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(54) **POCKET FLAP**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

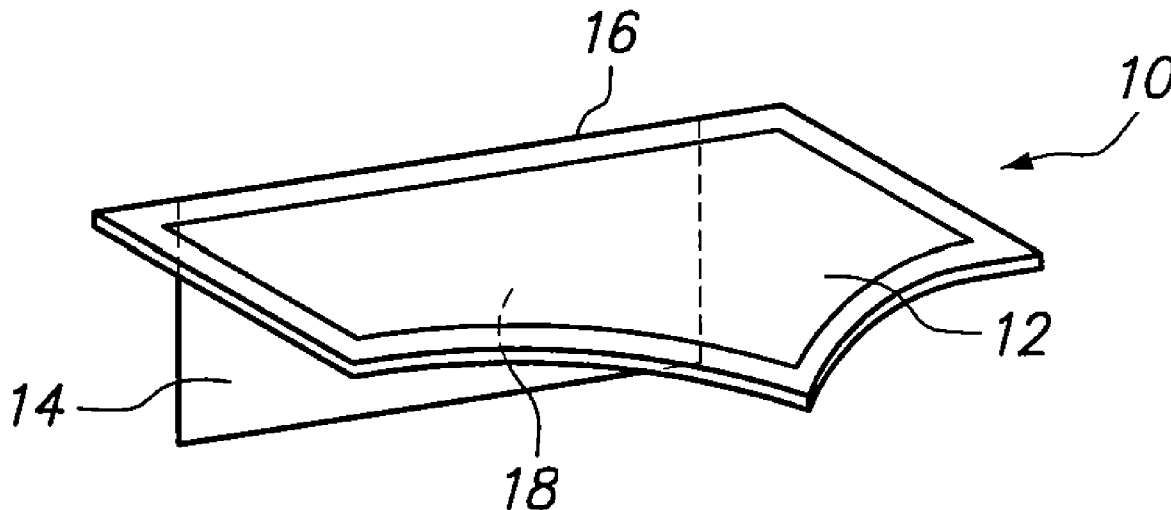
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A selectively attachable/detachable pocket flap includes a base member and a flap member. Respective straight edges of the base and flap members are joined together to establish a hinge line so the members can each be rotated about the hinge line to establish a potential space between them. In use, the base member is inserted into a pocket that is established by a pocket panel on an article of clothing. Stated differently, the pocket panel is positioned in the potential space between the base and flap members. The flap member is then rotated about the hinge line to position the pocket panel between the base member and the flap member to hold the pocket flap on the article of clothing.

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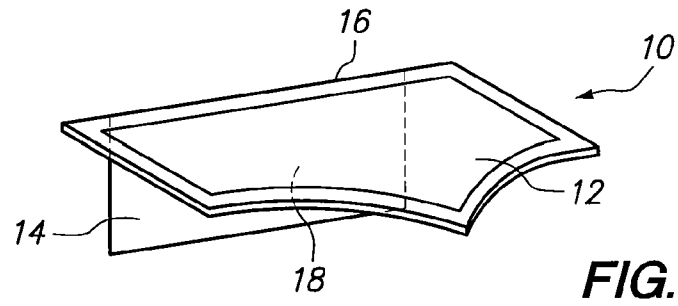


