April 22, 1969 M. KUBILIUS 3,440,128

CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

Filed June 8, 1965

FIG. 1

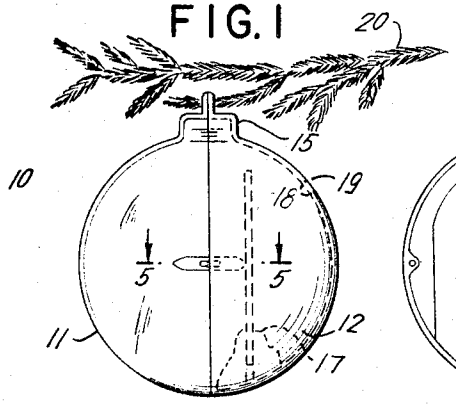


FIG. 2

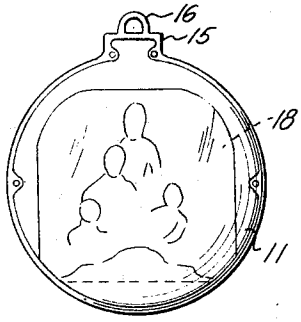


FIG. 3

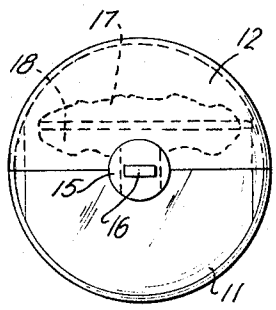
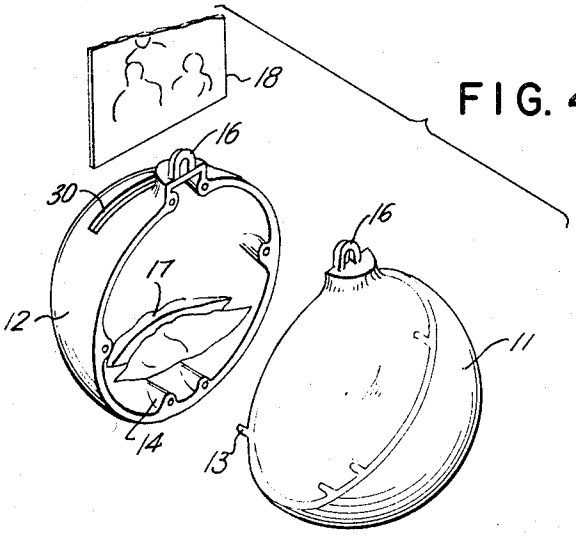


FIG. 4



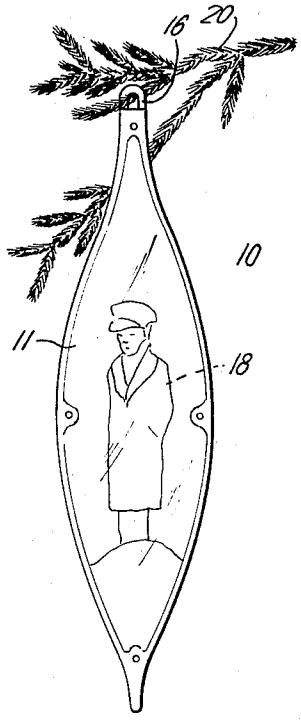


FIG. 6

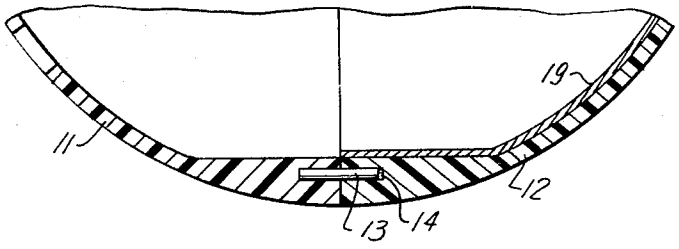


FIG. 5

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U.S. Cl. 161—5 5 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A Christmas tree ornament is described as a hollow plastic shell vertically split into front and back portions, joinable together at their edges, the front portion being transparent and the back portion being reflectively coated on the concave side and having mounted therein a photograph of, for example, a family group.

This invention relates to personalized Christmas tree ornaments and, more particularly, to Christmas tree ornaments having a transparent face and containing a photographic picture of an individual or a family group.

