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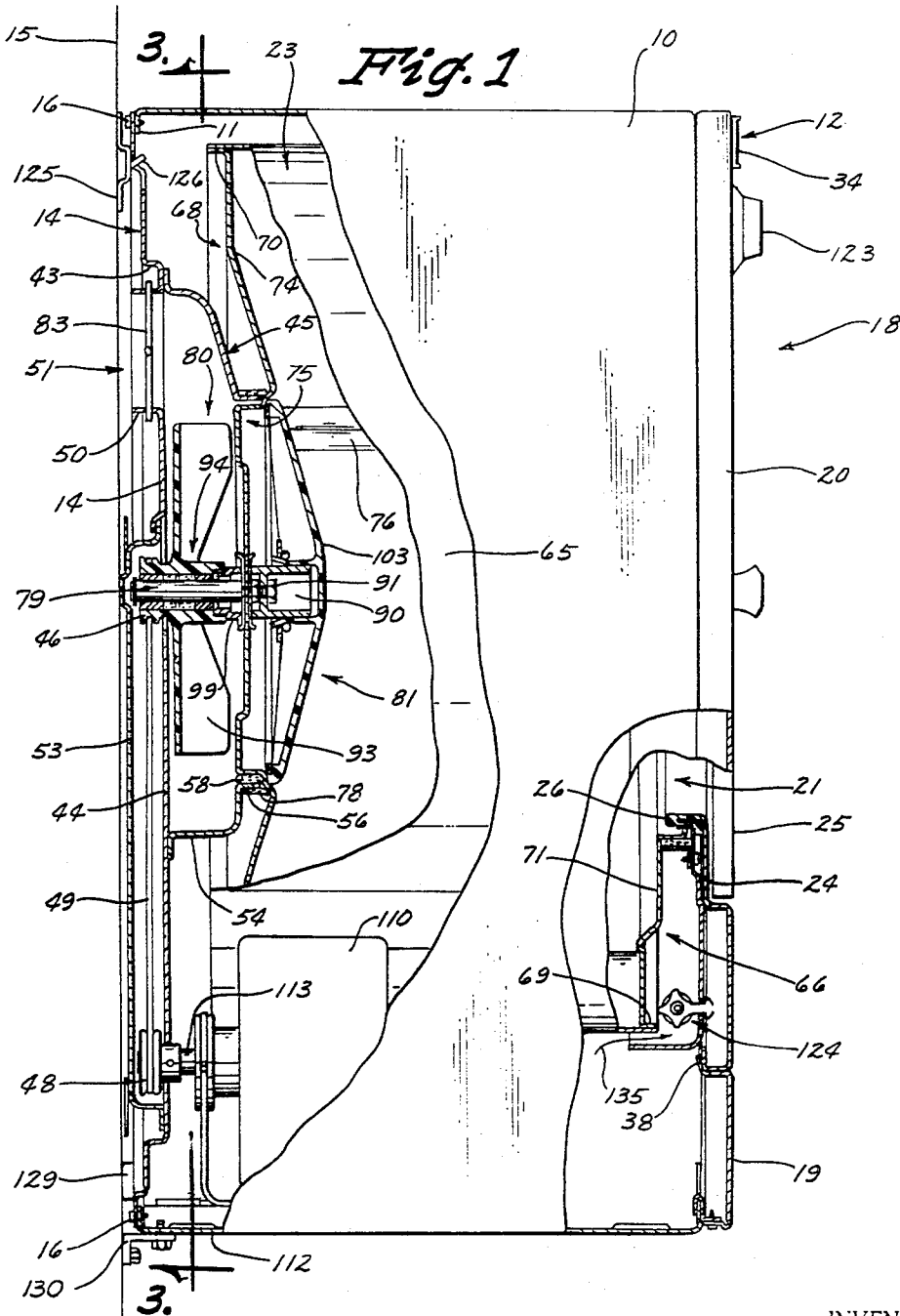
T. R. SMITH

