July 6, 1965 R. S. McGURN 3,192,658

CLASSIFIED DIRECTORY STRUCTURE

Filed July 11, 1963

Fig. 1.

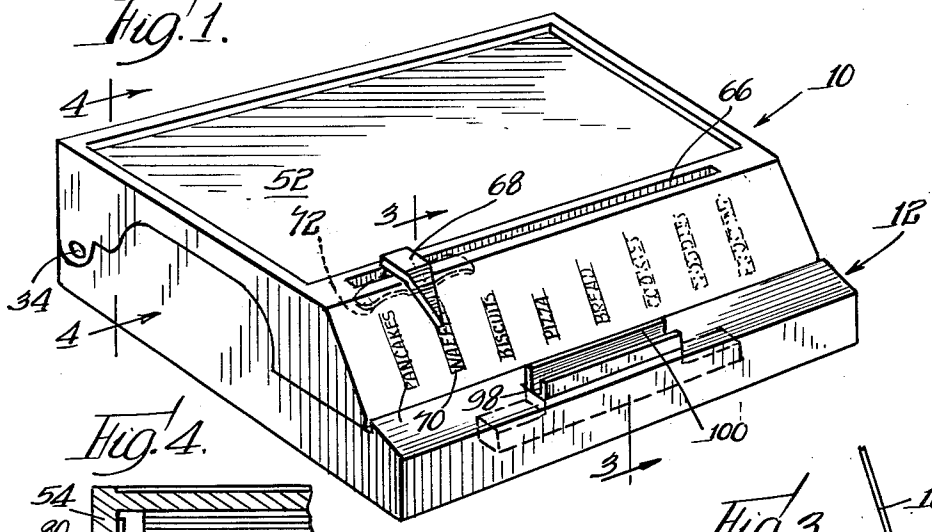


Fig. 4.

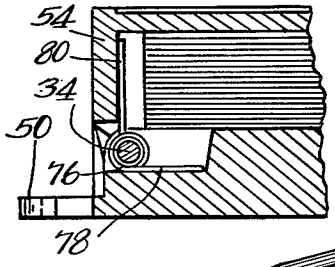


Fig. 3.

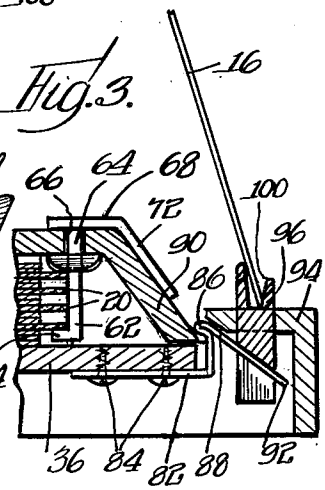


Fig. 2.

Fig. 5.

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CLASSIFIED DIRECTORY STRUCTURE

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The present invention relates to a novel data or information storage or filing construction, and more specifically to a novel filing construction of the type including a plurality of cards and the like and a container or box therefor.

While various uses for constructions incorporating features of the present invention will readily suggest themselves, one use for which the construction is particularly suitable is the filing of household information such as cooking recipes and the like. Recipe boxes heretofore generally available to the housewife have usually merely comprised a rectangular and upright box having a width and height for receiving a plurality of filing cards disposed in an upright position within the box. Such heretofore suggested recipe boxes have generally failed to provide any means for readily identifying and selecting different recipe cards within the box, and such heretofore suggested recipe boxes have usually been of a size and shape such as to make storage and handling difficult.

An important object of the present invention is to provide a novel construction for filing and storing information such as recipes and the like in a manner which enables the stored information to be readily identified and separated for use and in a manner which enables the entire construction to be easily handled and stored at any convenient location.

A more specific object of the present invention is to provide a novel construction for filing household recipes and the like, which construction is such as to enable a housewife or other user to add new information or discard old information without adversely affecing the functioning of the construction.

