An impression medium for preserving handprints and footprints for reproduction. Preferably, the device is used for infants. Still further, preferably, the preserved handprints and footprints allow for reproduction onto personalized keepsakes, such as birth announcements, birth certificates, mugs, t-shirts, and candy wrappers.
INFANT's RIGHT FOOTPRINT

Fig. 6

INFANT's LEFT FOOTPRINT

Fig. 7
IMPRESSION MEDIUM FOR PRESERVING HANDPRINTS AND FOOTPRINTS FOR REPRODUCTION AND METHOD THEREFOR

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] The present application is claiming the benefit of the Jan. 13, 2003 filing date of provisional Patent Application No. 60/439,815, entitled “KIT AND METHOD FOR MAKING AND SUBMITTING INFANT FOOT PRINTS TO SERVICE COMPANY FOR REPRODUCTION AND RELATED GIFTS”.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention relates generally to arts and crafts and, more specifically, to an impression medium for preserving handprints and footprints for reproduction.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Birth announcements and related gifts have long been used by parents to announce the birth of a child. Currently, one desiring to employ the service of an announcement printing company is generally limited to providing the infant’s birth information and occasionally a photograph for reproduction on announcements.

[0004] Alternatively, parents may purchase kits that provide a keepsake certificate and paint or ink for making an imprint on the certificate. However, these kits do not allow for multiple announcements that can be mailed or otherwise easily shared with family and friends. Furthermore, these kits typically do not provide printed birth information, thus requiring the user to hand-write the infant birth information onto the certificate.

[0005] Therefore a need existed for an impression medium for preserving handprints and footprints for reproduction onto personalized keepsakes. Preferably, the device is used for infants. Still further, preferably, the preserved handprints and footprints allow for convenient reproduction of the handprints and footprints along with printed birth information onto a set of birth announcements or gifts such as, but not limited to, keepsake birth certificates, mugs, t-shirts, and candy wrappers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0006] In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, an impression medium for preserving at least a portion of at least one of a handprint and a footprint for reproduction onto birth announcements and related gifts is disclosed. The impression medium comprises, in combination, an imprint film, a printing medium coated onto a bottom surface of the imprint film, a printing surface proximate the bottom surface of the imprint film, and a substantially rigid backer dimensioned to be placed proximate a bottom surface of the printing surface.

[0007] In accordance with another embodiment of the present invention a method for preserving handprints and footprints for reproduction is disclosed comprising the steps of providing an impression medium for preserving at least a portion of at least one of a handprint and a footprint, recording at least one of a handprint and a footprint onto the impression medium, and copying at least one of the handprint and the footprint from the impression medium onto a personalized keepsake.

[0008] The foregoing and other objects, features, and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following, more particular description of the preferred embodiments of the invention, as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1 is a top view of a keepsake birth certificate prior to receiving an imprint of a handprint or a footprint.

[0010] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the keepsake birth certificate of FIG. 1 being placed between an imprint film and a backer of a first embodiment of an impression medium.

[0011] FIG. 3 is a top view of a hand being pressed onto the first embodiment of the impression medium. Also shown is an imprint protector sheet that must be removed prior to pressing the hand onto the impression medium.

[0012] FIG. 4 is a top view of a printing surface.

[0013] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a hand being pressed onto a second embodiment of the impression medium.

[0014] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a printing surface being removed from between an imprint film and a backer of the second embodiment of the impression medium after an imprint of a footprint has been recorded onto the printing surface.

[0015] FIG. 7 is front view of a footprint recorded onto the printing surface shown in FIG. 6.

[0016] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of a bottom surface of a hand coated with a chemically reactive solution.

[0017] FIG. 9 is a perspective view of the hand coated with a chemically reactive solution of FIG. 8 being pressed onto a sheet of chemically reactive paper.

[0018] FIG. 10 is a perspective view of a handprint of the hand of FIG. 9 recorded onto the chemically reactive paper.

[0019] FIG. 11 is a perspective view of a foot being pressed onto an inkpad.

