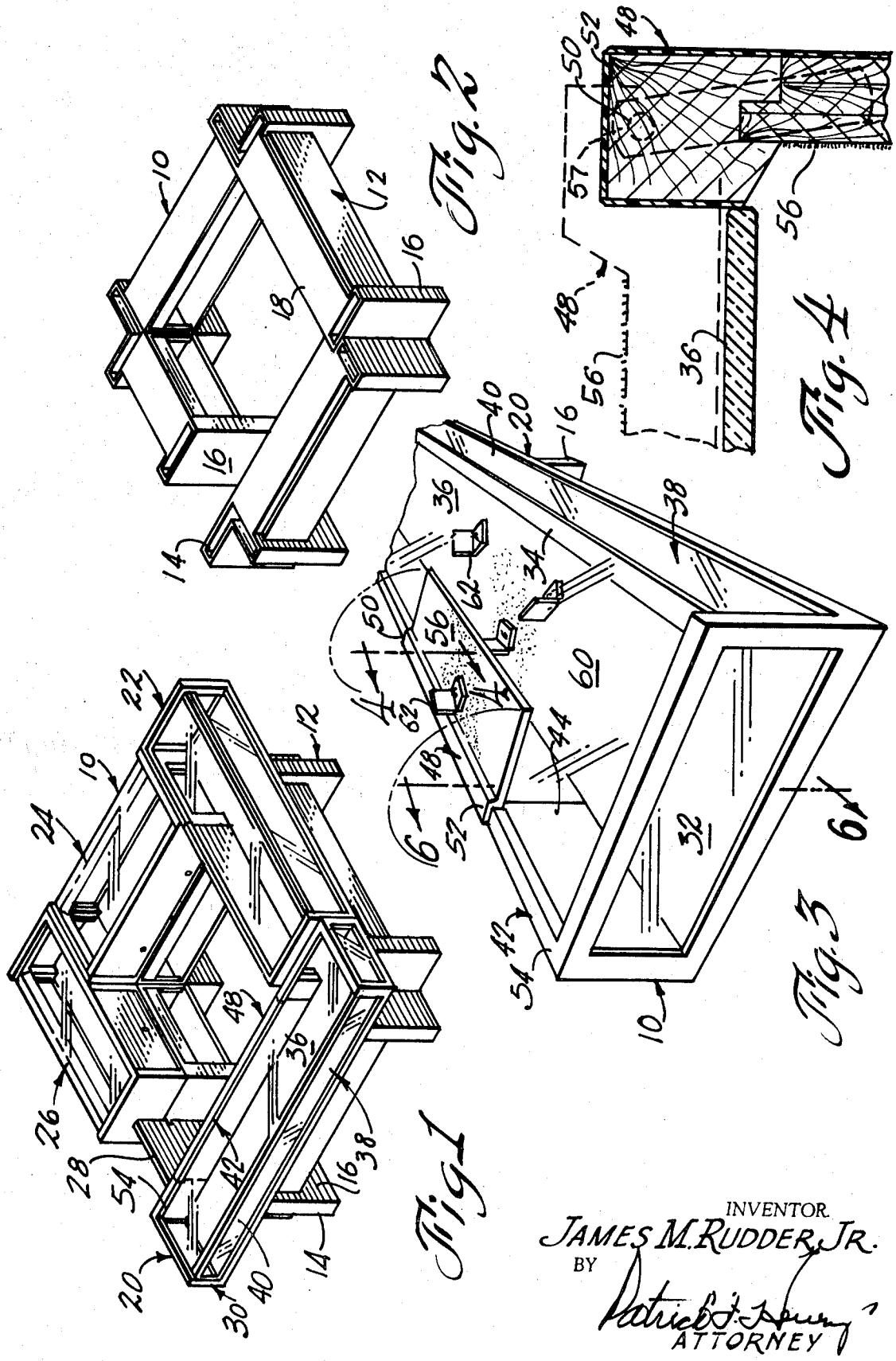
Feb. 13, 1973 J. M. RUDDER, JR 3,716,281

SECURITY DISPLAY CASE

Filed Sept. 23, 1971

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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SECURITY DISPLAY CASE

