110) shown is formed directly on a lower substrate (120), but can also be formed by the combination of features defined on the substrate (120) and a lid (130), which may also serve as an upper substrate. The substrate (120) provides a stable platform for supporting the MEMS device (110). Further, the substrate (120) provides a stable platform for bonding the MEMS device (110) to the circuit (180). In particular, the substrate (120) may be formed of a thermally stable material that is able to withstand high temperature ranges and that is a good electrical insulator. An exemplary substrate material includes, without limitation, a silicon wafer.

[0024] The MEMS assembly (100) shown has a glass lid (130) coupled thereto. In particular, the glass lid (130) is hermetically sealed to the substrate (120) by way of the seal ring (140). The MEMS device (110) is thus contained within an enclosure formed by the substrate (120), the glass lid (130), and the seal ring (140). This configuration helps protect the MEMS device (110) from damage and/or contamination and further allows the operating environment within the enclosure to be at least partially controlled and maintained. In particular, the glass lid (130) protects the MEMS device (110) from contact with other objects. Further, the enclosure is hermetically sealed by the seal ring (140) to maintain whatever environment may be desired for the MEMS device to operate, such as an inert gas.

[0025] The seal ring (140) may be formed of any material suitable for hermetically sealing the glass lid (130). One exemplary material includes, without limitation, 80 Au/20 Sn solder. This solder may be a eutectic solder, such that the Au and the Sn are combined in such proportions that the resulting

solder has the lowest melting point associated with combining the two metals. The use of a eutectic solder, with its correspondingly low melting point, melts with less heat. As a result, the use of a eutectic solder may help to minimize the possibility that the MEMS device (110) will be damaged due to thermal effects when the glass lid (130) is sealed.

[0026] As mentioned previously, the same material used to form the seal ring (140) may be used to form the bonding pads (160). For example, if 80 Au/20 Sn solder is used to form the seal ring (140), 80 Au/20 Sn solder is used to form the bonding pads (160). This type of solder bonding pad (160) reliably couples the MEMS leads (150) to the circuit leads (170).

[0027] The MEMS leads (150) are then bonded to MEMS leads (150) by way of the 80 Au/20 Sn solder bonding pads. The MEMS leads (150) may be made of any suitable material including, without limitation, aluminum wires. A conductive material such as titanium or tantalum may be deposited and patterned over the aluminum at the bond pad end of the wire to provide a diffusion barrier between the aluminum and the 80 Au/20 Sn solder. Further, the circuit leads (170) may be made of any suitable material including, without limitation, gold plated copper material. These leads are bonded together at the bonding pads (160). Further, the seal ring (140) and the bonding pads (160) may be formed in the same process.

[0028] The electrical connections made to the MEMS device (110) are illustrated as being laid out in a specific configuration, though they may exit the MEMS package in any of a number of configurations (not shown), and later be used to allow electrical signals to enter and exit the MEMS device (110). One exemplary method of forming the MEMS assembly (100) will now be discussed in more detail.

Method of Forming a MEMS Assembly and Coupling the Assembly to a Circuit

[0029] Figs. 3A-5B illustrate an exemplary method of forming a MEMS assembly (100; Fig. 2A-2B). As shown in Fig. 3A-3B, the method begins by forming a MEMS device (110) on a substrate (120). According to one

exemplary embodiment, the MEMS device (110) is formed by selectively depositing layers of semiconductor and/or insulating layers, applying photoresist patterns to the layers, exposing the uncovered portions, and then developing the exposed portions to etch to a desired depth through the layers. Further, while one assembly is shown, any number of MEMS assemblies (100) may be formed simultaneously through the use of a larger substrate. An exemplary substrate material includes, without limitation, silicon or silicon wafers.

[0030] The formation of the MEMS device (100) may include the formation of MEMS leads (150) formed on the substrate that extend from the MEMS device (110). The MEMS leads (150) may be formed of any suitable material. One exemplary MEMS leads material includes, without limitation, aluminum. The MEMS leads (150) may have subsequent layers of insulating materials deposited thereon such that a portion of the MEMS leads (150) are covered while leaving the ends distant from the MEMS device (110) exposed. The exposed ends may be covered by a conductive material, such as titanium or tantalum, which provides a diffusion barrier between the aluminum wire and the final bond pad material.