[0020] FIG. 12 is a perspective view of a bottom surface of the foot shown in FIG. 11 coated with ink.

[0021] FIG. 13 is a perspective view of the coated foot of FIG. 12 being removed after a footprint has been recorded onto paper card stock.

[0022] FIG. 14 is a top view of footprints copied onto a personalized birth announcement.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0023] The novel features believed characteristic of the invention are set forth in the appended claims. The invention will best be understood by reference to the following detailed description of illustrated embodiments when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals and symbols represent like elements.
The inventor has created an impression medium, referred to generically as impression medium 10, that allows for the convenient recording of at least a portion of a footprint 31 (shown in FIGS. 6, 7, 13 and 14) or handprint 30 (shown in FIG. 10) for reproduction onto personalized keepsakes.

Referring now to FIGS. 2-3, the preferred embodiment of the impression medium, referred to as impression medium 10a, is shown. The main components of the impression medium 10a include an imprint film 14 (shown in FIGS. 2, 3, 5 and 6), a printing medium 16 (shown in FIG. 6 and 7) coated onto a bottom surface of the imprint film 14 (shown in FIGS. 2, 3, 5 and 6), a printing surface 19 (shown in FIGS. 4, 6, and 7) proximate to the bottom surface of the imprint film 14, and a substantially rigid backer 22 (shown in FIGS. 2 and 6) dimensioned to be placed proximate a bottom surface of the printing surface 19. While it is preferred that the substantially rigid backer 22 be comprised of cardboard, it should be understood that substantial benefit may be derived from using plastic or any other substantially rigid material.

While, in the preferred embodiment, the impression medium 10a is substantially rectangular, as shown for example in FIGS. 2, 3, 5, and 6, it should be understood that it is within the spirit and scope of this invention to provide an alternatively shaped impression medium, as desired for particular uses.

An alternative embodiment of the impression medium 10a, referred to as impression medium 10b, is shown in FIGS. 5 and 6. Impression medium 10b is essentially the same as impression medium 10a, except that the size of the imprint film 14 in impression medium 10b is greater. Both impression medium 10a and impression medium 10b have a frame 11 (shown in FIGS. 2, 3, 5 and 6) coupled about the imprint film 14. Preferably, a first edge 13 (shown in FIG. 2) of the frame 11 is pivotally coupled to a corresponding first edge 23 (shown in FIG. 2) of the backer 22 so as to allow the backer 22 to be folded so as to be proximate the printing surface 19, although it should be clear that substantial benefit could be derived from an alternative embodiment of the present invention in which the backer 22 is coupled along another edge to the frame 11 or in which the backer 22 is completely separate from the frame 11.

Referring now to FIGS. 2-3, impression medium 10a comprises a frame 11 that defines at least three windows 12 dimensioned to expose at least a portion of the imprint film 14. Preferably, the exposed portions of the imprint film 14 are sized to fit a hand 32 (shown in FIG. 3) or a foot 34 (shown in FIG. 5).

Referring now to FIGS. 5 and 6, the frame 11 of impression medium 10b defines one window 12 dimensioned to expose a greater portion of the imprint film 14.

While FIGS. 3 and 5 depict an entire hand 32 and an entire foot 34, respectively, being pressed onto the imprint film 14, it should be clearly understood that substantial benefit may be derived from using a finger, a toe, a palm, a heel or any other portion of a hand 32 or foot 34. It should also be understood that although an infant hand 32 or infant foot 34 is preferred, substantial benefit may also be derived from using the hand 32 or foot 34 of a child or even an adult.

Referring now to FIGS. 3-4, it is preferred that the impression medium 10a have an imprint protector sheet 24 (shown in FIG. 3) dimensioned to be placed between the bottom surface of the imprint film 14 (shown in FIG. 3) and a top surface 21 (shown in FIG. 4) of the printing surface 19 (shown in FIG. 4). The imprint protector sheet 24 prevents any handprints 30 or footprints 31 from being made inadvertently while handling the impression medium 10a.