FIG. 1

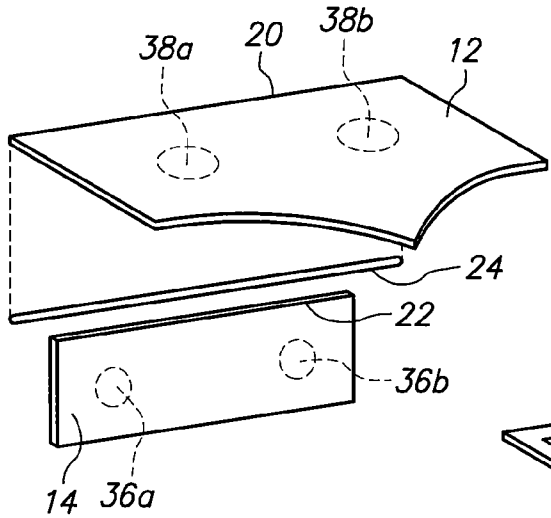


FIG. 2

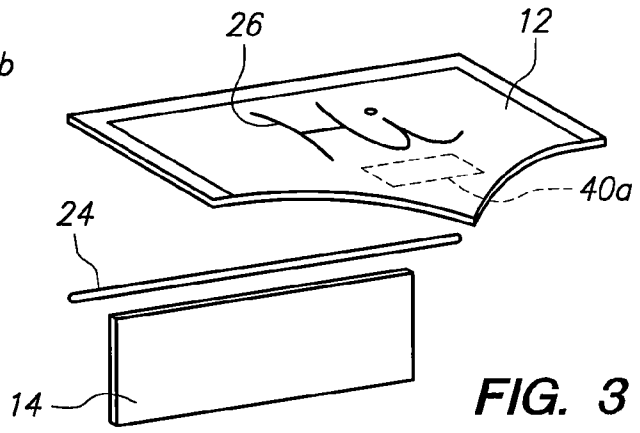


FIG. 3

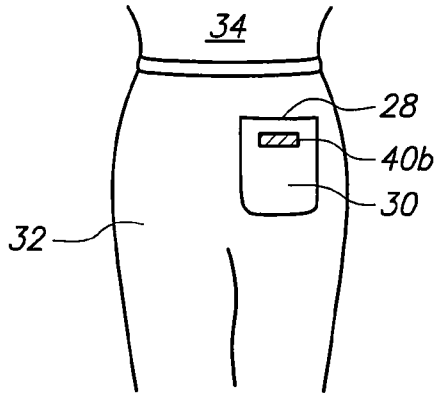


FIG. 4A

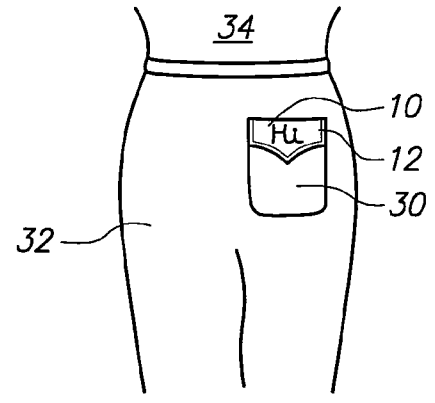


FIG. 4B

POCKET FLAP

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention pertains generally to decorative and ornamental embellishments for articles of clothing. More particularly, the present invention pertains to embellishments for apparel that can be selectively attached to or detached from the apparel as desired. The present invention is particularly, but not exclusively, useful as an embellishment that is formed as a flap and is selectively engaged with a pocket on an article of clothing to create a decorative and ornamental pocket flap for the article of clothing.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] For many clothes designs, pockets are located on the article of clothing and made with primarily utilitarian purposes in mind. Pocket utility, however, is not always required and may often be a lesser interest. Instead, it may be more important for a person to be attractive by wearing an article of clothing, such as a shirt, a jacket or a pair of pants, that is embellished with ornamental or decorative design on its pockets. Pockets in particular, even when utilitarian purposes are otherwise intended, provide an opportunity to incorporate appropriate eye-catching ornamentation and designs for the particular article of clothing. It may also happen that a person is simply tired of basic design for an article of clothing and wants to experience a change by adding an embellishment (a.k.a. "Bling").

[0003] From a more practical standpoint, whenever the basic design of an article of clothing is to be changed, it is important for the device or element that manifests the change to appear as though it was an original aspect of the article, rather than being merely an add-on. Further, it is important that the device or element be functionally and easily incorporated into the design of the article of clothing. Moreover, the device or element that is being added to an article of clothing needs to be effectively and firmly attached, in order to minimize the possibility it will become dislodged or detached from the article of clothing. In any event, if an embellishment is incorporated as an attachment to a pocket, it may be desirable for the functionality of the pocket to be maintained.

[0004] In light of the above, it is an object of the present invention to provide a pocket flap that can be selectively attached to a pocket of an article of clothing in a manner that will provide an appropriately decorative and ornamental embellishment for the clothing. Another object of the present invention is to provide a pocket flap for an article of clothing that can be effectively and firmly attached to a pocket in order to minimize the possibility it will become dislodged or detached from the article of clothing. Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a pocket flap for selective attachment to the pocket of an article of clothing that is simple to use, is easy to manufacture, and is comparatively cost effective.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] A pocket flap (device) that can be selectively engaged/disengaged with the pocket of an article of clothing is provided by the present invention. Functionally, the device can be attached to the pocket panel that creates a pocket on the article of clothing. As intended for the present invention, the pocket flap (device) can be adorned with ornamentations ("Bling") that will contribute to or enhance the attractive aspects of the article of clothing.