[0031] As shown in Figs. 4A-4B, after the MEMS device (110) is formed, including the MEMS leads (150), a layer of material is applied that is suitable for forming both the seal ring (140) and the bonding pads (160). One such material includes, without limitation, 80 Au/20 Sn eutectic solder. Thereafter, the layer of solder is patterned to form the seal ring (140) and the bonding pads (160). Accordingly, the seal ring (140) and the bonding pads (160) are formed at substantially the same time.

[0032] As shown in Figs. 4A-4B, the bonding pads (160) are formed such that the bonding pads (160) are in contact with one end of the MEMS leads (150). The seal ring (140) is formed on top of an insulating layer, such that the seal ring (140) is not in direct contact with the MEMS leads (150). As a result, the seal ring (140) is electrically insulated from the MEMS leads (150).

[0033] Figs. 5A-5B illustrate the glass lid (130) coupled to the seal ring (140). This coupling may be achieved by placing the glass lid (130) in contact with the seal ring (140), and then applying heat and/or pressure to cause the

material of the seal ring (140) to flow. Upon cooling, the seal ring (140) solidifies, thereby forming a hermetic seal between the glass lid (130) and the substrate (120). As a result, the MEMS device (110) is protected from physical shock and contamination and is contained within the proper operating environment.

[0034] Referring once again to Figs. 2A-2B, once the glass lid (130) has been attached, the MEMS assembly (100) may then be coupled to a circuit (180) by way of the circuit leads (170). In particular, the circuit leads (170) are aligned with respect to the bond pads (160). Thereafter, the circuit leads may be gang bonded, such that all the electrical connections are established at substantially the same time, resulting in the MEMS assembly (100) shown in Figs. 2A-2B.

[0035] The preceding description has been presented only to illustrate and describe the present method and apparatus. It is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the disclosure to any precise form. Many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching. It is intended that the scope of the disclosure be defined by the following claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

CLAIMS

1. A micro-electromechanical assembly (15, 100), comprising:
a substrate (35, 120);
a micro-electromechanical device (30, 110) coupled to said substrate (35, 120);
a seal ring (140) formed on said substrate (35, 120); and
a plurality of bonding pads (40, 160) formed on said substrate (35, 120),
wherein said seal ring (140) and bonding pads (40, 160) are formed of the same material.
2. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said material comprises solder.
3. The assembly of claim 2, wherein said material comprises AuSn solder.
4. The assembly of claim 3, wherein said AuSn solder comprises 80 Au/20 Sn eutectic solder.
5. The assembly of claim 1, and further comprising a cover (42) covering said micro-electromechanical device (30, 110), said cover (42) being hermetically sealed to said substrate (35, 120) by said seal ring (140).
6. The assembly of claim 5, wherein said cover (42) comprises a glass lid (130).
7. The assembly of claim 1, and further comprising leads (45, 50, 150, 170) extending between said micro-electromechanical device (30, 110) and said bonding pads (40, 160).
8. The assembly of claim 7, wherein said leads (45, 150) comprise aluminum wires having titanium deposited on at least a portion thereof.

9. An electronic device (10), comprising:
a MEMS assembly (15, 100) having bonding pads (40, 160) and a seal ring (140) formed of substantially the same material;
a circuit (20, 180) having circuit leads (50, 170) coupled to said bonding pads (40, 160); and
a controller (25) coupled to said circuit (20, 180).
10. The device of claim 9, wherein said circuit (20, 180) comprises a tape-automated bond circuit.
11. The device of claim 9, wherein said circuit leads (50, 170) comprise copper leads.
12. The device of claim 9, wherein said circuit leads (50, 170) comprise gold plated copper leads.
13. A method of forming a micro-electromechanical system assembly (15, 100), comprising:
coupling a micro-electromechanical device (30, 110) to a substrate (35, 120);
and
forming a seal ring (140) and a plurality of bonding pads (40, 160) on said substrate (35, 120) of substantially the same material.
14. The method of claim 13, and wherein said steps of forming said seal ring (140) and said plurality of bonding pads (40, 160) comprises occur at substantially the same time.
15. The method of claim 13, and further comprising coupling a cover (42) to said seal ring (140).