3,471,940

COMPACT DRYER APPARATUS

Original Filed Nov. 17, 1967

5 Sheets-Sheet 1



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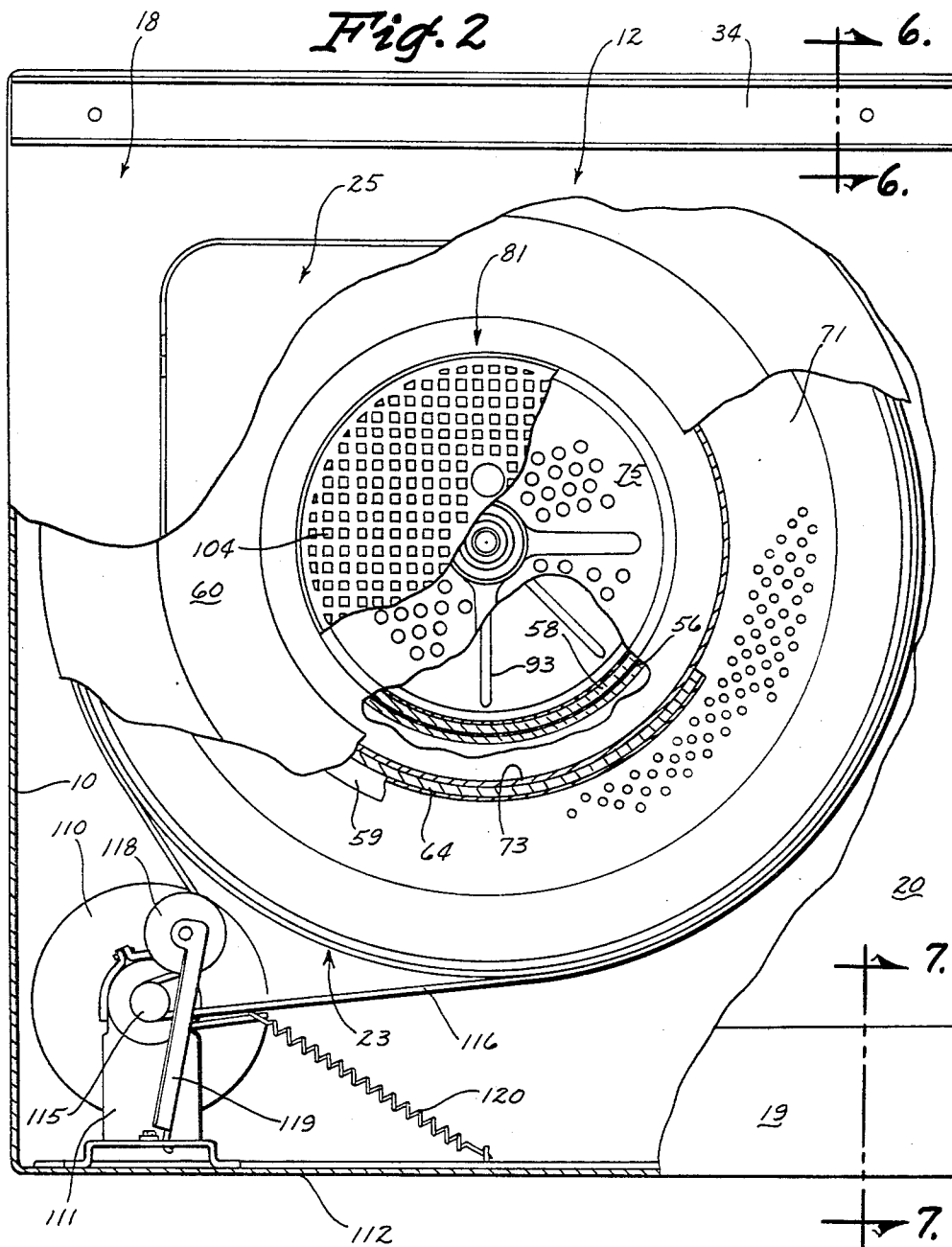
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