

Feb. 20, 1951

H. L. HOFFMAN
OBSERVING UNIT

2,542,675

Filed Jan. 30, 1950

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

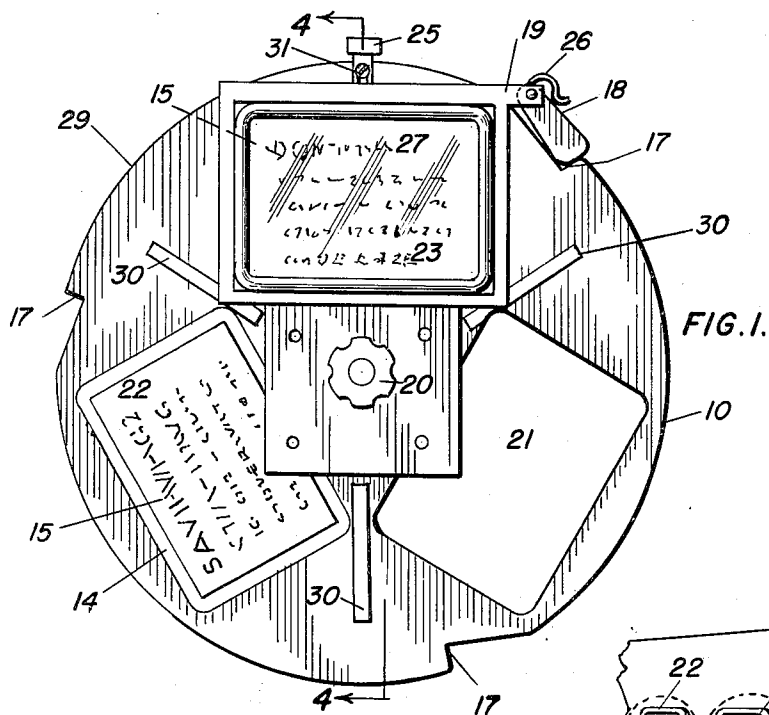


FIG. 1.

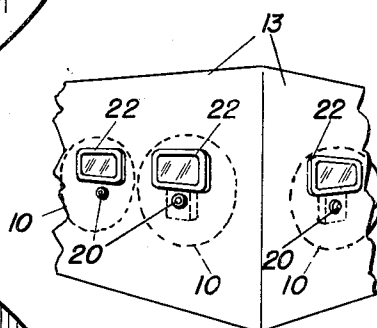


FIG. 3.

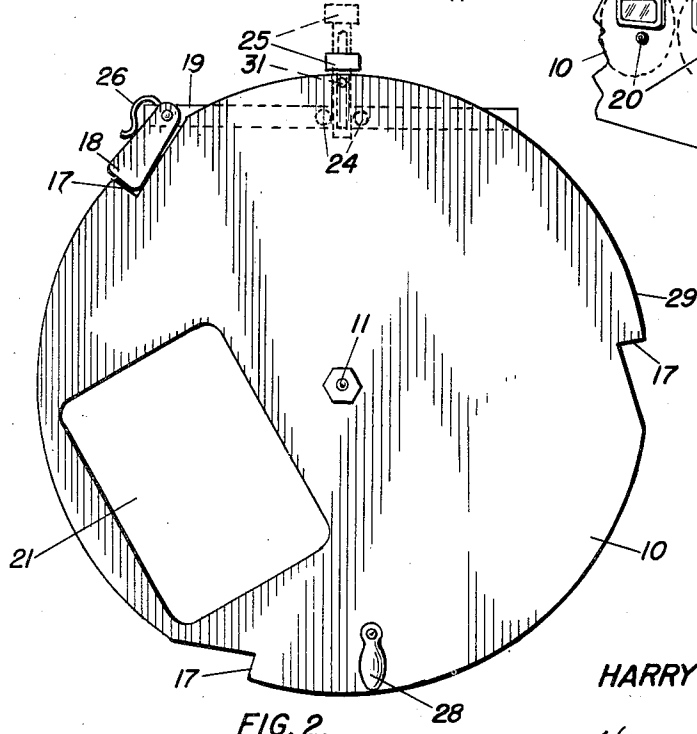


FIG. 2.

INVENTOR.
HARRY LEE HOFFMAN

BY *Howard J. Whelan.*
ATTORNEY.

