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FLORAL PIECE FOUNDATION

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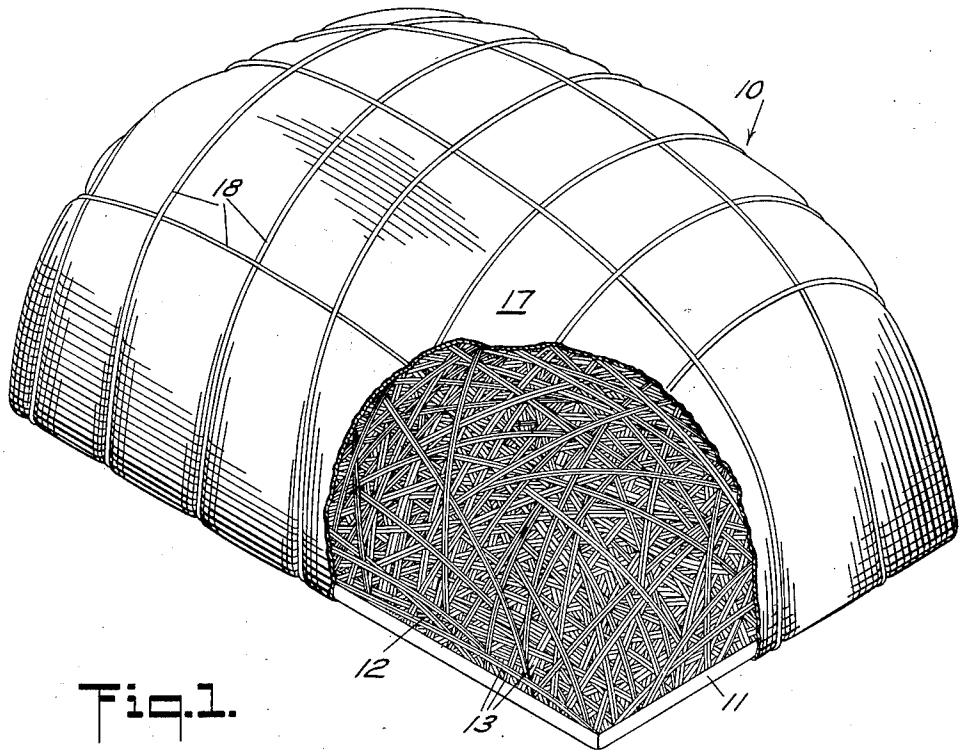


Fig. 1.

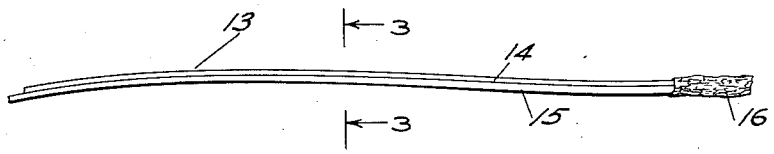


Fig. 2.

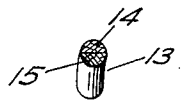


Fig. 3.

INVENTORS
ROBERT W. BOLES
MARVIN SHUPE
BY Joseph B Gardner
ATTORNEY

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FLORAL PIECE FOUNDATION

Robert W. Boles, Albany, and Marvin Shupe, Richmond, Calif.

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3 Claims. (Cl. 47—41)

The present invention relates in general to the manufacture of floral pieces and, more particularly, to a new and improved foundation support to facilitate such manufacture.

Florists and other suppliers of floral pieces generally construct their more lavish and highly decorative floral piece offerings upon some sort of a foundation or base structure which firmly supports the individual flowers in the desired position.

Heretofore such structures have been fashioned, for example, of a suitably shaped section of perforated metal screen having a mass of stuffing material positioned thereover and with a sheet of paper wrapped around the stuffing material and fastened as with wire to the perforated screen. The flower stem is thrust through the paper, which is perforable, into the stuffing material and the flower is thereby positioned in the floral piece design.

Customarily excelsior or moss is employed as the stuffing material. However, the use of such material is attended by various inconveniences and disadvantages which increase the labor required to produce the floral piece and tend to mar the beauty of the design. When excelsior is employed as the stuffing material, many of the delicate flower stems are broken as the generally rough surfaces, sharp edges and protruding fibers of the excelsior tend strongly to resist the entry of the flower stem. Moss and similar particulate stuffing materials may likewise damage the flower stem and suffer from additional disadvantages in that the particulate stuffing material tends to emerge from the perforations in the paper wrapping as the floral piece is handled and falls upon floor coverings and furniture upon which the piece may be placed.

It is proposed that a greatly improved foundation may be provided which is not subject to the disadvantages and remedies the defects of the devices now available to the trade. In a general sense the configuration and organization of such a structure must necessarily resemble those which are common in the trade as it is desirable thereby to obtain shapes and designs now preferred by the purchasers.

However, the defects are avoided by the use of a stuffing material having certain highly beneficial properties and by the provision of an imperforate base plate upon which the structure of the foundation is constructed. Further advantages are derived by the use of a net-like meshwork of cordage which is formed integral with or encases a perforable wrapping which surrounds the stuffing material, all as will be more fully described hereinafter.

Accordingly, it is an object of the invention to provide a new and improved foundation or base which may be employed in the manufacture of floral piece designs.

Another object of the invention is to provide a new and improved foundation or base for floral pieces including an imperforate plate in the lower portion thereof.