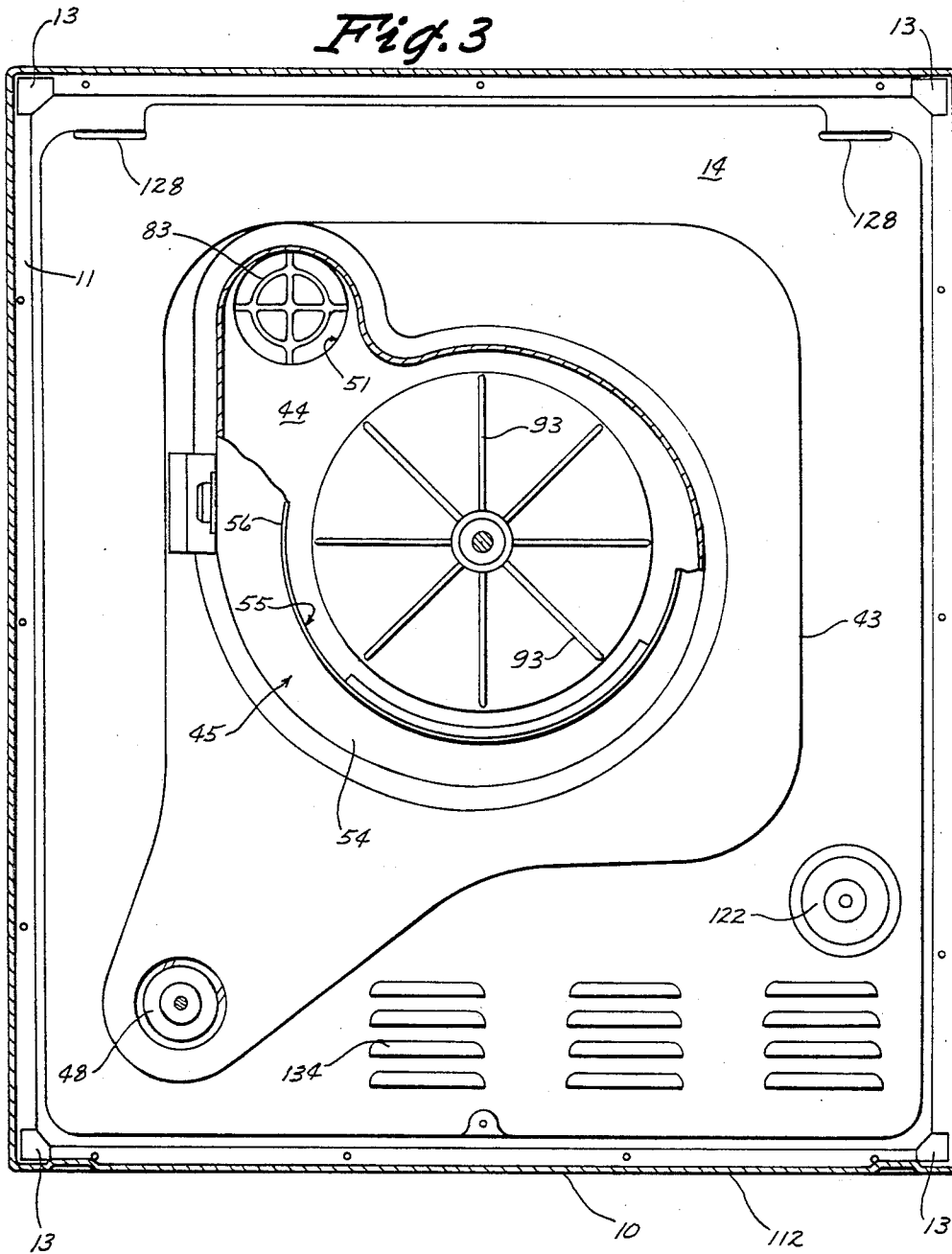
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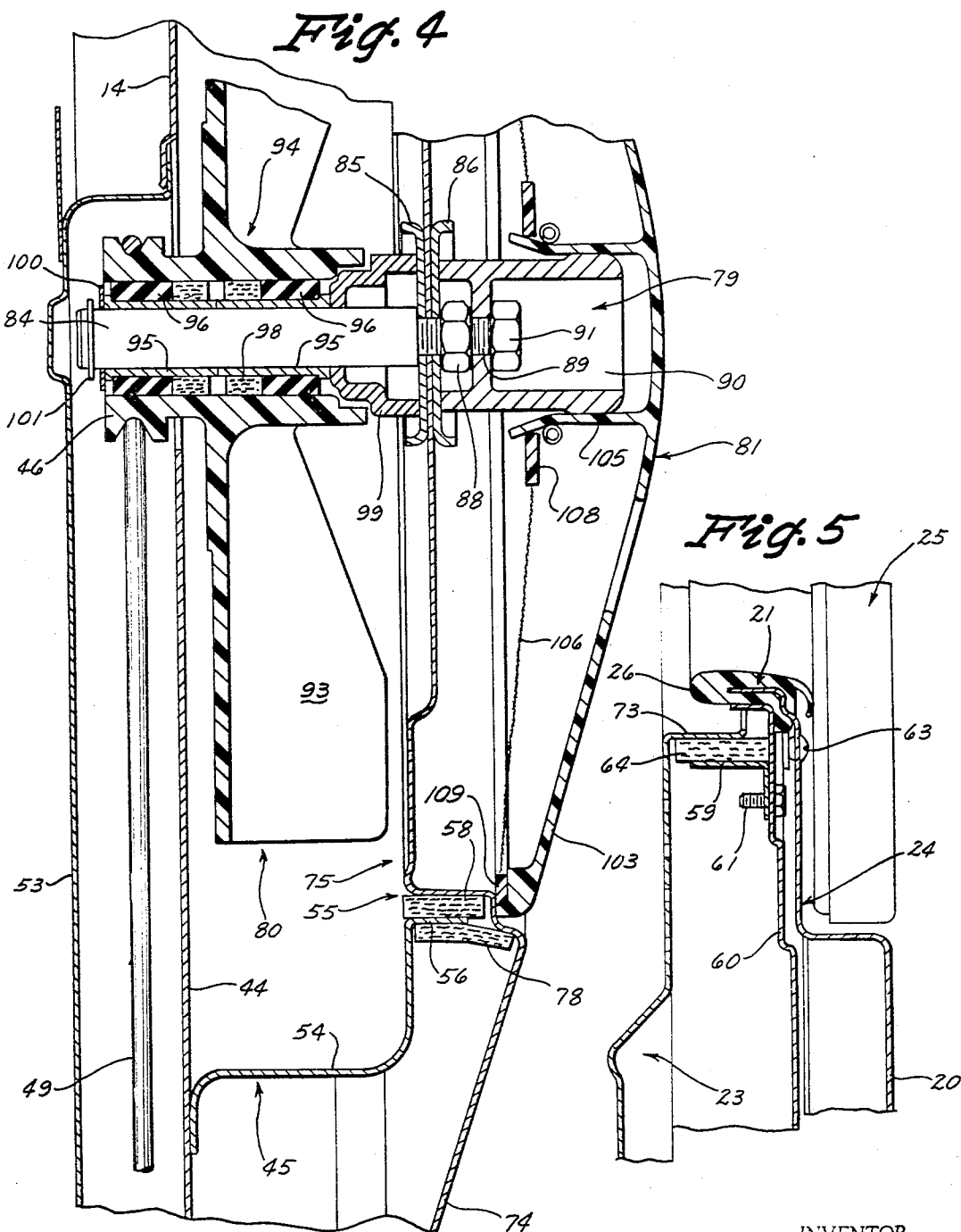
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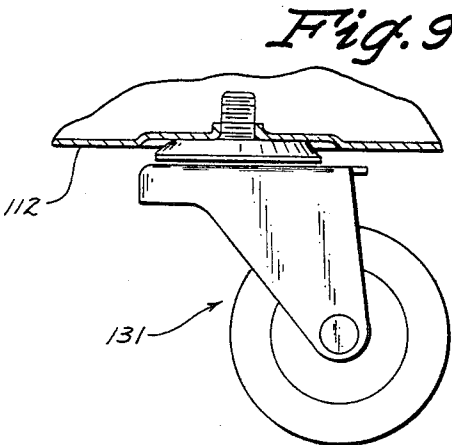