Christmas has been traditionally a time of family gatherings wherein friends and relations gather in the serenity of someone's home to exchange presents and holiday greetings. Quite often, however, individual members of a family move to some distant place for employment or climatic reasons and it is, therefore, impossible to gather everyone physically together on Christmas Day even with modern travel facilities. For that reason, personalized Christmas cards portraying a photograph of an individual or a family group are often mailed as a form of season's greetings rather than the usual, impersonal type card thereby enabling those living in far distant places to conjure up fond memories by viewing the photograph.

After these personalized greeting cards have been read, however, they are often merely placed among other Christmas cards which are later disposed of. Even in those homes where the greeting cards are saved and displayed during the Christmas season, they are quite often not noticed by visiting friends and relatives due to the fact that the Christmas tree is the center of attraction.

My invention provides a photographic picture placed within a Christmas tree ornament having a transparent face thereby enabling the features of the photograph to be seen by a person normally gazing at the tree on which it is hung. Since the Christmas tree is the center of activity during the holiday season, the photograph will have a position of prominence within the home and will be noticed by visitors. After the holiday season passes, this personalized Christmas tree ornament can be saved along with the other ornaments continuously to bring joy year after year. If personalized ornaments are received from various relatives, the Christmas tree, in effect, becomes a living family tree and when saved over the years, one can look at the ornaments and reflect on joyous bygone years as he contemplates the serene beauty of the tree. Thus, the personalized Christmas ornament brings lasting joy and beauty to a home at the Christmas season.

This and other objects of my invention will become evident from the description of a preferred embodiment of my invention which follows.

Briefly, the Christmas tree ornament of my invention comprises a generally hollow, rounded, closed body which tapers at its uppermost point into a cylindrical shaped portion terminating in a circular top on which is affixed an eye by which the ornament is hung from a branch of a Christmas tree. The ornament itself is split vertically into two hemispherically shaped approximately equal sections consisting of a transparent front section having prongs spaced at intervals along the perimeter of the split edge, and an opaque back section having grooved

seats spaced circumferentially along the perimeter of the split edge to receive the prongs protruding from the transparent front section and thereby lock the front and back portions together to form a unified closed body. The front section is preferably fabricated from plastic tinted a light shade of the desired color of the ornament. Care must be exercised so that the transparent front section is not too heavily tinted as it then will become difficult to dis tinguish the features on the photographic picture within the ornament. If desired, etching may be placed upon the transparent section to add beauty to the ornament so long as it does not detract from the photograph which is the featured item of the ornament.

The interior, concave portion of the opaque back section is covered with a highly reflective silverized paint while the exterior convex portion of the back sections is brightly colored to add beauty to the ornament. In the lower portion of the silverized interior of the opaque back section remote from the cylindrical shaped upper portion there is affixed a fastening means, e.g., a clip or a body having a slot, into which the photograph is inserted in order to hold it in an upright position so that it may be viewed properly when the ornament is hung from the tree. The back portion is also preferably made of plastic and also may be etched, if desired, for beauty. After the photograph has been inserted in the fastening clip, the front and back portions are fixably joined by the prongs and prong seats to give a composite personalized Christmas tree ornament. If desired, a small light bulb may be inserted within the ornament so that it will cast its illumination upon the photograph thereby permitting its enjoyment during the evening hours.

In a second aspect of my invention, I contemplate cutting a narrow transverse notch parallel to the split edge in the upper portion of the back section of the ornament body. The photograph of the individual or family group is inserted through the notch into the fastening means secured to the bottom of the ornament while the front and back portions remain fastened together. The photograph is then held in a vertical position by the joint action of the fastening means at the bottom of the ornament and the narrow slot at the top of the ornament. A slotted ornament of this type may be permanently sealed and still allow photographs to be easily interchanged from year to year, as desired, thereby retaining a current personalized effect.

Although the eye means has been described as an integral part of the body member, it could also be a separate member bonded to the body member or attached by mechanical means such as a pin and socket.