[0006] Structurally, the pocket flap of the present invention essentially includes a base member and a flap member. A wire

can also be included, as disclosed below. In detail, the base member is essentially a rectangular shaped layer that is made of a stiff material. Typically, this stiff material will be enclosed in a fabric material that is the same as, or is compatible with, that of the article of clothing on which the pocket flap is to be used. Importantly, the base member will be dimensioned so it can be inserted into the pocket of the article of clothing. On the other hand, the flap member need not be stiff. Instead, the flap member will provide the desired embellishment to the article of clothing that is the intended purpose of the pocket flap. Accordingly, the nature of the material (e.g. fabric) that is used for the flap member, as well as the decorative ornaments that may be made part of the flap member, will depend on the whims and preferences of the designer.

[0007] Both the base member and the flap member of the pocket flap have a substantially straight edge. For the present invention, these edges are joined together to establish a hinge line. Typically, this will be done by sewing the fabric material of the base member to the fabric material of the flap member. Thus, the base member and the flap member can rotate, relative to each other, about the hinge line to create a potential space between them. As mentioned above, a wire can also be included in the pocket flap. If so, the wire will be sewn into the pocket flap (device) at the juncture between the base member and the flap member to help mold the structure to the body shape. For this purpose, the wire is flexible so it can be bent and thereby configured to conform the hinge line of the device to a body surface of a user of the device.

[0008] An important aspect of the present invention is that the pocket flap (device) be firmly engaged with the pocket panel of a pocket when in use. This is necessary so it (the device) will not become dislodged or detached from the article of clothing during use. Preferably, this is accomplished with magnets. Specifically, in a preferred embodiment of the present invention, a first magnet, or plurality of magnets, is(are) mounted on the base member. Also, a second magnet, or plurality of magnets, is(are) mounted on the flap member. For this preferred embodiment of the present invention, the first and second magnets generate an attractive force between them that will hold the device on the pocket panel of a pocket. Alternatively, an attachment means can be provided wherein a first part of the attachment means is affixed to the pocket panel. A second part of the attachment means will then be affixed to the flap member. For this embodiment, the first and second parts of the attachment means will interact with each other to engage the pocket flap with the pocket panel. As envisioned for the present invention, the attachment means may be either a hook and loop type fastener (e.g. Velcro®) or a well-known snap type fastener.

[0009] In use, the base member of the pocket flap of the present invention is inserted into a pocket that is established by a pocket panel on an article of clothing. Thus, the pocket panel is positioned in the potential space between the base and flap members. The flap member is then rotated about the hinge line, toward the base member, to position the pocket panel between the base member and the flap member. For the preferred embodiment of the present invention, this rotation of the flap member also brings the first magnet on the base member into active engagement with the second magnet on the flap member to hold the pocket flap on the article of clothing.

[0010] For an alternate embodiment of the present invention, the base member can be modified to function as a clip or it can be effectively replaced by a clip. For instance, in place of the base member, a fabric strip can be attached to the back of the flap member. Clips, of a type well known in the perti-

ment art, can then be affixed to the fabric strip and used to engage the flap member with the pocket panel.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] The novel features of this invention, as well as the invention itself, both as to its structure and its operation, will be best understood from the accompanying drawings, taken in conjunction with the accompanying description, in which similar reference characters refer to similar parts, and in which:

[0012] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the pocket flap of the present invention;

[0013] FIG. 2 is an exploded perspective view of the pocket flap with portions shown in phantom for clarity;

[0014] FIG. 3 is an exploded perspective view of an alternate embodiment of the pocket flap shown with ornamental and decorative embellishments that can be provided for all embodiments of the present invention;

[0015] FIG. 4A is a view of a pocket on pants being worn by a user; and

[0016] FIG. 4B is a view of the user as seen in FIG. 4A with a pocket flap of the present invention being worn on the pants pocket.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0017] Referring initially to FIG. 1 a pocket flap in accordance with the present invention is shown and is generally designated 10. As shown, the pocket flap 10 includes a flap member 12 and a base member 14 that are joined together at a juncture that defines a hinge line 16. For the present invention, the flap member 12 and the base member 14 can rotate about the hinge line 16 relative to each other, to thereby create a potential space 18 between them. As envisioned for the present invention, both the flap member 12 and the base member 14 will be, primarily, a fabric type material chosen by the manufacturer of the pocket flap 10. Further, the base member 14 will also incorporate a stiff material, such as cardboard, that will give the base member 14 a degree of rigidity.