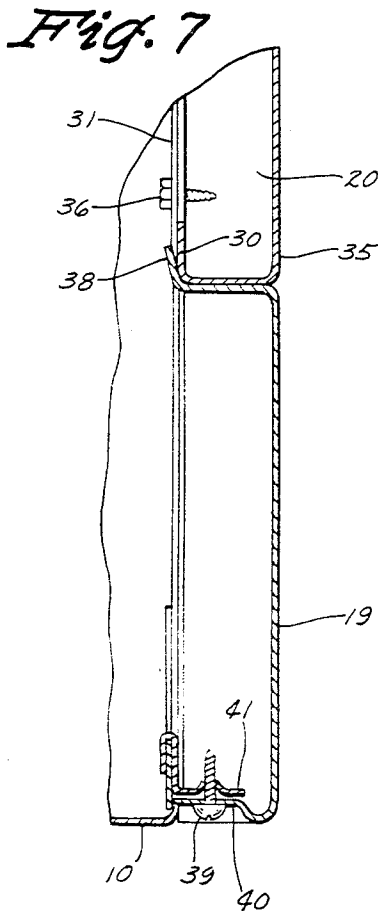
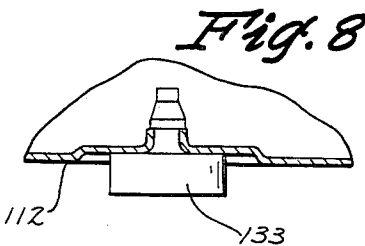
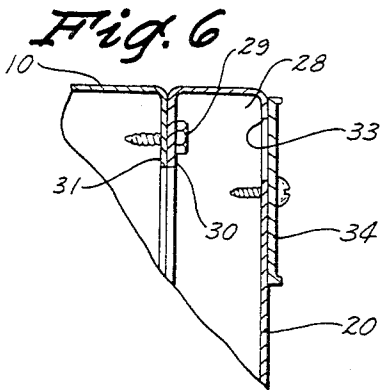
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3,471,940