A better understanding of this invention may be had from the appended drawing in which:

FIGURE 1 is a side view of the personalized ornament in accordance with my invention;

FIGURE 2 is a front view of the personalized ornament in accordance with my invention;

FIGURE 3 is a top view of the personalized ornament in accordance with my invention;

FIGURE 4 is an isometric, exploded view showing a personalized ornament having a slot in accordance with my invention;

FIGURE 5 is a sectional view taken along line A—A of FIGURE 1; and

FIGURE 6 is a personalized ornament in accordance with my invention.

Referring more particularly to the drawings, personalizer ornament **10** in a vertically split generally spherically shaped ornament consisting of a transparent half **11** and an opaque half **12** fixably joined by prongs **13** extending into grooved seats **14**. The prongs are of such a length as to extend deeply into grooved seat **14** without striking the back of the groove when the front and back

portions of the ornament are flush with each other. Ornament **10** tapers at its upper end into cylindrical portion **15** which is closed at its uppermost end remote from the ornament body to support eye means **16** thereon. A photographic picture **18** is fixably engaged within fastening means **17**, which is portrayed as a putty-like material firmly affixed to the lower, inner portion of back section **12**. Fastening means **17** is affixed as close to the split edge of back portion **12** as possible to allow for the greatest possible viewing angle of the photographic image. Although fastening means **17** is portrayed as a putty-like material, it is obvious that a metal clip, glue or a plasticized foam resembling snow could be used to support photograph **18** in the vertical position. The interior of back section **12** is covered with a thin layer of highly reflective silverized paint **19** better to portray the image on photograph **18**. Eye means **16** situated at the summit of ornament **10** slips over a branch portion of Christmas tree **20** to support the ornament at approximately the desired viewing height.

Referring more particularly to FIGURE 4, there is disclosed an ornament having a narrow transverse slot **30** cut into the upper portion of the back section of the ornament body parallel to the split edge to permit the insertion of photograph **18** into the ornament while the front and back portions of the ornament remain fixably engaged. In all other respects, FIGURE 4 is exactly the same as FIGURES 1, 2 and 3. Photograph **18** is lowered through slot **30** into back section **12** until the lower portion of the photograph is secured by fastening device **17**. Slot **30** acts in conjunction with fastening device **17** to maintain photograph **18** in a vertical position so that it may be properly viewed through transparent portion **11**.

FIGURE 5 is an enlarged top-sectional view showing a prong and grooved seat fixably engaged.

FIGURE 6 shows a personalized ornament design of a more unique and unusual type than the round conventional Christmas tree ball design. Since it is desirable to have the shape of the ornament conform with the dimensions of the photograph to be exhibited in order to preserve the symmetry of the ornament while allowing maximum observation of the photographic image, elongated ornament designs of the type shown in FIGURE 6 will often be necessary when full length photographs are to be exhibited. In all other respects except shape, FIGURE 6 is exactly the same as FIGURES 1 to 5.

Although the personalized ornament has been described as being fastened together by prongs and grooved seats, it is obvious that other fastening methods such as glue or grooved ridges capable of snapping into engagement with each other could be used without departing from the scope of this invention.

I claim:

1. A personalized Christmas tree ornament comprising

(a) a hollow plastic shell vertically split to produce a front portion and a back portion each having adjoining edges,

(b) said front portion being composed of transparent plastic and having fastening means fixably to engage it to said back portion,

(c) said back portion being composed of opaque plastic having a highly reflective bright coloring on the convex side, having a highly reflective silverized coating on the concave side and having means spaced along the perimeter of said split edge fixably to engage said fastening means of said front portion,

(d) means at the top of said hollow plastic shell defining an eye through which a hook may be passed,

(e) a photograph fastening means positioned in the bottom section of said back portion,

(f) a photograph of an individual or a family group fixably engaged by said photograph fastening means so that the photograph may be viewed through said front portion when said front and back portions are fixably engaged.

2. The ornament of claim **1** wherein said back portion has a thin transverse slot cut into its upper portion parallel to said split edge.

3. The ornament of claim **1** wherein said front portion fastening means consists of prongs and said back portion fastening means consists of grooved seats capable of accepting said prongs.

4. The ornament of claim **1** wherein said photograph fastening means along the bottom section of said back portion consists of glue.

5. The ornament of claim **1** wherein said photograph fastening means along the bottom section of said back portion consists of a slotted groove.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

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