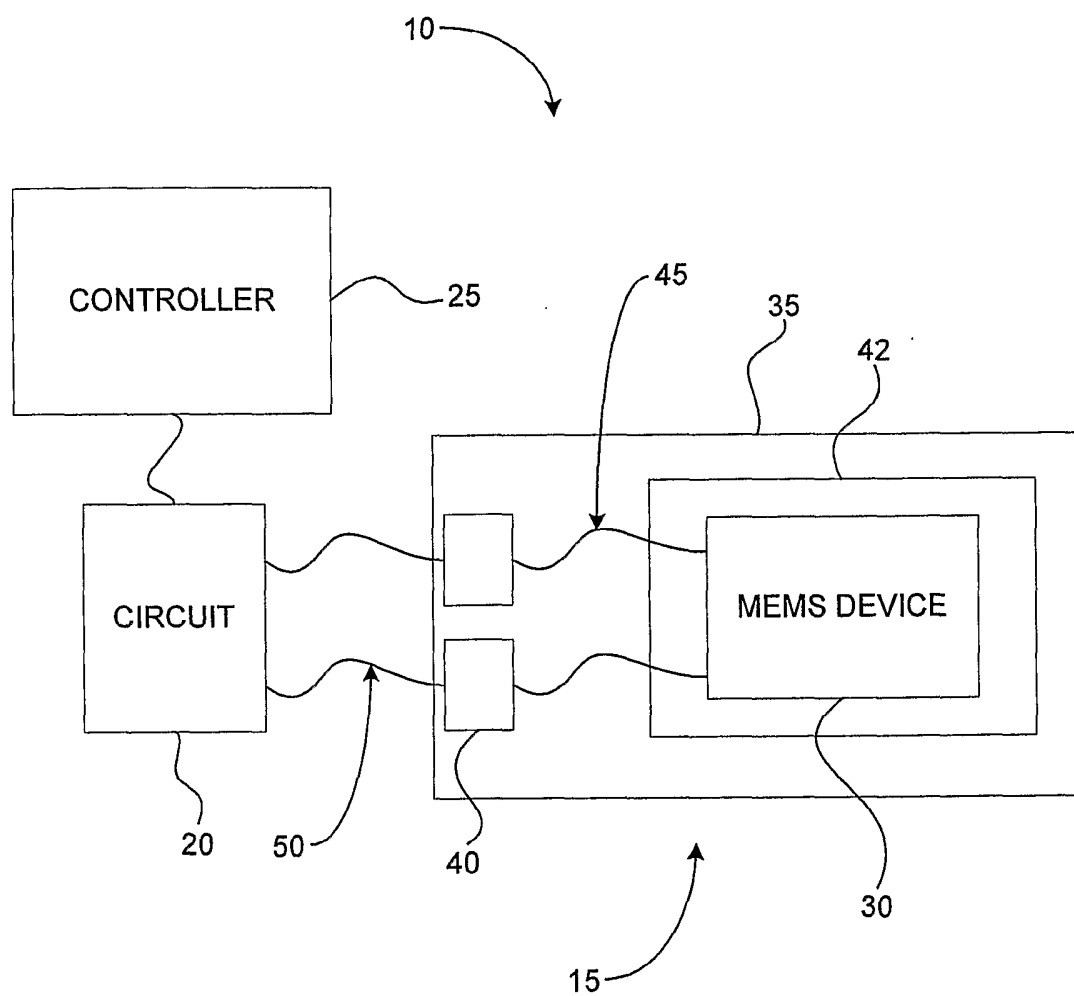
16. The method of claim 15, wherein coupling said cover (42) to said seal ring (140) comprises applying heat.

