United States Patent [19]

Deau

[11] **3,842,525**

[45] **Oct. 22, 1974**

[54] **PICTURE FRAME AND PLAQUE**

[75] Inventor: **William J. Deau,** Manitowoc, Wis.

[73] Assignee: **Contemporary, Inc.,** Manitowoc, Wis. 54220

[22] Filed: **July 20, 1973**

[21] Appl. No.: **381,012**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **40/159**

[51] **Int. Cl.** **G09f 1/10**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 40/152, 158, 159, 158 B, 40/20 A, 10, 325; 281/31

[56] **References Cited**

UNITED STATES PATENTS

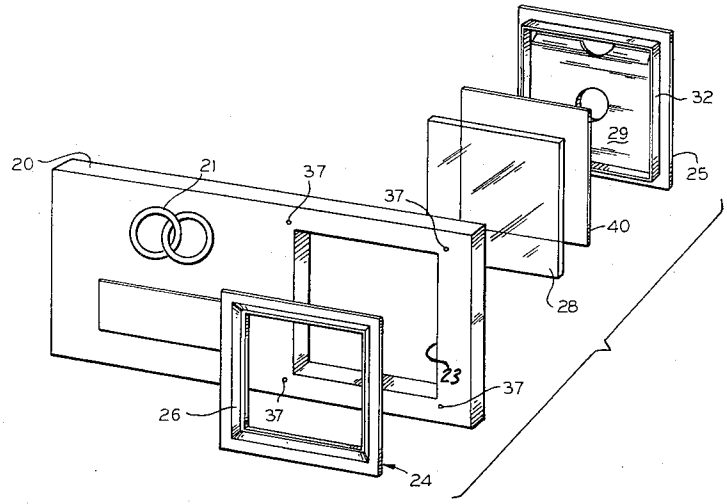
522,484	7/1894	Odgers	40/159
1,014,312	1/1912	Line	40/152
1,361,678	12/1920	Buck	40/158 B
2,253,814	8/1941	Sames	40/159
2,353,328	7/1944	Winston	40/10 R
2,506,509	5/1950	Kratkowski	40/152
2,747,310	5/1956	Tierney	40/10 R
2,801,115	7/1957	Federbush et al.	40/159 X
2,834,136	5/1958	Kiehl et al.	40/159
2,843,955	7/1958	Engelstein	40/158 R
3,177,600	4/1965	Wengel	40/158 R

Primary Examiner—Robert W. Michell
Assistant Examiner—Wenceslao J. Contreras
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Alter, Weiss, Whitesel & Laff

[57] **ABSTRACT**

Double frame members are permanently sealed in a spaced parallel relationship. The front frame has a glass or other transparent panel therein for exposing a picture to view. The rear frame has a tapered guide slot formed therein with a second panel which is positioned in a spaced parallel relationship with respect to the front panel. A picture is inserted into the frame through the guide slot. The taper of the slot guides the picture into and out of the space between the front and back panels. A finger opening in the back panel enables removal or straightening of the picture. The frame is generally mounted on a plaque through an opening therein.