A further object of the invention is to provide a superior stuffing material for a floral piece base which allows easy entry of delicate flower stems and provides a firm support therefor.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a new and improved foundation or base for floral piece manufacture in which a stuffing material is enclosed within a perforable wrapping.

One other object of the invention is to provide a new and improved base or foundation for a floral piece in which a meshwork of cordage encloses the whole assembly retaining the elements thereof in position and delineating the perforable portions of the wrapping to aid in positioning the flowers.

The invention possesses other objects and features of advantage, some of which, with the foregoing, will be set forth in the following description of the preferred form of the invention which is illustrated in the drawing accompanying and forming part of the specification. It is to be understood, however, that variations in the showing made by said drawing and description may be adopted within the scope of the invention as set forth in the claims.

Referring to the drawing:

Figure 1 is a perspective view partially broken away of the floral piece foundation of the invention.

Figure 2 is a needle-like material particularly suited as the stuffing employed in the foundation of the invention.

Figure 3 is a cross-section taken along the plane 3—3 of Figure 2.

With reference to Figure 1, a floral piece foundation generally indicated at **10** may be constructed in accordance with the invention by providing a base **11** formed as a rectangular flat plate or stiff sheet of imperforate material such as paperboard or corrugated pasteboard. The rectangular shape of the base **11** possesses a marginal configuration suitable for providing a foundation upon which the well-known "pillow" floral design may be constructed. However, it will be understood that a base having any marginal configuration appropriate to yield the desired flarol design may likewise be employed. A relatively stiff and imperforate base **11** provides a positive shaping function for the finished structure and also retains the flower stems within the body of the foundation structure.

Upon the base **11** there is positioned a cushion-like body **12** of stuffing material which provides the filled rounded appearance of the "pillow" floral design. The properties of the material chosen as the stuffing or filling in the foundation is largely determinative of the characteristics which the foundation will exhibit during assembly of the floral design. It has been found that a most desirable result is obtained if a material having certain physical characteristics is employed therein.

Stuffing materials found particularly suited to the purpose have cylindrical or elongated rod-like shapes similar to that of a needle. Further suitable materials have a hard smooth glazed or waxy surface and are somewhat flexible but sufficiently stiff and strong to provide proper support to the flower stems when the mass of stuffing is assembled. In practice organic materials which have been found particularly desirable when employed as the stuffing **12** are materials having a generally rod or needle-like structure of a diameter from about 1/64 to 1/8 inch in diameter and having cut lengths not less than about 1 inch, minimum, and preferably having a majority of lengths above about 2 inches.

Synthetic extruded plastic materials may be employed for such purpose. However, it has been found that a very inexpensive, naturally occurring and plentiful material, viz., coniferous needles, and particularly pine needles, possess the desired properties in a high degree.

With particular reference to Figures 2 and 3 the desirable properties of such material are as follows: An individual needle **13** may occur as a pair of individual blades **14** and **15** having a truncated half-round cylindrical shape tapering to a point and bound at the truncated ends by a knot-like growth **16**. The diameter of dry, mature needles generally is somewhat above 1/64 of an inch and the surfaces thereof are hard and glazed. Certain cereal grain stalks also are suitable when cut into proper lengths and separated from the lighter blade portions.

The stuffing material comprising, for example, a mass of pine needles **12** is totally enclosed within a perforable wrapping **17** as of paper which extends beneath the base **11** and is held in place by a net-like meshwork **18** of cordage wrapped about the whole assembly.

In use, flower stems preferably cut to yield a tapered point are inserted into the areas defined by the cords of the meshwork **18** so as to perforate the wrapping **17** to enter the body **12** of stuffing material slipping easily

between the needles or pieces of the particular materials provided by the invention. By wrapping the cordage in a regular pattern the open areas of the meshwork **18** provide a gauging guide which facilitates assembly of the floral piece. Moreover, the meshwork **18** prevents undesirable tearing of the paper wrapping **17** and provides additional support to flower stems of heavy flowers if required.

Alternatively, the paper wrapping and cordage meshwork may be formed integrally in which case the combined meshwork and wrapping may be glued beneath the base. Moreover, the meshwork may also be formed of a suitably perforated flexible sheet material such as of light weight cardboard.

While the invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments thereof it is considered that many modifications may be made therein without departing from the spirit of the invention, and it is intended to cover all such as fall within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A floral piece foundation comprising in combination, a flat relatively rigid shaping base plate, a body of organic stuffing material the individual elements of which are relatively flexible, have a generally needle-like shape, are of a length of at least 1 inch, have a diameter between $\frac{1}{64}$ and $\frac{1}{8}$ inch and possess a hard smooth glazed surface and may be broken upon insertion of a flower stem into said body, a perforable wrapping enclosing said body and base plate, and a meshwork of cordage wrapped around the entire assembly in a preselected regular pattern to provide a guide for the reception of flower stems or the like.

2. A floral piece foundation comprising a flat relatively rigid base plate, a body of dry mature pine needle stuffing material disposed over said base plate, the said needles being relatively fragile whereby upon the insertion of a stem into said material the needles may break to provide sharp edges for engaging the periphery of said stem, a perforable wrapper enclosing said material, and a meshwork of cordage securing said base plate, material and wrapper together.

3. Apparatus as set forth in claim 2 in which said cordage is disposed to provide a plurality of substantially equal perforable areas on said wrapper.

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