[0018] Referring now to FIG. 2, it will be seen that the flap member 12 is also formed with a substantially straight edge 20, and that the base member 14 is formed with a substantially straight edge 22. It will be appreciated by cross referencing FIG. 2 back to FIG. 1 that the hinge line 16 is established when the edge 20 of flap member 12 is joined with the edge 22 of base member 14, such as by sewing. FIG. 2 also shows that the pocket flap 10 may include a wire 24 that can be sewn into the hinge line 16 as the flap member 12 is joined to the base member 14. When incorporated into the pocket flap 10 of the present invention, the wire 24 is preferably bendable so it can be appropriately configured as disclosed below in greater detail.

[0019] FIG. 3 shows that the flap member 12 can be adorned with ornamentations 26. Specifically, if used, the additional ornamentations 26 can be of any type desired by the designer. The purpose here is that the pocket flap 10 be used to distinctively influence one's personal appearance. For example, a comparison of FIG. 4A with FIG. 4B shows a use without the pocket flap 10 (FIG. 4A), and a use with the pocket flap 10 (FIG. 4B). In this example, FIG. 4A shows how a typical pocket 28 looks, without a pocket flap 10, when it is created by a pocket panel 30 on a pair of pants 32 and is worn by a user 34. FIG. 4B then shows the same user 34, wearing the same pants 32, when the pants 32 have been embellished by a pocket flap 10.

[0020] Returning to FIG. 2, a preferred embodiment of the pocket flap 10 of the present invention is shown. In this preferred embodiment, pair of first magnets 36a and 36b are shown mounted on the base member 14. Also, a pair of second magnets 38a and 38b are shown mounted on the flap member 12. In a manner well known by almost everyone, when the magnets 36a and 36b are proximate the magnets 38a and 38b an attractive force between them will hold the flap member 12 against the base member 14 and thereby substantially eliminate the potential space 18. As intended for the present invention, when the pocket flap 10 is in use, the pocket panel 30 on pants 32 will be held between the flap member 12 and the base member 14 within what was formerly the potential space 18.

[0021] In an alternate embodiment of the pocket flap 10 that is best appreciated by cross referencing FIG. 3 with FIG. 4A, an attachment 40a (shown in phantom) can be affixed to the flap member 12. This is done in a manner well known in the art, such as by sewing or gluing the attachment 40a onto the flap member 12. Likewise, an attachment 40b can be affixed to the pocket panel 30 as shown in FIG. 4A. With this arrangement, the present invention envisions the attachment 40a on the flap member 12 can be connected with the attachment 40b to hold the flap member 12 against the pocket panel 30. As envisioned by the present invention, the attachments 40a,b can either be a loop and hook type fastener (e.g. Velcro®) or a standard snap type fastener. It is to be appreciated that the present invention envisions other types of alternate arrangements for various fasteners. Further, in place of the attachments 40a and 40b, a clip (not shown) can be used to hold the flap member 12 against the pocket panel 30. The important thing for any embodiment is that the pocket panel 30 somehow be firmly held between the flap member 12 and the base member 14 or, stated differently, that the flap member 12 be effectively engaged with the pocket panel 30.

[0022] In use, the base member 14 of the pocket flap 10 is inserted into the pocket 28 of an article of clothing (e.g. pants 32). This places the pocket panel 30 in the potential space 18 between the flap member 12 and the base member 14. Once the base member 14 is properly positioned, the flap member 12 is then rotated about the hinge line 16. This rotation will effectively eliminate the potential space 18 and, thus, position the pocket panel 30 directly between the base member 14 and the flap member 12. For the preferred embodiment of the present invention, this rotation of the flap member 12 will also engage the magnets 36a,b on the base member 14 with the magnets 38a,b on the flap member 12 to firmly hold the pocket flap 10 on the pocket 28. Similarly, alternate type fasteners (e.g. attachments 40a,b or a clip) will accomplish the same function.

[0023] While the particular Pocket Flap as herein shown and disclosed in detail is fully capable of obtaining the objects and providing the advantages herein before stated, it is to be understood that it is merely illustrative of the presently preferred embodiments of the invention and that no limitations are intended to the details of construction or design herein shown other than as described in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A device for engagement with a pocket panel on an article of clothing which comprises:

- a base member formed with a substantially straight edge;
- a flap member formed with a substantially straight edge, wherein the edge of the flap member is joined with the edge of the base member to establish a hinge line at the juncture for rotation of the flap member around the hinge line relative to the base member to selectively create a potential space therebetween for receiving at least a portion of the pocket panel therein; and

