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FLORAL PIECE FOUNDATION

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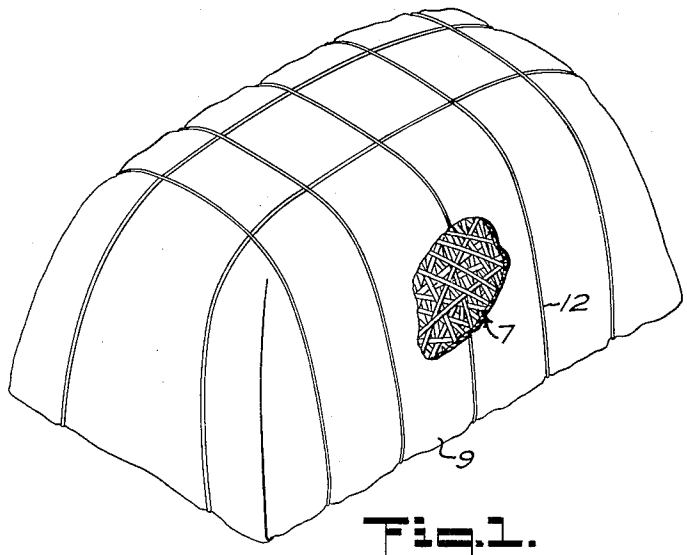


Fig. 1.

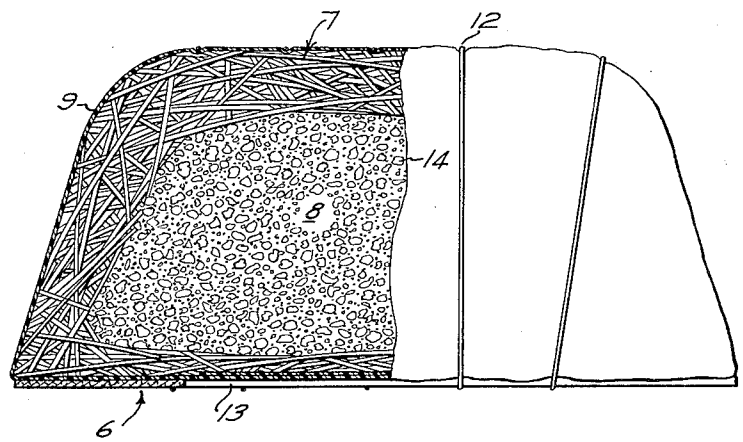


Fig. 2.

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FLORAL PIECE FOUNDATION

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This invention generally relates to devices for positioning and supporting flower stems so as to permit the production of a properly designed floral piece.

Heretofore, a wide variety of floral piece foundations have been provided and one of such foundations is disclosed in our prior Patent No. 2,699,012. In said patent, there is disclosed a foundation or base for floral pieces comprising a stuffing material of pine needles or the like and a suitable perforable wrapper surrounding the needles through which the flower stems could be inserted. The needles were so arranged so as to permit ready entry of the delicate flower stems and yet provide a firm support therefor, so that irrespective of the angular relationship between the stem and the foundation base, the respective flowers would be properly maintained in position.

While the foregoing construction was mechanically practical, it was found that where the floral piece was to be utilized over any extended period of time, the dry pine needles would not permit any great life for the flowers. However, pine needles or their equivalent are not water retentive or absorbent and it therefore accomplished no purpose to wet the needles so as to provide a wet support for the stems.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a floral piece foundation comprising a pine needle or similar supporting stuffing in which means are incorporated for holding water whereby the foundation may be used as a constant source of moisture for the stems of the flowers inserted therein.

Another object of our invention is to provide a device of the character described in which a mass of water absorbent and water retentive material is provided and which is substantially completely surrounded by the stem supporting material whereby the combination of proper support and moisture may be readily afforded.

A further object of the invention is to provide a foundation of the character described in which the moisture retentive and absorbent material consists of vermiculite particles.

Yet another object of our invention is to provide a device as hereinabove defined which is substantially drip free yet which contains sufficient water to materially extend the life of the flowers inserted into the base.

The invention possesses other objects and features of advantage, some of which, with the foregoing, will be set forth in the following description of the preferred form of the invention which is illustrated in the drawing accompanying and forming part of the specification. It is to be understood, however, that variations in the showing made by the said drawing and description may be adopted within the scope of the invention as set forth in the claims.

Referring to said drawing:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the floral foundation of the present invention.

FIGURE 2 is a longitudinal elevational view of the construction shown in FIGURE 1 with portions of the external wrapping being broken away so as to more clearly indicate details of internal construction.

In broad terms, the device of the present invention generally includes a base 6, a stem supporting mass or body 7 overlying the base, a water absorbent and retentive mass 8 of material positioned generally centrally within the body 7, a wrapper 9 for enclosing the body and material, and a plurality of tie wires or other fastening means 12 for securing all of the elements together.