Filed Sept. 23, 1971 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

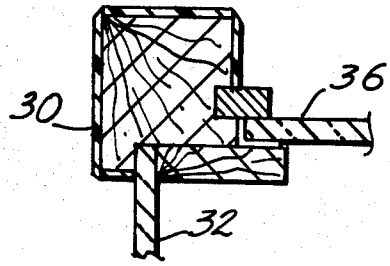


Fig. 5

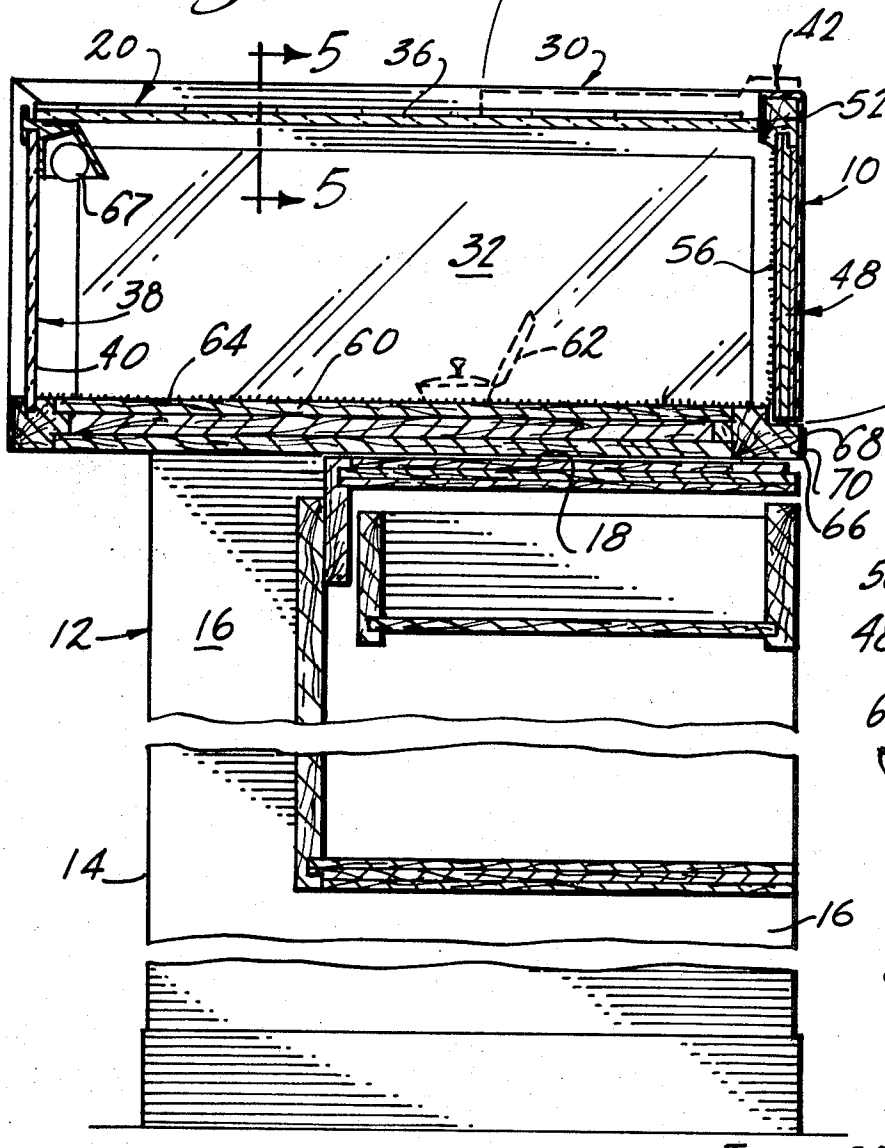


Fig. 6

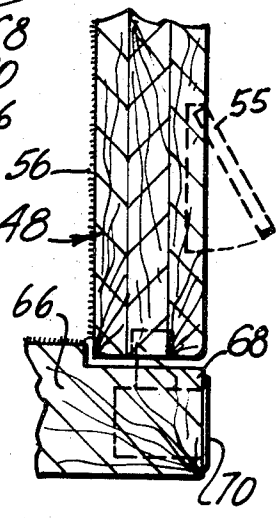


Fig. 7

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United States Patent Office 3,716,281 Patented Feb. 13, 1973

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SECURITY DISPLAY CASE

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Filed Sept. 23, 1971, Ser. No. 182,939
Int. Cl. A47f 3/00
U.S. Cl. 312—114 10 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A portion of the back wall of a jewelry display case behind the counter is a swingably mounted wall panel so that expensive jewelry items such as rings, bracelets, and watches are placed on the surface of the swingable wall panel when it rests on top of the counter leaving a large exposed opening to the case behind the counter. The surface of the swingable wall panel may be covered with jewelry cloth or other covering to match the interior of the case. The swingable wall panel is normally coextensively a part of the back wall but is a separate frame made from the same material and has exactly the same frame mold as the rest of the back wall of the case so that it matches completely when in place but readily is swung from a vertical position in normal place to a horizontal position on top of the glass case. The swingable panel drops by gravity and locks in place by means of a latch.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

(1) Field of the invention

Display cases having movable wall sections. Security cases and glass counter cases having locked security closures.