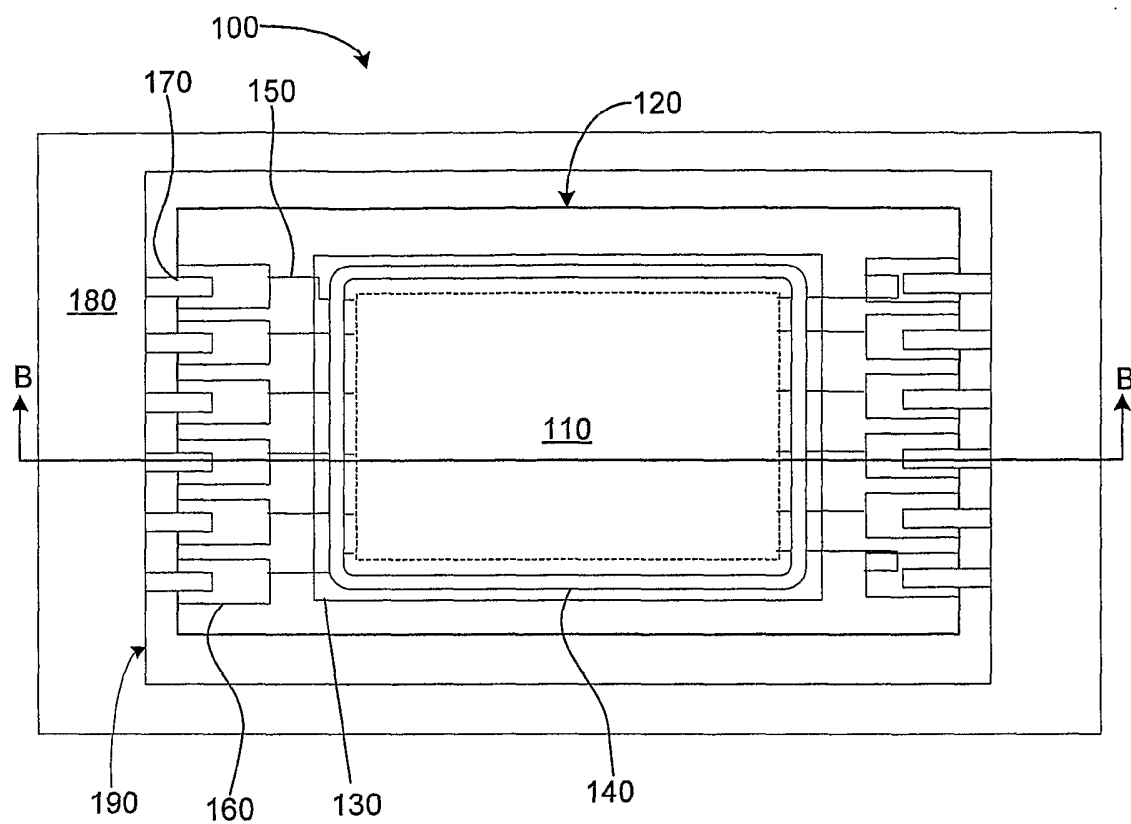
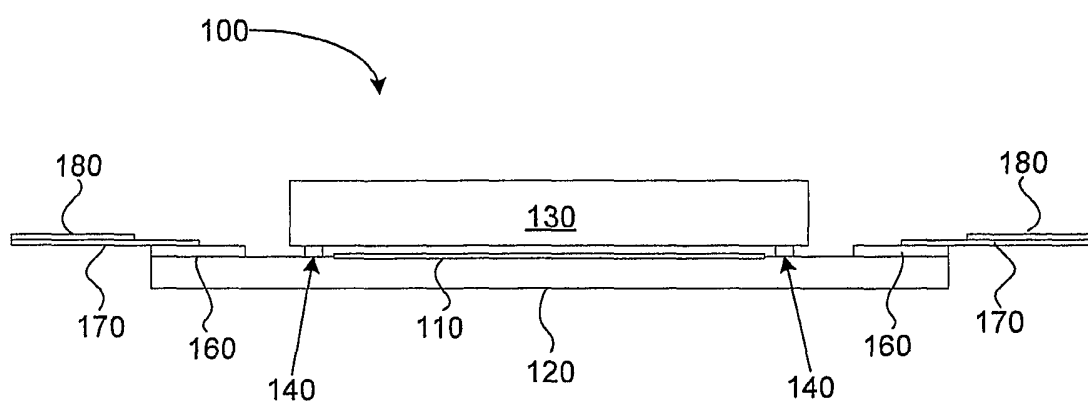
17. The method of claim 13, wherein forming said seal ring (140) and bonding pads (40, 160) comprises forming solder patterns.