A further specific object of the present invention is to provide a novel construction of the above described type which may be readily stored by a housewife at any desired location such as in a drawer, on a counter top, or hanging on a wall.

A further more specific object of the present invention is to provide a novel construction of the above described type comprising a plurality of information cards arranged in groups according to subject matter and separated by divider cards, and a novel container or box construction cooperable with all of the aforementioned cards for retaining the cards in a predetermined relationship and for enabling the cards to be readily identified and separated according to subject matter.

Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following description and the accompanying drawing wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing a novel filing construction incorporating features of the present invention in a closed condition;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the construction shown in FIG. 1 but in an opened condition;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary sectional view taken generally along lines 3—3 in FIG. 1 and further showing an information card removed from the box structure and disposed in a generally upright position for reading purposes;

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary sectional view taken generally along lines 4—4 in FIG. 1; and

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary back view of the structure shown in FIG. 1.

Referring now more specifically to the drawings wherein like parts are designated by the same numerals throughout the various figures, a filing construction 10 incorporating

features of the present invention comprises a container or box structure 12 and a pack 14 of cards including information cards 16 and divider cards 18. While the number and arrangement of the cards may be varied in accordance with need, it is contemplated that there will be at least one and probably more of the information cards 16 between the divider cards 18 as will be apparent, the number and arrangement of the information cards may be changed at any time by the operator.

The information cards 16 are substantially identical to each other and have a substantially rectangular configuration of predetermined length and width. Information may be printed directly on the cards 16 or the cards may be blank or lined for enabling the information to be written thereon. Of course, separate pieces of paper having the desired information thereon can be pasted or otherwise secured to the information cards if desired.

The divider cards 18 also have a generally rectangular configuration and are substantially equal in length and width to the information cards. However, each of the divider cards includes a tab 20 projecting from an upper or forward edge thereof as shown in FIG. 2 for cooperation with a card selector element of the box structure in the manner described below. The tabs 20 of the divider cards 18 are of different lengths and are arranged so that terminal end edges 22 thereof are disposed in a stepped relation across the card pack as shown in FIG. 2. Preferably opposite ends 24 of the tabs 20 are disposed substantially in a common plane and it is to be noted that the ends 24 are all offset at least a predetermined distance from adjacent end edges 26 of the cards. Similarly, the end edge 22 of the longest tab 20 is offset inwardly from adjacent end edges 28 of the cards for avoiding interference with abutment and locating means of the box structure described hereinbelow.

The box structure 12 comprises a bottom member 30 and a top member 32. Back marginal portions of the top and bottom members are pivotally connected adjacent opposite ends thereof by pins 34, only one of which is shown. As shown in the drawings, the bottom member is constructed so that it is adapted to receive the card pack 14 with the cards lying generally horizontally or flat against the bottom member rather than with the cards standing upright on edge. Thus when the box is resting flat on a horizontal table or the like as indicated in FIGS. 1 and 2, the cards are disposed in vertically stacked relationship in the pack. While the height of the card pack may be varied, it is preferably substantially less than the width of an individual card. In addition the height of the box structure is substantially less than its width or length whereby to enable the box to be easily handled and stored at any convenient location such as in a cabinet drawer or the like.

The bottom member 12 comprises a generally flat horizontal bottom wall 36 and upstanding side flanges or walls 38 and 40. The card pack is adapted to rest on the bottom wall 36 and the spacing between the interior surfaces of the sidewalls or flanges 38 and 40 is substantially equal to but slightly greater than the length of the cards so that the cards are retained against end-wise movement relative to each other. As shown in FIG. 2, upstanding stop or abutment elements 42 and 44 are disposed adjacent the forward ends of the sidewalls 38 and 40, which abutments may be provided as integral inturned flanges at the forward ends of the sidewall or as separate elements secured to the bottom wall. In any event, the abutment or stop elements 42 and 44 have inwardly facing stop surfaces 46 and 48 disposed substantially in a common plane for engaging the forward edges of all of the information and divider cards in the card pack for maintaining the cards in alignment with each other. It will be noted that the stop surfaces 46 and 48 extend upwardly from the bottom

36 a distance in excess of the full height of the card pack whereby the cards will be maintained in proper alignment regardless of the position in which the box may be held. In this connection it is to be noted that the bottom member 30 is provided with an apertured lug 50 extending from the back edge thereof so that the box structure may be hung by a pin on the wall, if desired.