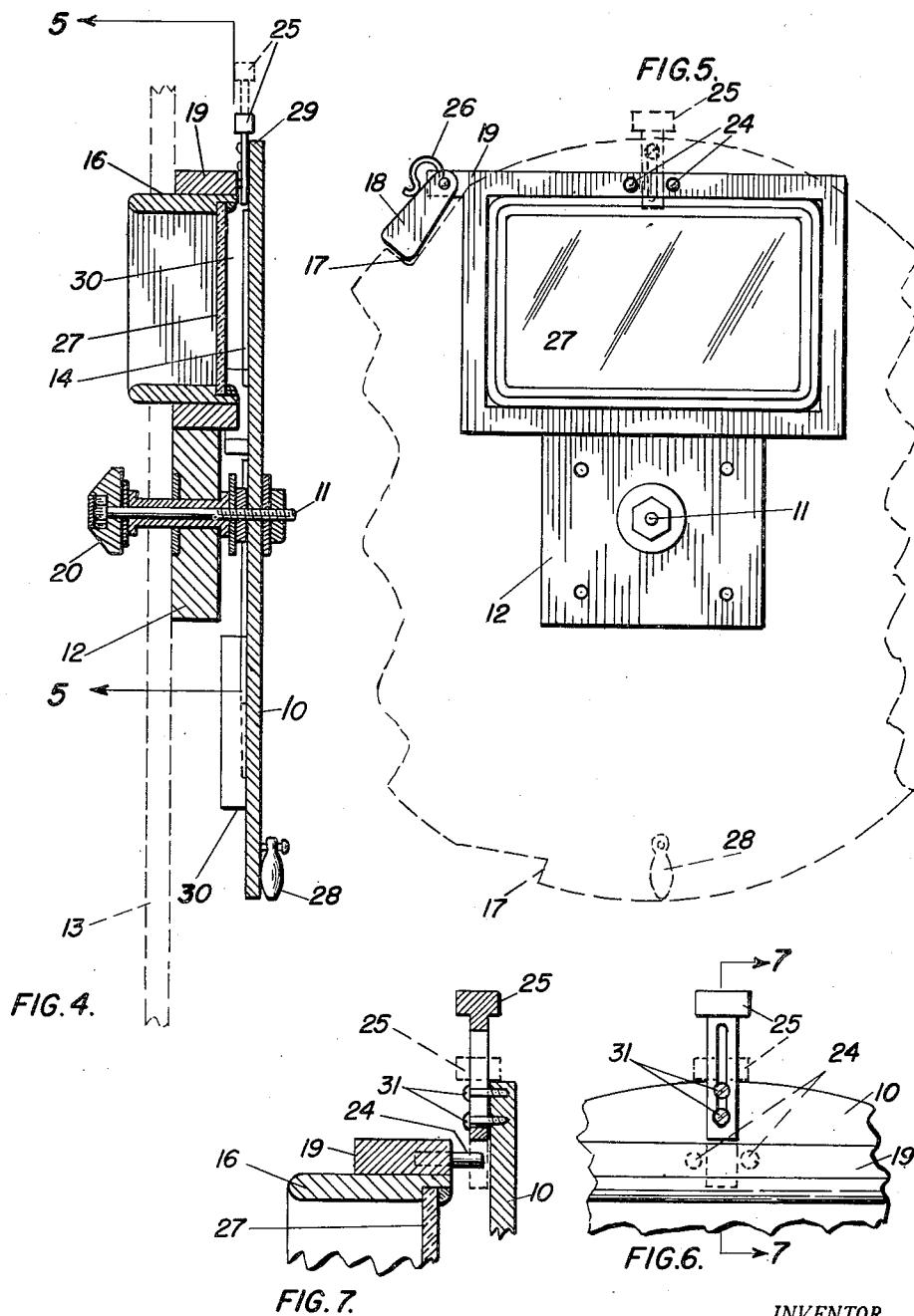
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INVENTOR.
HARRY LEE HOFFMAN.

BY *Howard J. Whelan.*
ATTORNEY.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,542,675

OBSERVING UNIT

Harry Lee Hoffman, Baltimore, Md.

Application January 30, 1950, Serial No. 141,277

6 Claims. (Cl. 40-70)

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This invention relates to display and advertising devices and more particularly to peephole units designed to make use of the natural curiosity of individuals to investigate what is going on at the project, such as the building of structures normally hidden from view by fences and other protective structures such as display windows and the like.