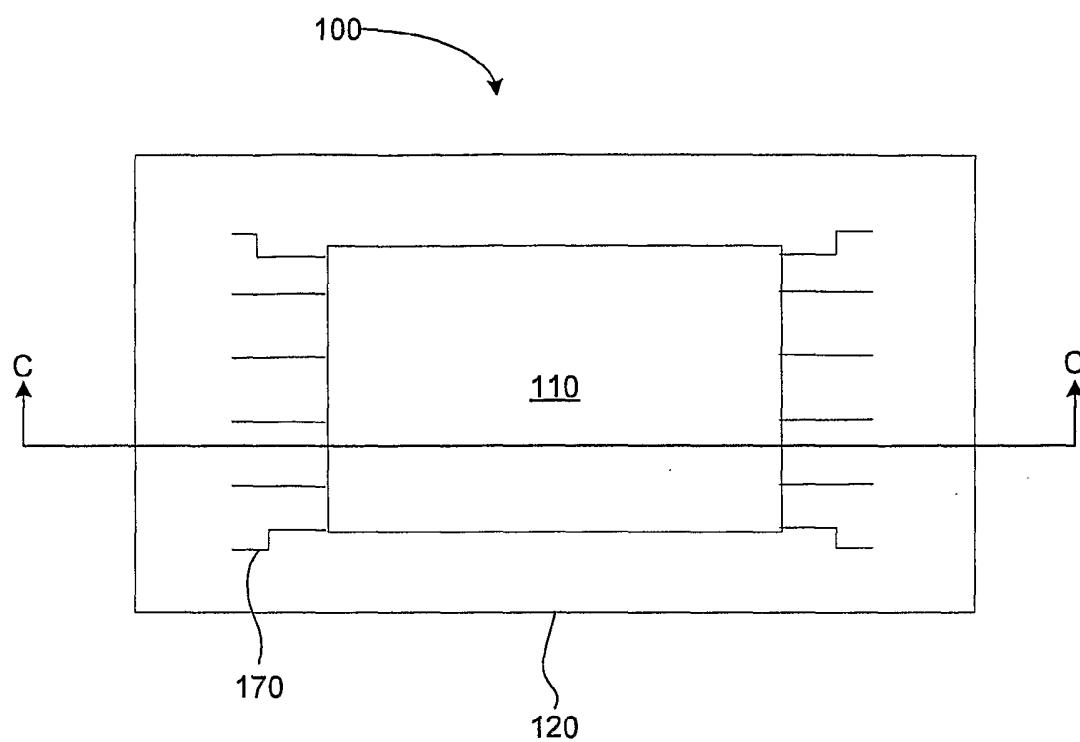
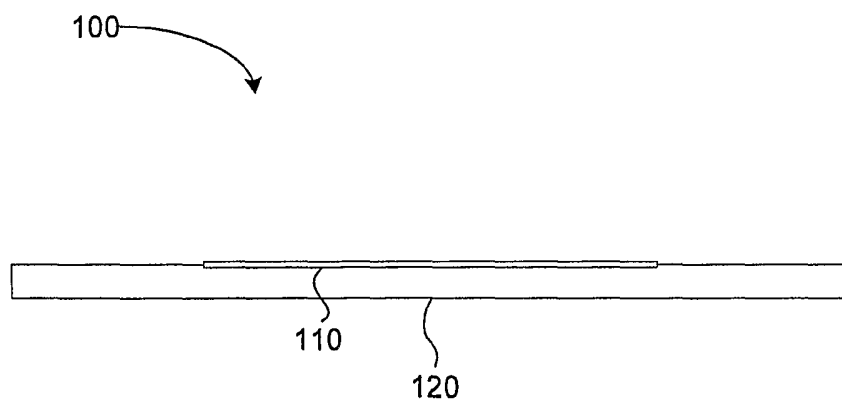
18. The method of claim 13, and further comprising coupling circuit leads (50, 170) to said bonding pads (40, 160).