- a means mounted on the device for engaging the device with the pocket panel to hold the pocket panel between the base member and the flap member.
- 2. A device as recited in claim 1 further comprising a wire positioned along the hinge line to provide stability for the device while the device is engaged with the pocket panel.
- 3. A device as recited in claim 2 wherein the wire is made of metal and is sufficiently flexible to allow for bending the wire into a configuration to conform the hinge line of the device to a body surface of a user of the device.
- 4. A device as recited in claim 1 wherein the base member includes a substantially rectangular shaped layer made of a stiff material, and wherein the base member is dimensioned for insertion into a pocket on an article of clothing established by the pocket panel.
- 5. A device as recited in claim 4 wherein the stiff material is cardboard.
- 6. A device as recited in claim 1 wherein the means for engaging the device with the pocket panel comprises:
 - a first magnet mounted on the base member; and
 - a second magnet mounted on the flap member, wherein there is an attractive force established between the first magnet and the second magnet.
- 7. A device as recited in claim 6 wherein the first magnet is a pair of magnets and the second magnet is a pair of magnets.
- 8. A device as recited in claim 1 wherein the means for engaging the device with the pocket panel comprises:
 - a first part of a loop and hook means mounted on the pocket panel; and
 - a second part of a loop and hook means mounted on the flap member, wherein the first part interacts with the second part to fasten the flap member against the pocket panel.
- 9. A device as recited in claim 1 wherein the means for engaging the device with the pocket panel comprises:
 - a first snap means mounted on the pocket panel; and
 - a second snap means mounted on the flap member, wherein the first snap means interacts with the second snap means to fasten the flap member against the pocket panel.
- 10. A device as recited in claim 1 further comprising ornamentation affixed to the flap member.
- 11. A device for engagement with a pocket panel on an article of clothing which comprises:
 - a substantially straight hinge wire;
 - a base member mounted on the hinge wire for rotation around the hinge wire;
 - a flap member mounted on the hinge wire for rotation around the hinge wire to create a potential space between the base member and the flap member for receiving at least a portion of the pocket panel in the potential space; and
 - a means mounted on the device for engaging the device with the pocket panel to hold the pocket panel between the base member and the flap member.
- 12. A device as recited in claim 11 wherein the wire is made of metal and is sufficiently flexible to allow for bending the wire into a configuration to conform the hinge line of the device to a body surface of a user of the device.

- 13. A device as recited in claim 11 wherein the base member includes a substantially rectangular shaped layer made of a stiff material, and wherein the base member is dimensioned for insertion into a pocket on an article of clothing established by the pocket panel.
- 14. A device as recited in claim 13 wherein the stiff material is cardboard.
- 15. A device as recited in claim 11 wherein the means for engaging the device with the pocket panel comprises:
 - a first magnet mounted on the base member; and
 - a second magnet mounted on the flap member, wherein there is an attractive force established between the first magnet and the second magnet.
- 16. A device as recited in claim 11 wherein the means for engaging the device with the pocket panel comprises:
 - a first part of an attachment means mounted on the pocket panel; and
 - a second part of the attachment means mounted on the flap member, wherein the first part and the second part interact with each other to engage the device with the pocket panel.
- 17. A device as recited in claim 11 further comprising ornamentation affixed to the flap member.
- 18. A method for affixing an ornamental and decorative device to a pocket panel on an article of clothing which comprises the steps of:
 - providing a device having a base member formed with a substantially straight edge, and a flap member formed with a substantially straight edge, wherein the edge of the flap member is joined with the edge of the base member to establish a hinge line at the juncture, for rotation of the flap member around the hinge line relative to the base member to selectively create a potential space therebetween for receiving at least a portion of the pocket panel therein, and further wherein the device includes a means mounted on the device for engaging the device with the pocket panel;
 - inserting the base member of the device into a pocket established by the pocket panel, wherein the base member includes a substantially rectangular shaped layer of a stiff material dimensioned for insertion into the pocket; and
 - activating the means for engaging the device with the pocket panel to hold the pocket panel between the base member and the flap member.
- 19. A method as recited in claim 18 wherein the device further comprises a flexible metal wire positioned along the hinge line to provide stability for the device while the device is engaged with the pocket panel, and the method further comprises the step of bending the wire into a configuration to conform the hinge line of the device to a body surface of a user of the device.
- 20. A method as recited in claim 18 wherein the means for engaging the device with the pocket panel comprises:
 - a first magnet mounted on the base member; and
 - a second magnet mounted on the flap member, wherein there is an attractive force established between the first magnet and the second magnet.

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