More particularly, and as will be seen in the drawing, the base 6 may be of any desired shape or configuration but in order to make the conventional "pillow" floral design, the base possesses a generally rectangular configuration and preferably consists of a flat plate or stiff sheet of generally imperforate material such as paperboard or corrugated pasteboard. For a purpose presently to be explained, the base 6 is provided with a slot 13.

The body 7 is shaped in a cushion-like configuration so as to effect a pillow design although it will be readily apparent that other configurations could readily be used. The body consists of a large number of elongated rod-like elements shaped in the form of needles. Actually, it will be appreciated that if the length or diameter of these individual elements are excessive, it will be difficult if not impossible to insert the relatively weak flower stem therethrough. However, by using elements having a diameter from about 1/64 of an inch to 1/8 of an inch and a length from about 1 inch to 3 inches, optimum supporting qualities are obtained. While synthetic extruded plastic materials may be utilized, coniferous organic needles are particularly well suitable and since they are found in large quantities the cost thereof is accordingly lessened. By way of example, dry mature pine needles are extremely satisfactory to form the body 7. A body formed of such needles will perform the requisite functions of permitting ready entry of a flower stem therethrough and then supporting such stem and its attached flower in the position in which the stem was inserted into the body.

As hereinabove explained, while the body of pine needles is adequate for insuring proper support of the flower stems, it is not capable of retaining moisture so as to keep the stems wet and fresh. Accordingly, as the principal feature of the present invention, there is provided the mass or core 8 which is formed of material which has the necessary water retentive and absorbent qualities. Unfortunately, any such material has been found inadequate for proper support of the stems and therefore it must be used and incorporated with the body 7. An excellent water absorbing and retentive material is vermiculite particles and such particles are illustrated in FIGURE 2 of the drawing, and it will be seen that the bulk of such particles are substantially completely surrounded by the body 7. In other words, a stem inserted into the floral pack or foundation will first pass through the pine needles, thence through the mass of vermiculite particles 14, and then finally again through the lower or opposed mass of pine needles.

While it is possible to use similar absorbent materials such as some of the cellular plastic materials, the vermiculite is relatively inexpensive and therefore preferable for the production of the core 8.

To complete the unit, a generally waterproof flexible covering 9 surrounds the mass of material and overlies the base 6. This covering may be of any readily perforable pliant material such as polyethylene and after encompassing the mass of needles and vermiculite, is secured to the base such as by passing a plurality of wires 12 around the entire package in a general symmetrical pattern so as to assist the florist in preparing the floral display. After the unit is complete, the person arranging the display may pour water through the cut slot 13 in the base 6 and punch out one or more holes through the wrapper 9 in an end thereof. The excess water is permitted to drain out through the opening in the wrapper and results in a moist pad which is drip free, yet which contains sufficient water to materially extend the life of the flowers inserted therein.

What is claimed is:

1. A floral piece foundation comprising a generally

flat base plate, a body of stuffing material the individual elements of which are relatively flexible, have a general needle-like shape, are of a length of at least 1 inch, have a diameter between 1/64 and 1/8 inch and possess a relatively hard, smooth, glazed surface and may be broken upon insertion of a flower stem into said body, a core of water retentive and absorbent material positioned substantially entirely within said body and capable of receiving a flower stem inserted therethrough, a perforable wrapping enclosing said body, and means securing said body to said base plate.

2. A floral piece foundation comprising a flat rigid base plate, a body of pine needle stuffing material overlying and supported on said base plate, said body having a central core of particles capable of absorbing water and retaining the same, a perforable waterproof wrapper enclosing said body, and a mesh work of cordage securing said base plate, material and wrapper together, said core consisting of vermiculite particles and said particles being substantially completely surrounded by said needles.

3. A floral piece foundation comprising a relatively flat base plate having an aperture therein, a mass of pine needles supported on and overlying substantially the entire area of said base plate, said mass in the central portion thereof having a quantity of vermiculite particles therein, a perforable wrapper overlying the sides and upper edge

portion of said mass and being secured to said base plate, and cordage for tying said wrapper, needles, vermiculite particles and base plate together.

4. A floral piece foundation comprising a body of stuffing material the individual elements of which are of generally rod-like shape and possess a substantially hard smooth surface, said material being generally incapable of absorbing water while permitting the passage of a flower stem therethrough and supporting such stem, a core of water retentive and absorbent material disposed substantially entirely within the central portion of said body and substantially encompassed by a layer of said elements, and a perforable wrapper around said body.

5. A device as set forth in claim 4 in which said core material comprises expanded plastic resin granules.

6. A device as set forth in claim 4 in which said stuffing material consists of synthetic plastic.

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