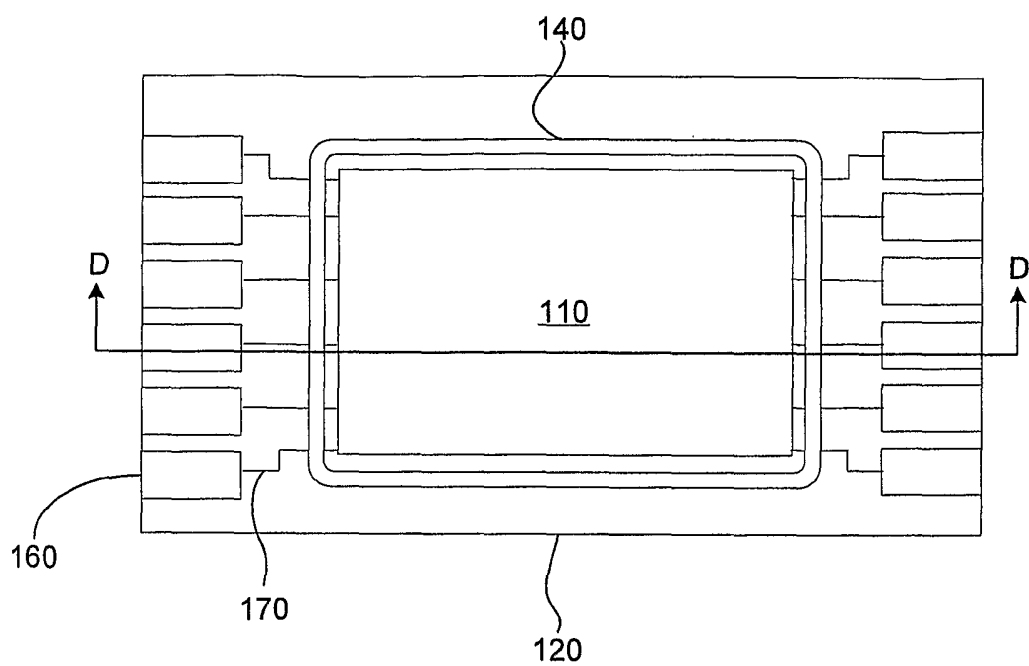
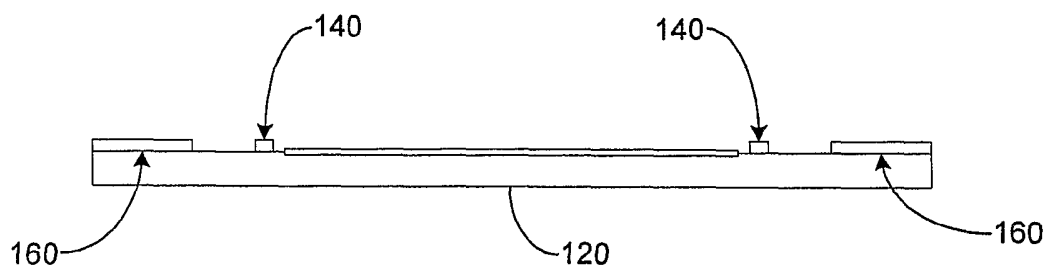
19. The method of claim 18, wherein coupling said circuit leads (50, 170) to said bonding pads (40, 160) comprises thermocompression bonding.