(2) Description of the prior art

Glass display cases and counter arrangements made from glass display cases are quite common in the merchandising field particularly the retail jewelry. Such cases are usually arranged either with a series of cases in a somewhat closed area or in front of a wall so only the salesman of the house is behind the case with access to the case closures. One problem in the retail merchandising field and particularly in the retail jewelry field is removing the expensive merchandise from inside the case to the outside of the case for the customer to examine. If the clerk is distracted or is very busy it is possible that one or two pieces of merchandise will be left on top of the glass case unnoticed when all of the others are returned to the glass case. This is especially true if the top of the glass case is clear glass without a mat or piece of jewelry cloth on top of the case to display the merchandise. Sometimes a clerk forgets to use anything on top of the case and at other times in expensive and elegant jewelry stores it is not considered sufficiently elegant to use such material. The present arrangement is directed to the difficulties involved in removing loose items of jewelry, or any other merchandise, from the inside of a display case to the top of the case for examination by the customer and safe return of the merchandise as well as closing of the case after return.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In a display case of the sort which may be a glass enclosed jewelry case having a counter top of framed glass, framed glass sides and a framed glass front and a rear panel of some material in which there is mounted a closure, there is a portion of the rear wall of the case which is in a secure area such as behind the counter or inside a closed island of cases in which is mounted a swingable panel that is a portion of the wall mounted on

hardware so that the panel swings from a vertical position in alignment with and part of the back wall to a horizontal position in which the panel rests on top of the glass case and the vertical surface of the panel which may be jewelry cloth or other suitable material is contrasting with the glass top. At least two purposes are served by this arrangement: (1) the swingable panel provides an attractive surface on which the merchandise may be displayed and makes it easier for the clerk to try to keep the merchandise in this area; (2) it is obvious to the clerk as well as security personnel in the establishment as well as other personnel that the case is open and it is easily closed by quick flipping to fall by gravity.

Therefore, an object of the present invention is to provide a display panel in a jewelry case which is swingable into position on top of the case.

Another object of the invention is to provide a display panel which is normally part of the rear or back wall of the case and swings out of position to leave an obvious opening therein.

Another advantage of the present arrangement of the swingable panel is that the surface on which the merchandise is to be displayed is a permanent part of the permanent swingable panel and is always present for the clerk and its presence requires the clerk to use this surface for display. Also the presence of this surface on top of a contrasting surface such as a glass case makes more obvious the presence of items of merchandise both on this surface and on the glass case which helps prompt both the clerk and the security people to watch the merchandise carefully.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a typical arrangement of a jewelry display case island providing a secure area in which only the authorized clerk operates and has access to the present case.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the bases forming the island in FIG. 1 without the glass cases thereon.

FIG. 3 is a partial perpective view of one of the cases of FIG. 1 with the present security closure and display panel thereon.

FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view taken substantially along lines 4—4 in FIG. 3.

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view taken along lines 5—5 in FIG. 6.

FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view taken substantially along lines 6—6 in FIG. 3.

FIG. 7 is an enlarged view in section of the bottom edge of the movable panel at the lower right-hand side in FIG. 6.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In FIGS. 1 and 2 there is shown a typical display arrangement designated generally by reference numeral **10** in which there is an island within the store itself or other establishment created by a substantially rectangular support structure designated generally by reference numeral **12** and constructed from wood and metal in the form of box-like units designated generally by reference numeral **14** each having legs **16** resting on the floor and flat upper surfaces **18** providing a support for a plurality of three-dimensional, rectangular glass display cases **20**, **22**, **24**, and **26** arranged to form an enclosure to which access is gained only through a door **28** hinged to one of the legs **16**.

Typically all of the cases **20**, **22**, **24**, and **26** are rectangular enclosures made from panels of framed heavy glass fastened together. Case **20** shown in FIG. 3 comprises end frames **30** having glass **32** and a top frame

34 having top glass 36 to form a counter, front panel 38 with glass 40 and a special rear panel 42.

The rear frame 42 includes a solid arrangement of individual panels 44 each of which is covered with a dark material (or a billard cloth, etc.) on the inside surface which is the vertical wall that shows through the glass case. A portion of the rear frame 42 is the swingable or movable framed panel 48 of the present invention which is mounted on pivots 50 attached to the frame member 52 of the panel 48 and fitted into the frame member 54 which is part of the rear frame 42. There is a pivoted finger grasping member 55 on panel 48 to aid in lifting same. Panel 48 is covered with the same material on its exposed vertical surface 56 as the material used in the surface 44 of the rest of the rear wall 42. Pivot 50 is movably attached to a metal support arm 57 which is screwed to the frame member 48. Arm 57 rotates on pivot 50. There is a pivot 50 and arm 57 on each side of panel 48.