The top member 32 comprises a top panel 52 having a back wall 54 depending therefrom for enclosing the back edges of the cards. This back wall also serves to support a portion of the cards when the top member is opened as shown in FIG. 2. Sidewall sections 56–58 and 60–61 depend from opposite ends of the top panel 52 adjacent back and front corner portions thereof for complementing the upstanding side sections 38 and 40 of the bottom member for completely closing sides of the box when the top member is closed. In addition, the side sections 56 and 60 are adapted to engage lower end edge portions of the cards supported in the open top member as shown in FIG. 2 while the side sections 58 and 61 are adapted to overlie upper corner portions of the cards for maintaining the cards in proper alignment with each other.

In order to aid in selecting the desired cards from the card pack, the construction is provided with a selector element or finger 62 carried at the inner end of a slide member 64 extending through an elongated slot 66 in the top member 32. A pointer 68 is secured to an outer end of the slide for registering with suitable indicia 70 spaced across the top member for indicating a position of the selector element. The indicia 70 are respectively positioned and marked in accordance with the positions of the tabs 20 of the various divider cards and the subject matter of the information cards associated with the various divider cards. A retainer 72 perferably in the form of a flexure spring element is fixed to the slide 64 for engagement with the inner surface of the top member and frictionally retaining the slide at any position to which it has been manually adjusted.

The selector element 62 extends downwardly from the top member 32 at a location forwardly of the divider card tabs 20. However, the selector element includes a horizontally extending terminal end 74 at a level beneath the lowermost divider card tab and extending rearwardly for underlying the divider card tabs. The width of the selector element end portion 74 is correlated with and less than the lateral spacing between the end edges 22 of successive divider card tabs. Thus when the pointer element 68 is properly registered with one of the indicia 70, the selector element end portion 74 will be properly positioned for engaging a downwardly exposed area of the desired divider card tab. When the top member is opened, the element 74 engages the selected divider card tab and raises the engaged divider card and all of the cards thereabove to the opened position as shown in FIG. 2. This action exposes the desired group of information cards for easy reference and removal.

In the embodiment shown a torsion spring 76 is mounted around the pivot pin 34 and is arranged with ends 78 and 80 respectively bearing against the bottom and top members for biasing the top member toward the opened position. The box structure is provided with a latch mechanism for releasably retaining the top member in the closed position. As shown best in FIG. 3 this latch mechanism includes a strap 82 of spring metal having one end secured by fasteners 84 to an under side of the bottom panel 36. An intermediate portion 86 of the strap member is formed upwardly so as to extend through a slot 88 for overlapping engagement with a lower margin of a front panel 90 extending downwardly from the top panel 52 of the top member. An outer end 92 of the strap member extends from the top engaging section 86 forwardly beneath a raised front marginal portion 94 of the bottom member. The arrangement is such that when the front end section 92 of the latch strap is depressed, the intermediate section 86 is shifted forwardly for disengagement from the top member. When this disengagement is accomplished, the spring 76 functions automatically to open top member.

In order to facilitate operation of the latch member an actuator bar 96 is mounted in a slot 98 in the front marginal portion 94 of the bottom member. The bar 98 is adapted to be manually depressed for depressing the outer end section 92 of the latch strap.