COMPACT DRYER APPARATUS

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Continuation of application Ser. No. 684,048, Nov. 17, 1967. This application Oct. 28, 1968, Ser. No. 771,697

Int. Cl. F26b 11/04

U.S. Cl. 34—133

33 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A compact fabric drying apparatus is disclosed that includes a structural rear panel, an enclosure member, and a front panel rigidly connected to form a unitary cabinet structure mountable on a vertical wall through the rear panel. The drying apparatus further includes a trunnion mounted rotatable fabric container and a blower housing defined by the cabinet rear panel, the rotatable fabric container back wall and a substantially axially extending intermediate wall portion. An impeller, supported by the trunnion mounted rotatable fabric container, is positioned within the blower housing and driven at a relatively fast speed by drive means that is also operable for rotating the fabric container at a relatively slower speed.

This application is a continuation of Ser. No. 684,048, filed Nov. 17, 1967, now abandoned.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the invention

This invention relates to a drying apparatus and more particularly to a compact drying apparatus having novel cabinet, fabric container, and blower supporting constructions.

Description of the prior art

It is commonly shown in prior art patents relating to drying apparatus that a cabinet is provided for enclosing the rotatable fabric container and other operating components associated with the drying operation. These prior art patents show a structural substantially horizontal base frame through which the fabric container, operating components, and enclosing cabinet are directly or indirectly supported. The base is in turn supportable on a horizontal surface by a plurality of feet or casters.

Prior art has also shown drying devices mountable on vertical walls wherein the fabrics are dried by movement of air currents through a fixed chamber in which the fabrics are supported. These wall mounted drying devices, however, have not included a rotatable fabric container.

It is also commonly shown in prior art relating to fabric drying apparatus to provide means, in the form of a motor driven impeller, for moving air through the rotatable fabric container. In one type of construction a blower is provided adjacent the rear of the cabinet. The rear of the drum is supported by a shaft member with the shaft member also supporting the impeller. The primary support for the shaft, however, is through the cabinet back panel or through a supporting structure extending upwardly from a lower horizontal base. Another construction provides a separate support for the impeller independently of the fabric container. In both general types of construction, however, the blower housing is generally formed by front, rear, and sidewall members positioned between the cabinet rear panel and the container back wall.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved compact fabric drying apparatus having a rotatable fabric container supportable within a unitary cabinet structure.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide an improved compact fabric drying apparatus including a rotatable fabric container and being supportable on a substantially vertical wall.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a compact fabric drying apparatus having a rotatable fabric container and a unique cabinet structure mountable on a vertical wall through a structural rear panel.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a compact dryer apparatus including a novel cabinet structure, blower construction and means for rotatively supporting a fabric container within the cabinet structure.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide an improved fabric drying apparatus having a unique blower construction including an impeller supported by the rotatable fabric container.

It is a still further object of the present invention to provide an improved compact fabric drying apparatus including a unique blower construction including an impeller supported by the rotatable fabric container that is in turn supported within a unique cabinet structure.

The invention is embodied in a fabric drying apparatus having a unitary cabinet structure supportable on a vertical wall and operable for enclosing and supporting a rotatable fabric container. The invention is also embodied in a fabric drying apparatus having a unique blower construction including an impeller supported by the rotatable container.