Prior to recording the handprint 30 or footprint 31, the imprint protector sheet 24 should be removed (shown in FIG. 3). A printing surface 19 should then be placed between the imprint film 14 and the backer 22. It is preferred that the printing surface 19 be either an imprint sheet 25 (shown in FIGS. 4, 6, and 7), card stock 26 (shown in FIG. 13), or artist board (not shown). It should be clearly understood, however, that substantial benefit may also be derived from using paper or any other medium capable of recording a handprint 30 or footprint 31.

By pressing the hand 32 (shown in FIG. 3) or foot 34 (shown in FIG. 5) onto the imprint film 14, the printing medium 16 (preferably ink) is transferred onto the printing surface 19 in the shape of a handprint 30 or footprint 31. This handprint 30 and footprint 31 may then be copied onto a birth announcement 29 (shown in FIG. 14), a card, a mug, a shirt, a candy wrapper, or any other form of a personalized keepsake.

Alternatively, a user may insert a pre-printed keepsake birth certificate 27 (shown in FIGS. 1 and 2) between the imprint film 14 and the backer 22 of the impression medium. After pressing a hand 32 (shown in FIG. 3) or a foot 34 (shown in FIG. 5) onto the imprint film 14, the printing medium 16 will be transferred directly onto the keepsake birth certificate 27.

Although it is preferred that ink 17 (shown in FIG. 11) be the printing medium 16 used to record the handprint 30 or footprint 31 and that a type of paper product be the printing surface 19, it should be understood that substantial benefit may be derived from an alternative embodiment of the impression medium 10. For example, referring to FIGS. 8-10, a bottom surface 33 (shown in FIG. 8) of a hand 32 (shown in FIGS. 8-9) or alternatively a foot, not shown) can be first coated with a chemically reactive solution 18. The coated hand 32 (or foot) can then be pressed onto a chemically reactive paper 28 (shown in FIGS. 9-10). Finally, FIG. 10 shows the resulting handprint 30 that appears on the chemically reactive paper 28.

An alternative method for preserving handprints and footprints is shown. A footprint 31 (or handprint) may also be recorded by first pressing a bottom surface 35 (shown in FIG. 12) of a foot 34 (or a hand) onto an inkpad 36 (shown in FIG. 11). The bottom surface 35 of the foot 34 (or hand) will then be coated with ink 17 (shown in FIG. 12). The foot 34 (or hand) is then pressed onto a printing surface 19 (shown in FIG. 13), such as cardstock 26 or artist board (not shown). FIG. 13 shows the resulting footprint 31 that appears on the cardstock 26. The footprint 31 (or handprint) can then be copied, such as by photocopy or some other standard copying means, onto a birth announcement 29 (shown in FIG. 14) or some other personalized keepsake. If desired, the printing surface 19 may be sent by, for example, a parent or a guardian, to a manufacturer of various items as described.
above, who will place the handprint 30 or footprint 31 onto the items manufactured by the manufacturer for distribution to those people designated by the parent.

What is claimed is:

1. An impression medium for preserving at least a portion of at least one of a handprint and a footprint comprising, in combination:

   an imprint film;

   a printing medium coated onto a bottom surface of said imprint film;

   a printing surface proximate said bottom surface of said imprint film; and

   a substantially rigid backer dimensioned to be placed proximate a bottom surface of said printing surface.

2. The impression medium of claim 1 further comprising a frame coupled about said imprint film, said frame defining at least one window dimensioned to expose at least a portion of said imprint film, said portion being sized to fit at least a portion of at least one of said handprint and said footprint.

3. The impression medium of claim 2 wherein said frame being coupled to said backer.

4. The impression medium of claim 2 wherein a first edge of said frame being pivotally coupled to a corresponding first edge of said backer so as to allow said backer to be folded so as to be proximate said printing surface.

5. The impression medium of claim 1 further comprising an imprint protector sheet dimensioned to be placed between said bottom surface of said imprint film and a top surface of said printing surface.