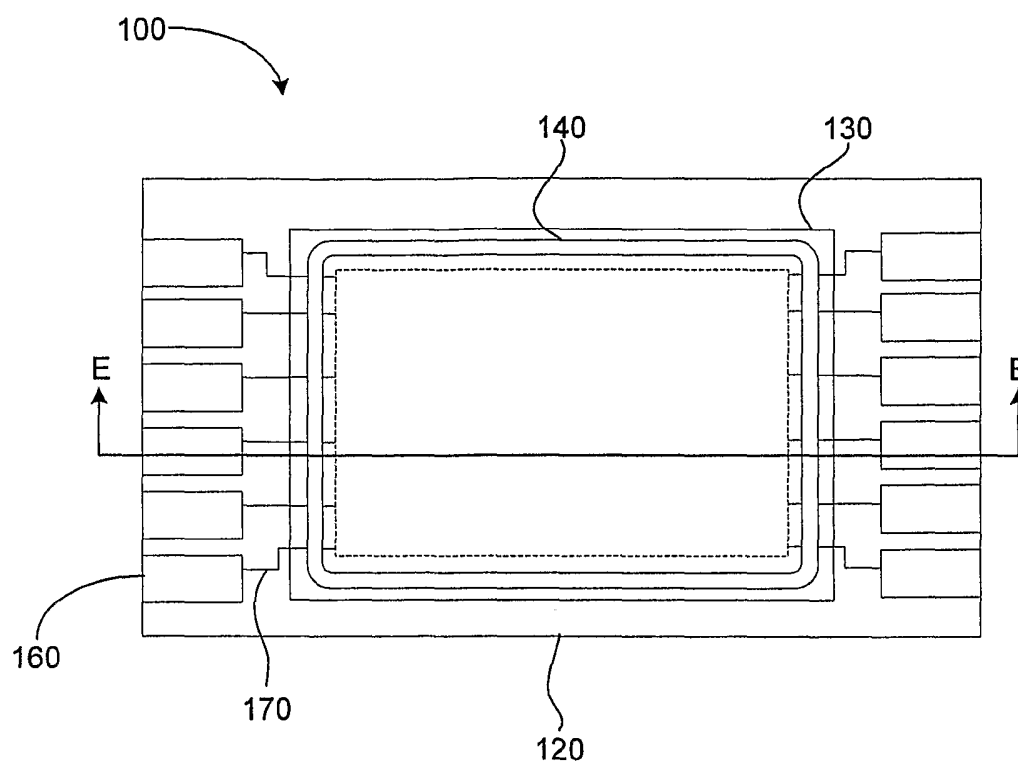
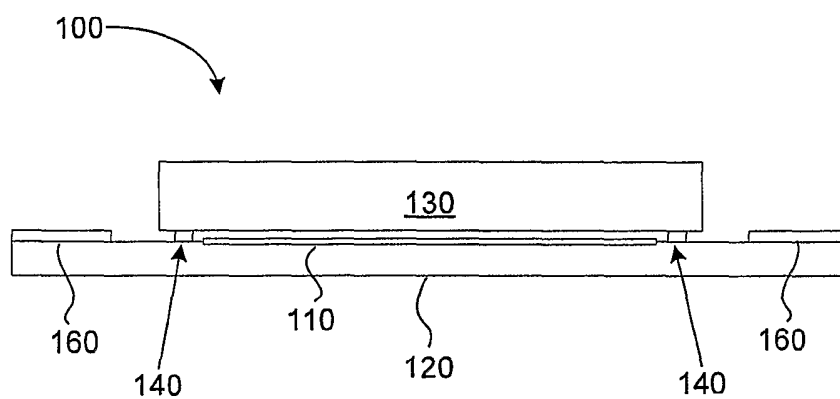
20. An electronic device (10), comprising:
a controller (25);
a circuit (20, 180) coupled to said controller (25); and
a micro-electromechanical assembly (15, 100) including a substrate (35, 120), a micro-electromechanical device (30, 110) coupled to said substrate (35, 120), a seal ring (140) formed on said substrate (35, 120), and a plurality of bonding pads (40, 160) formed on said substrate (35, 120), wherein said seal ring (140) and bonding pads (40, 160) are formed of a substantially similar material.

**Fig. 1**

**Fig. 2A****Fig. 2B**

**Fig. 3A****Fig. 3B**

**Fig. 4A****Fig. 4B**

**Fig. 5A****Fig. 5B**

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/US2005/030973

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

B81B7/00

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)

B81B

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 practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2002/000646 A1 (GOOCH ROLAND W ET AL) 3 January 2002 (2002-01-03) paragraphs '0029! - '0033! figures 3,4 -----	1-20

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

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Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 2002000646 A1	03-01-2002	US 6521477 B1	18-02-2003