Operation of the device and further objects and advantages thereof will become evident as the description proceeds and from an examination of the accompanying five pages of drawings which illustrate a preferred embodiment of the invention and in which similar numerals refer to similar parts throughout the several views.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGURE 1 is a side elevational view of a compact drying apparatus having portions shown in section to expose elements of the instant invention;

FIGURE 2 is basically a front view of the fabric drying apparatus of FIGURE 1 wherein portions are sequentially removed to further show the fabric drying apparatus comprising the instant invention;

FIGURE 3 is a sectional view of the fabric drying apparatus taken substantially along lines 3—3 of FIGURE 1 and shows primarily an inside view looking toward the rear of the machine from a position behind the rotatable fabric container;

FIGURE 4 is a fragmentary sectional view of the rear portion of the fabric drying apparatus showing primarily the rear support for the fabric container and the mounting of the blower impeller;

FIGURE 5 is fragmentary sectional view showing primarily the front support for the rotatable fabric container;

FIGURE 6 is a fragmentary sectional view taken along line 6—6 of FIGURE 2, showing attachment of the front panel to the fabric drying apparatus;

FIGURE 7 is a fragmentary sectional view taken along line 7—7 of FIGURE 2 showing further details relating to attachment of the front panel;

FIGURE 8 is a fragmentary sectional view showing an alternate means of support for the fabric drying apparatus; and

FIGURE 9 is also a fragmentary sectional view show-

ing a still further method of supporting the fabric drying apparatus.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring initially to FIGURE 1, there is shown a fabric drying apparatus embodying the instant invention. The laundry apparatus includes an enclosure member 10 in the form of a substantially continuous wrapper forming the top, bottom, and two sides of the dryer cabinet indicated generally as 12. The wrapper or enclosure member 10 may be formed from a single sheet of material and then welded along one seam to form a substantially continuous member as shown. The enclosure member 10 is formed with an inwardly turned flange 11 along each of its substantially flat portions at the rear end, and reinforced at each of the corners by a plate 13, to provide means for rigidly attaching the enclosure member 10 to the rear panel 14. The rear panel 14, shown in section in FIGURE 1 and in elevation in FIGURE 3, serves as a structural member for supporting the drying apparatus on a vertical wall 15 as will be more fully explained hereinafter. The enclosure member 10 is mounted on the rear panel 14 by a plurality of threaded fasteners 16 extending through the rear panel 14 and into the rear flange 11 of the enclosure member 10.

A front panel means 18 is attached to the enclosure member 10 as will be shown hereinafter. The front panel means 18 includes a lower portion in the form of a service access panel 19 removable from its position shown in FIGURE 1 separately from the upper portion 20 of the front panel to facilitate ease of service into the lower portion of the apparatus. The upper front panel 20 includes an opening 21 for providing access to a rotatable fabric container means 23 disposed within the cabinet 12 and further includes a recessed portion 24 surrounding the access opening 21 that is adapted to receive a door 25 for closing the access 21 during operation of the apparatus. As best shown in FIGURE 5, a resilient seal 26 is provided at the access 21 and engageable by the door 25 to effectively close the access opening 21.

Referring now to FIGURES 6 and 7, the attachment of the front panel means 18 to the enclosure member 10 is shown in detail. In a preferred assembly of the front panel means 18 to the enclosure member 10, the attachment would be as follows: The upper edge 28 of the upper front panel 20 as shown in FIGURE 6, is connected to the enclosure member 10 by means of threaded fasteners 29 extending rearwardly through the rear flange 30 of the front panel 20 and threadingly engageable with the front flange 31 of the enclosure member 10. An access hole 33 is provided in the front panel 20 to facilitate insertion of the screw member 29 into its assembled position. A plurality of these screw members 29 may be used along the upper edge 28 of the upper front panel 20. A trim strip 34 is assembled to the front surface of the front panel 20 for decorative purposes and to cover the access holes 33. As best shown in FIGURE 7, the lower edge 35 of the upper front panel 20 is secured to the enclosure member 10 by a threaded fastener 36 extending forwardly through the flange 31 of the enclosure member and threadingly engageable with the mating flange 30 of the front panel 20. The upper front panel 20 is thus securely fastened to the enclosure member 10.

The lower front panel 19 is secured by means of a flange 38 extending generally upwardly at the rear of the bottom edge 35 of the upper front panel 20 and by means of a pair of screw members 39 extending upwardly through the bottom edge 40 of the lower front panel 19 and engageable with a pair of fastener members 41 connected to the front flange 31 of the enclosure member 10.

It may therefore be seen from the foregoing explanation that the front panel means 18 is attached to and in turn through the enclosure member 10 to the rear

panel 14 and coeprable with the enclosure member 10 and rear panel 14 to provide a substantially rigid unitary cabinet structure construction for a clothes drying apparatus.