11 Claims, 8 Drawing Figures



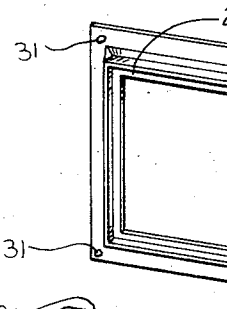


FIG.1A

FIG.1

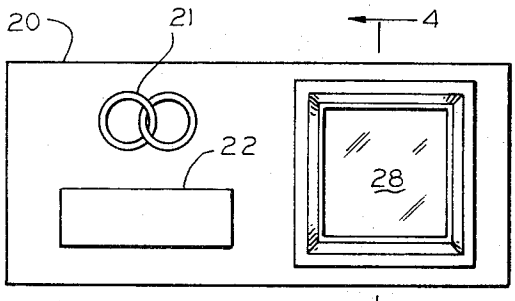


FIG.2

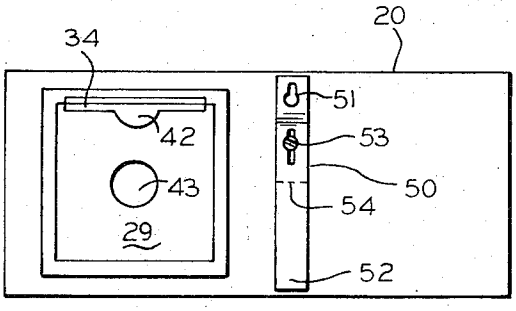


FIG.3

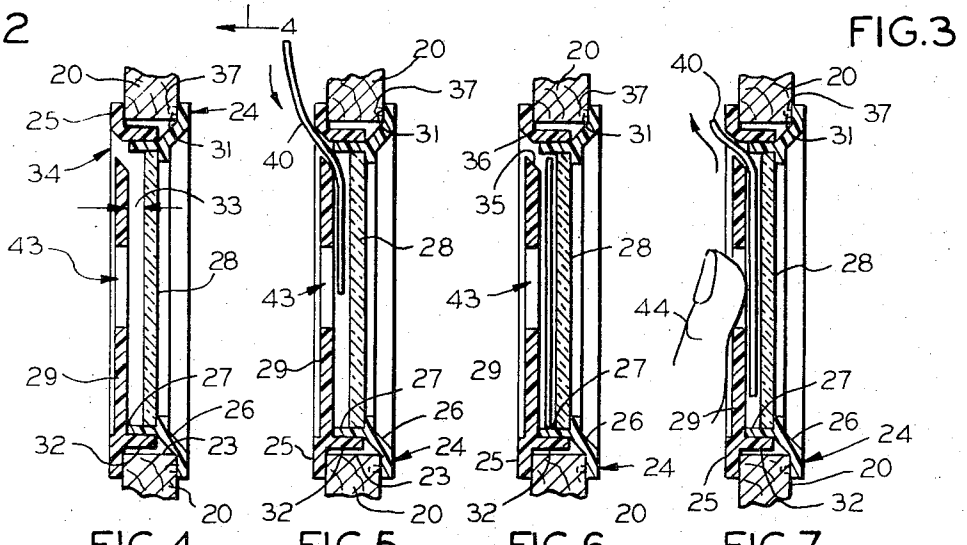


FIG.4 FIG.5 FIG.6 FIG.7

PICTURE FRAME AND PLAQUE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to frames and more particularly to low cost, quick change picture frames, especially for use in combination with a plaque.

Picture frames are, of course, well known devices, having many uses. Usually, it is necessary to go through a disassembly process of removing parts of the frame prior to an insertion of a picture, document, or the like, hereinafter generally called "graphical display." Then, after the graphical display is inserted, the frame must be reassembled, often with finger prints on the inside of the glass, with crooked or skewed graphical display, and the like. In general, this type of a frame has been somewhat cumbersome to use and relatively expensive to make or buy. Furthermore, where frames have heretofore been mounted on plaques, they have been affixed to one face of the plaque affording excessive thickness to the overall plaque. It was also often difficult to insert pictures into, and remove pictures from, the frame when they have been attached to plaques.

Accordingly, an object of the invention is to provide new and improved frames for graphic display. Another object is to provide a frame which may be quickly and easily filled or emptied of its graphical display. A further object is to provide a frame wherein the enclosed graphical display may be straightened with a minimum of difficulty.

Another object of the invention is to provide a frame which is especially well suited for use on or in combination with plaques, display boards, or the like. Here, an object is to provide a frame which does not add any appreciable thickness to the plaque.

Yet another object of the invention is to provide low cost frames which are adaptable to be produced in large quantities and almost any quality.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In keeping with an aspect of the invention, these and other objects of the invention are accomplished by means of double frame members which are permanently sealed in a spaced parallel relationship. The front frame has a glass or other transparent panel therein for exposing to view a graphical display. The rear frame has a tapered guide slot formed therein with a second panel which is positioned in a spaced parallel relationship with respect to the front panel. To insert a graphic display into the frame, it is only necessary to cut it to size and then to fit it into the guide slot. The taper of the slot guides the graphic display into and out of the space between the front and back panels. A finger opening in the back panel enables a removal or straightening of the graphic display. The two frame members are inserted through an opening in a plaque and sealed, one member being on one face of the plaque and the other member being on the opposite plaque face. The members may be sealed together or to the plaque. Because of flanges on the front and back frame members, the members stay in position in the plaque.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is an exploded view, in perspective, of one embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 1A is a rear perspective view of the front panel of the embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a front elevational view of the assembled unit of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a rear elevational view of the assembled unit of FIG. 1, and

FIG. 4–7 are four cross-sectional views taken along line 4—4 of FIG. 2, showing the steps of inserting the graphical display into and removing it from the frame.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In greater detail, FIG. 1 shows an exemplary plaque **20** having any suitable emblem **21** and information plate **22** on the end and having a window or opening **23** on the other end. The plaque may be constructed of wood or other suitable material. A double frame comprises a front member **24** and a back member **25** shaped and proportioned to fit into the window **23.**

The front member **24** comprises an escutcheon **26** and a supporting frame **27** (see FIG. 1A) for receiving a transparent panel **28** of any type, such as glass or plastic, for example. The rear member **25** comprises a central panel **29** and a supporting frame **32.** The two supporting frames **27, 32** are shaped and proportioned to fit together in a manner which positions the transparent panel **28** and the rear panel **29** in a spaced parallel relationship **33,** as seen in FIG. **4.** The outside dimensions of the supporting frames **27, 32** are such that they fit into window **23** without adding any appreciable thickness to the plaque **20,** as seen in FIGS. **4–7.** The members **24, 25** may be permanently secured in relation to the plaque **20** by either gluing together or by gluing to the plaque faces. Other suitable means of securing the assembly together may be employed.