6. The impression medium of claim 1 wherein said substantially rigid backer being a cardboard backer.

7. The impression medium of claim 1 wherein said printing medium comprising ink.

8. The impression medium of claim 1 wherein said printing surface being one of an imprint sheet and paper card stock.

9. The impression medium of claim 1 wherein at least one of said handprint and said footprint being from at least one of an infant hand and infant foot.

10. A method for preserving handprints and footprints for reproduction comprising the steps of:

   providing an impression medium for preserving at least a portion of at least one of a handprint and a footprint;

   recording at least one of a handprint and a footprint onto said impression medium; and

   copying at least one of said handprint and said footprint from said impression medium onto a personalized keepsake.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the step of providing an impression medium for recording at least a portion of at least one of a handprint and a footprint comprises the steps of:

   providing an imprint film;

   providing a printing medium coated onto a bottom surface of said imprint film; and

   providing a printing surface proximate said bottom surface of said imprint film.

12. The method of claim 10 wherein the step of recording at least one of a handprint and a footprint onto an impression medium comprises the steps of:

   pressing at least one of a hand and a foot on a top surface of said imprint film so as to impart at least a portion of at least one of said handprint and said footprint from said bottom surface of said imprint film onto said printing surface; and

   copying from said printing surface at least a portion of at least one of said handprint and said footprint onto said personalized keepsake.

13. The method of claim 10 wherein said impression medium further comprises an imprint protector sheet dimensioned to be placed between said bottom surface of said imprint film and a top surface of said printing surface.

14. The method of claim 10 wherein said impression medium further comprises a substantially rigid backer dimensioned to be placed proximate a bottom surface of said printing surface.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein a first edge of said frame being pivotally coupled to a corresponding first edge of said backer so as to allow said backer to be folded so as to be proximate said printing surface.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein said substantially rigid backer being a cardboard backer.

17. The method of claim 10 wherein said impression medium further comprises a frame coupled about said imprint film, said frame defining at least one window dimensioned to expose at least a portion of said imprint film, said portion being sized to fit at least a portion of at least one of said handprint and said footprint.

18. The method of claim 10 wherein the step of recording at least one of a handprint and a footprint onto an impression medium comprises the steps of:

   providing a printing medium;

   coating a bottom surface of at least one of a hand and a foot with an effective amount of said printing medium;

   pressing at least a portion of at least one of said handprint and said footprint onto a printing surface; and

   copying from said printing surface at least a portion of at least one of said handprint and said footprint onto said personalized keepsake.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein said printing medium being ink contained in one of an inkpad and an ink plate.

20. The method of claim 18 wherein said printing medium being a chemically reactive solution.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein said impression medium being chemically reactive paper.

22. The method of claim 10 wherein said personalized keepsake being one of a birth announcement, a card, a mug, a shirt, and a candy wrapper.

23. The method of claim 10 wherein said personalized keepsake having at least one of said handprint and said footprint being manufactured by a third party for distribution to those people selected by at least one of a parent and a guardian.

24. A method for preserving handprints and footprints onto an impression medium for production of a personalized keepsake comprising the steps of:
providing an impression medium for preserving at least a portion of at least one of a handprint and a footprint, said impression medium comprising, in combination:

an imprint film;

a frame coupled about said imprint film, said frame defining at least one window dimensioned to expose at least a portion of said imprint film, said portion being sized to fit at least a portion of at least one of said handprint and said footprint;

an ink coated onto a bottom surface of said imprint film;

a printing surface proximate said bottom surface of said imprint film;

an imprint protector sheet dimensioned to be placed between said bottom surface of said imprint film and a top surface of said printing surface; and

a rigid backer coupled along a first edge to a corresponding first edge of said frame and dimensioned to be folded so as to be proximate a bottom surface of said printing surface; and

pressing at least one of a hand and a foot on a top surface of said imprint film so as to impart at least a portion of at least one of said handprint and said footprint from said bottom surface of said imprint film onto said printing surface; and

copying from said printing surface at least a portion of at least one of said handprint and said footprint onto one of a birth announcement, a card, a mug, a shirt, and a candy wrapper.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein at least one of said handprint and said footprint being at least one of an infant handprint and an infant footprint.

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