Th bar 96 is also adapted to retain an information card 16 which has been removed from the pack in a generally upright position for easy reading. More specifically, the bar is provided with a narrow slot 100 in its upper margin. The bottom of the slot 100 is disposed so as to be substantially coplanar with the upper surface of the front marginal portion 94 of the bottom member so that the front marginal portion serves to engage opposite ends of a card supporting the slot 100 for preventing the card from twisting. It will be observed that the slot 100 has a width greater than the thickness of the card for facilitating insertion of the card and also for enabling the card to tilt backwardly in the manner shown for easy reading.

While a preferred embodiment of the present invention has been shown and described herein, it is obvious that many details may be changed without departing from the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

The invention is claimed as follows:

1. A construction of the type described including a box comprising a bottom member and a top member hingedly connected to said bottom member for movement between opened and closed positions, a plurality of loose unconnected information cards and divider cards generally horizontally disposed in a stack on said bottom member, said stack having a predetermined height, said information cards and said divider cards substantially having a common predetermined length and width, said divider cards separating groups of said information cards, said divider cards including tabs extending outwardly of adjacent edges of all of said cards, said tabs having staggered ends for facilitating selection thereof, all of said tabs being spaced inwardly from opposite end portions of said edges of the cards, abutment means on said bottom member adjacent said opposite end portions of said edges, said abutment means having surfaces disposed substantially in a common plane and having a height at least substantially equal to said predetermined height for engaging said edge end portions of all of said cards for maintaining the cards in alignment, and a selector element shiftably mounted on said top member for selectively engaging the tab of a desired divider card and raising said last mentioned card when the top member is opened.

2. A construction of the type described including a box comprising a bottom member and a top member and means pivotally connecting said members adjacent rear edges thereof for movement between open and closed positions, a plurality of loose unconnected information cards and divider cards generally horizontally disposed in a stack on said bottom member, said stack having a predetermined height, said information cards and said divider cards substantially having a common predetermined length and width, said divider cards separating groups of said information cards, said divider cards including tabs extending outwardly of front edges of the information cards and the corresponding edges of said divider cards, said tabs having staggered ends for facilitating selection thereof, all of said tabs being spaced inwardly from opposite end portions of said edges of the cards, one of said bottom and top members including opposite sidewall sections engageable with opposite ends of said cards for retraining the cards in the stack, a selector element shiftably mounted on said top member for selectively engaging a tab of a desired divider card and raising said last mentioned card and any cards thereabove when the top member is opened, said top member including a back wall section engageable with rear edges of said cards for retaining the cards in the stack when the top member is

closed and for supporting said raised cards when the top member is opened, and a pair of abutment means on said bottom member respectively adjacent opposite end portions of said front edges of said cards, said abutment means including surfaces disposed substantially in a common plane and having a height at least substantially equal to said predetermined height for engagement with said opposite end portions of said front edges of all of said cards.

3. A construction, as defined in claim 2, wherein said side sections are on said bottom member and are disposed for engaging intermediate portions of opposite ends of said cards, said side sections having a height at least equal to the height of said stack of cards, and said side sections having generally straight upper edges extending for substantial distances along the intermediate portions of the ends of the cards whereby said side sections are adapted to engage and retain all of the cards against twisting movement relative to each other.

4. A construction, as defined in claim 3, which includes additional side sections on said top member for complementing the first mentioned side sections in closing the sides of the box when the top member is closed and for engaging and retaining cards raised with the top member when the top member is opened.

5. A construction, as defined in claim 2, which includes latch means between said top and bottom members for releasably retaining top member in closed position, said

latch means comprising a depressable bar for releasing the latch means, said bar having elongated notch means therein for receiving and supporting an information card removed by an operator from the box for enabling the operator to read the card.

6. A construction, as defined in claim 4, which includes spring means between said top and bottom members for biasing the top member toward the opened position.

7. A construction, as defined in claim 2, wherein said box has a length and width substantially greater than its height, said height of said box being less than the length and width of said card.

8. A construction, as defined in claim 2, wherein each of said groups of information cards includes a plurality of cards.

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