The apparatus shown in this application is in the form of a compact device having an over-all size and weight substantially less than the majority of the fabric drying apparatus available in the market place. In its preferred embodiment, the fabric apparatus shown in these drawings and specification has a total weight of approximately 80 lbs. and an over-all size of 24 inches wide, 28 inches high and 15 inches deep. This compact dryer apparatus is selectively mountable on a vertical wall or supportable on a horizontal surface. The unique combination of elements of the instant invention help make such a compact dryer possible.

Referring again to the rear panel 14, it is shown that the rear panel 14 includes a forwardly extending recessed portion 43 over a large central area for forming a rear wall 44 and accommodating a pair of drive pulleys 46 and 48 and an impeller drive belt 49 as will be more fully shown hereinafter. Adjacent the upper edge of the recessed portion 43, a rearwardly extending annular flange 50 defines a vent opening 51 from the blower housing 45. Attached to the rear side of the rear panel 14 is a housing 53 for enclosing the impeller belt drive system.

Attached to the forward side of the rear panel 14 is a scroll-shaped wall member 54 forming a part of the blower housing 45 and having a forwardly facing central opening 55 as best shown in FIGURES 1, 3, and 4. The opening 55 is encircled by a forwardly extending flange 56 upon a lower portion of which an arcuate felt bearing strip 58 is adhered to serve as a trunnion support for the rear end of the fabric container 23. The bearing surface of the felt bearing strip 58 is coated with a fluorocarbon such as tetrafluoroethylene.

As best shown in FIGURE 5, the front of the fabric container 23 is mounted on a trunnion arrangement similar to that shown for the rear of the container and includes an arcuate flanged bracket 59 attached to a heater shroud member 60 by a plurality of screws 61 which is in turn fastened to the front panel 20 by a plurality of threaded fasteners 63. Threaded fasteners 63 connecting the shroud 60 to the front panel 20 are positioned adjacent the corners of the access door recess 24 and concealed by the door 25. The threaded fasteners 61 are spaced along the arcuate flange 59. A tetrafluoroethylene-coated felt bearing 64 is adhered to the trunnion flange 59 in a manner similar to that for the rear felt bearing 58.

The fabric container 23, having an over-all dimension of approximately 22 inches in diameter and 10½ inches deep, is disposed within the cabinet structure 12 and is rotatable about a horizontal axis. The fabric container 23 includes a substantially cylindrical sidewall 65 and flanged front and back walls 66 and 68 attached along the flanges 69 and 70 to the sidewall 65 to form the drum-like fabric container 23. The front wall 66 includes an annular perforate portion 71 and a forwardly extending flange portion 73 encircling the access opening into the container. The flange portion 73 is engageable with the tetrafluoroethylene-coated felt bearing 64 for supporting the front of the fabric container 23.

The back wall 68 includes an outer imperforate annular portion 74 and a central rearwardly extending circular cylindrical portion 75 telescoping into the flanged opening 55 of the blower housing 45. The rearwardly extending portion 75 is supported on the tetrafluoroethylene-coated felt bearing 58 for supporting the rear of the fabric container 23. The central portion of the back wall 68 is perforate for allowing air flow from the fabric container 23 into the blower housing 45. It is thus clear that the fabric container 23 is trunnion supported at both the front and back walls 66 and 68 by the cabinet structure 14.

A plurality of baffles 76 are disposed within the fabric

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container 23 adjacent the sidewall 65 and extending between the front and back walls 66 and 68 for effecting a tumbling of the fabrics within the fabric container 23 upon rotation thereof. A felt seal 78 is provided encircling the outside of the flange 56 to substantially prevent passage of air between the flange 56 and the mating portion of the fabric container back wall 68. A shaft means 79 is supported at the axis of rotation of the fabric container 23 for supporting an impeller 80 and lint filter 81 as will be shown hereinafter.

Considering more closely the construction of the blower, it may be seen that the housing 45 consists of a portion 44 of the rear panel 14, an intermediate scroll-shaped wall 54 fixed to and extending substantially forwardly from the rear wall portion 44 and finally including the central perforate portion 75 of the fabric container back wall 68. In this unique construction, the rear cabinet panel 14 forms the back wall of the blower housing instead of using a separate wall member. This feature contributes to the over-all compactness of the dryer. The air flow path from the fabric container 23, therefore, includes flow through the perforations in the central portion 75 of the container back wall 68, through the blower and out the exhaust vent 51 provided in the rear panel 14. A grid 83 is disposed within the exhaust vent 51 to prevent insertion of foreign articles into the blower housing 45.