The building of large buildings in a highly populated district requires the contractor to erect protective boarding or fences around the area. The purpose of this boarding is to protect persons travelling by it from scattering dust, stones and other objects arising from the building operations. Such debris is apt to cause serious injury and subject the contractor or his employees. In fact the owners of the progressing structure are usually in favor of the passerby giving the project as many inspections as he would care to spend in the matter. There is a certain amount of advertising value to the attention derived from a building operation of this nature and many appreciate the fact. They do not however, know how to make the most of the situation, and generally pass the matter up as being unsolvable. However, a number of years ago, a certain contractor in a large city of the United States decided to do something in the matter, and thought he had solved the problem by providing small peepholes in the boarding, for individuals to look through. There was considerable publicity given in the matter throughout the country and the results were deemed satisfactory by all concerned. However in this invention, a more elaborate arrangement has been devised. Its purpose is to provide a better view than is possible through the use of a peephole, which is usually less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter. At the same time the new arrangement is safer. This is anticipated by the use of a thick glass window which will allow a view to be had but prevent particles or pieces of injurious substances from passing through the window space into the eyes of the observer. Using the curiosity of the observer and to make him give something in exchange for the facility provided, the window is provided with a series of advertisements that he must observe and understand in the most intimate manner. This can be appreciated when the fact appears that the device with the advertisements must be

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actuated by the observer himself while his eyes are concentrated in close proximity therewith.

Therefore an object of this invention is to provide a new and improved peephole unit that will avoid one or more of the disadvantages and limitations of the prior art.

Another object of the invention is to provide a new and improved peephole unit that can be mounted on a fence for facilitating its use by passers-by.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a new and improved peephole unit that can be used for observation purposes and as an advertising implement.

An additional object of the invention is to provide an effective and attractive display and observation unit that can be mounted on a suitable structure for facilitating its use by individuals and entertaining them with a view and with other data that is made interesting to them.

Other objects will become apparent as the invention is more fully outlined.

Referring to the drawings:

Figure 1 is a front view of a peephole unit embodying this invention; with the front fence removed;

Figure 2 is a rear view of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a sketch indicating how the invention can be mounted on a fence or similar structure;

Figure 4 is a side elevation in section of the device taken along the line 4-4 of Figure 1;

Figure 5 is a detail of the supporting window member looking in the direction of 5-5 in Figure 4;

Figure 6 is a detail view of the lock employed in this invention and

Figure 7 is a section on the line 7-7 of Figure 6.

Similar reference characters relate to the same parts throughout the drawings.

In the structure shown in the drawings, a rotary display observing unit comprises a disc 10 of suitable design suspended by a central shaft 11 that is journaled in a collar-like bearing member 12 adapted for attachment to a fence, or vertical wall 13 in any conventional manner. This disc has a series of frames 14 encompassing rectangular spaces 22 and 23 radially arranged in it and of a size suitable for the insertion of cards 15 having display or advertising notes thereon. The spaces may be open or closed in and are preferably of rectangular contour and register consecutively every 120° of turning with a peephole window 16 inserted in the fence 13. One of the frames 14 is usually left open at 21

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without a card so the observer can look through the peephole 16 without obstruction. This enables him to view any building project in progress behind the fence to which the unit is secured.

The periphery or peripheral rim 29 of the disc is notched at 17 to serve as a ratchet mechanism in conjunction with a pawl 18 operably movable on a rack 19 extending rigidly from the bearing 12 so that the disc cannot be rotated counter-clockwise, but may be rotated clockwise. This rack 19 also supports pins 24 that project therefrom in such alignment as to enable a slide bolt 25 to engage with them. The bolt in its engaged position on the pins 24 holds the disc against rotation.

A handle or knob 20 of the type indicated is attached and keyed to the shaft 41 and serves the user on the side of the wall 13 opposite to the placement of the disc, so that he may actuate the disc. The screws 31 hold the slide bolt structure 25 to the disc. The pawl 18 is held against the peripheral rim 29 by a flat spring 26 mounted on the arm 19 in rigid attachment. The peephole 16 is preferably closed in by a glass or plastic window 27, and is kept clean on the side away from the user of the unit, by a series of rubber brushes 30 radially attached to the front of the disc 10 so they will wipe the glass 27 as the disc is rotated. The brushes 30 are preferably cemented to the disc and are preferably of the softer kinds of rubber.

In order to keep the disc balanced one or more weights 28 are attached to the disc in suitable locations thereon.

The operation of the device is simple. The user simply rotates the knob 20 in a clockwise direction until the pawl 18 clicks in a notch 17 in the disc and registers the frame selected with the peephole 16. He rotates the knob again when he wants to rotate it to another position. His curiosity will ordinarily induce him to view all the advertisements on the disc. The unit keeps the peephole glass clean by the help of the brushes 30 which also serve to keep it steady and give it a desirable operational resistance. Whenever it is desired to prevent further turning of the disc, the owner of the device simply registers the bolt 25 between the pins 24 and pushes it down so as to lock the disc against turning.