The back of the supporting frame **27** of the front member **24** has four protuberances **31** which are adapted to fit into recesses **37** provided on the plaque. This permits members **24, 25** to be properly aligned in relation to the plaque **20.**

The rear panel **29** includes a guide slot **34** for receiving a graphical display (FIG. **3**). The upper edge of the panel **29** (lower edge **35** of slot **34**) is tapered inwardly to guide the graphical display into the frame and space **33,** as seen in FIG. **5.** The upper edge **36** of the slot **34** is tapered outwardly to guide the graphical display out of the frame, as seen in FIG. **7.**

As seen in FIG. **5,** the graphical display **40** may be dipped in direction A into the guide slot **34** and pushed into position inside the space **33** between the transparent panel **28** and the rear panel **29.** The upper edge of rear panel **29** has a relieved area **42** (FIG. **3**) for enabling the graphical display **40** to be pushed down into its final resting position.

When the graphical display **40** is pushed into such final position inside the space **33** (FIG. **6**), it may be viewed through the transparent panel **28** in the manner of a picture in a picture frame.

A suitable finger hole **43** is formed in the back panel **29** for enabling a user to place his finger **44** against the back of the graphical display (FIG. **7**). In this manner, the display **40** may be straightened in the frame or pushed upwardly in direction B, for removal from the frame. When so pushed, the graphical display **40** bears against the tapered surface **36** at the top of the slot **35** and is guided out of the slot.

The plaque may be provided with suitable means for supporting it in both a hanging and a free standing posi-

tion. This means includes an elongated spring-like member **50** with a hole **51** formed in one end thereof and a supporting leg **52** formed on the other end thereof. A screw **53** secures the member **50** to the plaque at a point intermediate the ends **51, 52.** The end of member **50** having the hole **51** has an offset relief section providing clearance between end **51** and plaque **20.** Thus, the head of a screw, nail, or hanger may be passed through the hole **51** and into the offset relief area. In this manner, the plaque may be hung on a wall.

The end **52** is a cantilevered arm which may be pulled away from the plaque **20.** The arm **52** bends near the screw **53** so that it projects away from the plaque to support it when it is setting on a table or similar surface. A scoreline **54** may be provided to facilitate bending. Thus, the inventive plaque and frame may be supported in different manners.

Briefly, in summary, the plaque may serve any convenient function, such as to commemorate an event, confer an award, preserve a memory or the like. The double frame member may be placed in the plaque in any suitable manner. The frame may be low cost metal or plastic, or it may be of precious metal. Hence, the invention may be made as low cost or high cost as may be desirable. The shape and configuration of the frames and plaques may vary according to the user's needs and wishes.

Therefore, the appended claims are to be construed to cover all equivalent structures falling within the scope and the spirit of the invention.

I claim:

1. An article comprising a plaque having a predetermined thickness and an opening therein, front and rear frame members positioned within said opening in said plaque and held in a space parallel relationship by abuttment against opposite sides of said plaque, the front member having an opening for exposing to view a graphical display, the rear member having a panel with a guide slot formed therein, said guide slot being positioned to enable the insertion and removal of a graphic display into the frame and in the space between the front and back panels.

2. The article of claim **1** wherein a transparent panel is integral with the front member and extends across the opening therein so that the graphical display is viewed through the transparent panel.

3. The device of claim **2** wherein the guide slot is tapered to facilitate insertion and removal of a graphic display.

4. The article of claim **3** wherein a finger opening is included in the panel of the rear member to enable removal or straightening of the graphic display.

5. The article of claim **4** wherein the front member includes a first frame member having an escutcheon integrally formed thereon, for supporting the transparent panel, and the rear member includes a second frame member having an escutcheon integrally formed thereon for supporting the rear panel, said first and second frame members being shaped and proportioned to telescope and fit together within said thickness of said plaque without adding substantial thickness thereto and said escutcheons forming said abuttments against said opposite sides of said plaques.

6. The article of claim **5** wherein the front member escutcheon fills the space in a window in said plaque between said transparent panel and said plaque.

7. The article of claim **6** wherein a finger opening is included in the panel of said rear member for removing or straightening said graphic display.

8. The article of claim **7** wherein a tapered relieved area is provided in the guide slot for positioning the graphic display.

9. The article of claim **8,** wherein means are included on said plaque for supporting it in either a hanging or a free-standing position.

10. The article of claim **8** wherein a plurality of locating pins are provided on the back of the escutcheon on the front member and recesses are provided on the plaque for receiving the locating pins whereby the front and back members are properly aligned in relation to the plaque.

11. The article of claim **10** wherein the locating pins are each positioned in a corner of the back of the escutcheon of the front member.

* * * * *