The bottom 60 of the case 20 on which the merchandise 62 normally is stored may be plywood or any other material covered in an attractive material such as black jewelry cloth 64 in the manner shown in FIG. 6. There may be a light 67 mounted inside the case 20 to enhance the display of the merchandise 62. The framed glass wall structure 42 includes the top horizontal frame member 54 as well as a bottom horizontal frame member 66 which is formed by woodworking machinery to provide a right angular portion 68 against which the panel 48 closes in its closed position and there may be a self-closing latch arrangement 70 having a tapered latch member which automatically latches in place in a receiver on the swingable panel 48 when the swingable panel 48 is allowed to drop.

Noting the position of the swingable panel 48 in FIG. 3, merchandise 62 is clearly visible by contrast on top of the glass 60 and any merchandise 62 on top of the swingable panel 48 will automatically be dropped when the panel is moved from its display position in FIG. 3 back to its closed position as shown in FIG. 6. The panel 48 is rotated a full 270 degrees from its normal vertical closed position to the position superposed against the top of the glass 60 and whenever the clerk observes the case in this position he will know that the case is open and the panel 48 should be returned to closed position. By lifting the panel from the position shown in FIG. 3 until it passes the vertical position headed back toward closed position the panel 48 when released will fall by gravity into place and the lock member will latch into place. From any position in the establishment a security officer or other personnel of the store will immediately and easily notice that a case is open and there is merchandise on the top 36 of the case or even if the case is open and no merchandise is on the top 36.

While I have shown and described a particular preferred embodiment of the invention and a suggested composite display arrangement this is by way of illustration only and does not constitute any sort of limitation on the scope of the invention since various alterations, changes, eliminations, deviations, additions, substitutions, revisions and departures may be made in the embodiment shown and things described herein without departing from the scope of my invention as defined by the appended claims.

What is claimed:

1. In a security display case:

(a) a normally closed case comprising a top counter, a front wall, side walls, a bottom having a surface thereon normally holding merchandise such as expensive jewelry, and a normally approximately vertical closed back wall structure,

(b) a portion of said back wall structure being in the form of a movable panel normally forming a part of the back wall structure and having a wall surface on the inside of the case normally viewed as a part of the back wall structure but said panel being movable from its normal approximately vertical position to a position over and against the top of the top counter of the case in which position the surface of said movable panel covers a portion of the surface of said case and may be used to place the items of display such as jewelry thereon.

2. The device claimed in claim 1 wherein there is a lock which is automatically latched when the panel is allowed to fall into place in position as part of the back wall structure.

3. The device claimed 1 wherein said back wall structure has the inside thereof inside the case covered with a contrasting material to that of the top of the case such as black jewelry cloth on the back wall structure as compared with clear glass on the top so that when said panel is swung into place the surface thereof contrasts with the top.

4. The device claimed in claim 3 wherein said movable panel matches and blends with the back wall structure when in place thereon, there being pivot support means for opposite sides of said movable panel pivotally supporting same for movement relative to said back wall.

5. The device claimed in claim 4 wherein said pivot support means comprises a pair of elongated support members having one end attached to said movable panel and the other end pivotally mounted on a pivot member attached to said back wall.

6. The device claimed in claim 1 wherein said security display case is a part of a security area comprising cases arranged in a quadrilateral formation to provide a security area to which there is only one entrance between said cases.

7. The device claimed in claim 1 wherein said top counter, said front wall, and said side walls each comprises a transparent panel of glass, plastic and the like mounted in a framed structure of wood and the like.

8. The device claimed in claim 1 wherein said movable panel is heavy enough to fall by gravity when released and is pivotally mounted to be swung from its normal approximately vertical position as part of the back wall structure to a position approximately 270 degrees therefrom wherein it is resting upon and superposed with respect to said top counter.

9. The device claimed in claim 8 wherein said top counter includes a transparent portion for viewing the merchandise inside the security display case, such as glass, plastic and the like, and said inside surface of said movable panel which is normally vertical becomes exposed on top of said counter when said panel is moved panel is of a contrasting color with respect to the transparent portion of said top counter whereby the contrast between said top counter and said movable panel is readily noticed.

10. The device claimed in claim 9 wherein said movable panel is supported on pivot means on each side thereof and said pivot means comprises a pivot member attached to said panel and a pivot support member attached to said back wall.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

108—90, 15; 312—137, 140.4