While but one general form of the invention is shown in the drawings and described in the specifications, it is not desired to limit this application for patent to this particular form or in any other way otherwise than limited by the scope thereof, as it is appreciated that other forms of construction could be made that would use the same principles and come within the scope of the appended claims.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. In combination with a wall including a window therein, a display observing unit comprising in combination, a disc including a plurality of spaced positions and an opening therein, a support for the disc for rotating the disc adjacent the wall and aligning its spaced positions and opening in consecutive operation with said window whereby the user of the unit can observe the areas of the disc opposite the window in any of the spaced positions in said window, means disposable in said window to permit the dispensing of information therefrom, means for controlling the position of the disc during predetermined amounts of its rotative movement, means for locking the disc in predetermined posi-

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tions, said support including a bearing and a shaft attached to the disc with a handle thereon for operating said shaft, from the side of the wall opposite to the location of the disc thereon, said first mentioned means including a ratchet engageable in notch means provided in conjunction therewith on the disc.

2. In combination with a wall including a window therein, a display observing unit comprising in combination, a disc including a plurality of spaced positions and an opening therein, a support for the disc for rotating the disc adjacent the wall and aligning its spaced positions and opening in consecutive operation with said window whereby the user of the unit can observe the areas of the disc opposite the window in any of the spaced positions in said window, means disposable in said window to permit the dispensing of information therefrom, means for controlling the position of the disc during predetermined amounts of its rotative movement, means for locking the disc in predetermined positions, said support including a bearing and a shaft attached to the disc with a handle thereon for operating said shaft, from the side of the wall opposite to the location of the disc thereon, said first mentioned means including a ratchet engageable in notch means provided in conjunction therewith on the disc, said locking means including a sliding bolt positioned on said disc for engaging with a predetermined portion of said disc to retain it in a predetermined position of rotation.

3. A peephole unit comprising in combination, a collar member attachable to a wall structure and including a bearing transversely therein, a shaft rotatable in the bearing, a handle on one end of the shaft for rotating it, a disc on the other end portion of said shaft and including an opening therein to permit observation therethrough and spaces for advertising markings, a window element supported by said member and alignable with a predetermined space in said structure during the rotation of said disc for consecutive alignment of the said spaces therewith, means for controlling the direction of rotation of said disc, and means for manually locking said disc against rotation.

4. A peephole unit comprising in combination, a collar member attachable to a wall structure and including a bearing transversely therein, a shaft rotatable in the bearing, a handle on one end of the shaft for rotating it, a disc on the other end portion of said shaft and including an opening therein to permit observation therethrough and spaces for advertising markings, a window element supported by said member and alignable with a predetermined space in said structure during the rotation of said disc for consecutive alignment of the said spaces therewith, means for controlling the direction of rotation of said disc, means for manually locking said disc against rotation, said window element including a frame with a transparent pane therein, its frame being arranged to fit within an opening provided therefor in said structure at the alignable space.

5. A peephole unit comprising in combination, a collar member attachable to a wall structure and including a bearing transversely therein, a shaft rotatable in the bearing, a handle on one end of the shaft for rotating it, a disc on the other end portion of said shaft and including an opening therein to permit observation therethrough and spaces for advertising markings, a window element supported by said member and

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alignable with a predetermined space in said structure during the rotation of said disc for consecutive alignment of the said spaces therewith, means for controlling the direction of rotation of said disc, means for manually locking said disc against rotation, said window element including a frame with a transparent pane therein, its frame being arranged to fit within an opening provided therefor in said structure at the alignable space, and brushes on the face of the disc, for cleaning the window surface as the disc is rotated.

6. A peephole unit comprising in combination, a collar member attachable to a wall structure and including a bearing transversely therein, a shaft rotatable in the bearing, a handle on one end of the shaft for rotating it, a disc on the other end portion of said shaft and including an opening therein to permit observation there-through and spaces for advertising markings, a window element supported by said member and alignable with a predetermined space in said structure during the rotation of said disc for consecutive alignment of the said spaces therewith, means for controlling the direction of rotation

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of said disc, means for manually locking said disc against rotation, said window element including a frame with a transparent pane therein, its frame being arranged to fit within an opening provided therefor in said structure at the alignable space, brushes on the face of the disc for cleaning the window surface as the disc is rotated, and means for balancing the disc so any unbalancing in said disc due to variation in its weight throughout its structure can be compensated for as well as keep the disc notch in engagement with said first mentioned means.

HARRY LEE HOFFMAN.

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