Disposed within the blower housing 45 is an impeller 80 mounted on the shaft means 79 carried by the back wall 68 of the fabric container 23. As best shown in FIGURE 4, the shaft means 79 includes a rearwardly extending shaft portion 84 mounted on the back wall 68 of the fabric container 23 by a pair of reinforcing plates 85, 86 abutting the back wall 68 that are in turn securely clamped in place by a first nut 88 threadingly engageable with the threaded portion 89 of the shaft means 79. A forwardly extending hub 90 is attached by a second nut 91.

The impeller vanes 93 extend radially outwardly from a central hub 94 rotatively supported within the housing 45 by the shaft portion 84. The hub construction of the impeller 80 includes a pair of bearings 95 for rotatively supporting the impeller 80 on the shaft portion 84 and further includes rubber mounts 96 and lubrication means 98 disposed between the hub 94 and the bearing 95. The hub includes an integral pulley 46 extending rearwardly through an opening in the rear panel and is engageable by a belt member 49 for effecting rotation of the impeller. A spacer 99 on the shaft 84 properly positions the impeller 80 within the blower housing 45. The impeller 80 is axially retained on the shaft 84 by a rear washer 100 and retaining ring 101.

A lint filter 81 is provided at the rear of the fabric container 23 for removing lint from the air prior to entrance into the blower housing 45 and exhaust from the machine. The lint filter 81 is positioned coaxially to the blower housing opening 55 and includes a housing member 103 having a plurality of openings 104 therein for allowing air to pass freely therethrough and further includes a central hub 105 frictionally engageable with the forwardly extending hub 90. The lint filter assembly 81 further includes a small mesh screen 106 supported by inner and outer annular rings 108 and 109 behind the lint filter housing member 103 and in the airflow path for removing lint particles from the air. Further details concerning the lint filter construction may be found in the United States Patent 2,925,665, issued to T. R. Smith, Feb. 23, 1960 and assigned to the assignee of the instant invention.

Drive means for rotating the impeller 80 and the fabric container 23 is provided in the form of an electric motor 110 mounted on the bottom portion 112 of the enclosure member 10 by a bracket 111 secured to the enclosure member 10 and having a pair of upwardly extending flanges. The motor 110 includes a rearwardly extending

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shaft 113 carrying a first pulley 48 engageable by the impeller drive belt 49. The motor 110 further includes a forwardly extending shaft carrying a second pulley 115 engageable by a polyvee drive belt 116 that substantially encircles the periphery of the container sidewall 65 for effecting rotation of the fabric container 23. The impeller drive belt 49 extending between the rear pulley 48 and the impeller pulley 46 is in the form of a round stretch belt and capable of maintaining proper driving tension thereon without auxiliary tension control means. The container drive belt 116, however, is engageable by an idler pulley 118 carried on a pivotal bracket 119 biased toward the belt 116 by a spring member 120 connected between the pivotal bracket 119 and the enclosure bottom 112 for maintaining proper driving tension on the drive belt 116.

The dryer apparatus is further provided with control means including a timer having a timer dial 123 manually actuatable by the operator for controlling or initiating the drying operation. Also, heating means in the form of an electric coil 124 is disposed between the shroud member 60 and the front wall 66 of the rotatable container for heating air prior to its passage into the fabric container. Further constructional details of the heating system as shown in the instant application may be found in United States Patent 2,958,138 issued to A. T. Ashby, Nov. 1, 1960 and assigned to the assignee of the instant invention.

Electric power may be supplied to the machine through a connection in the rear panel as at 122. The power may be connected to the timer, motor, heater and other auxiliary controls to effect a complete cycle of operations of the fabric drying apparatus.

As indicated previously, the entire fabric apparatus may be suspending on a vertical wall 15 spaced from the floor. A bracket member 125, as shown in FIGURE 1, is securely attached to the vertical wall 15 and includes a pair of forwardly and upwardly extending hooks 126 engageable with the pair of hanger means 128 formed in the rear panel 14. A spacer 129 is attached to the lower central portion of the rear wall 14 to properly space the bottom of the device from the wall 15. An additional bracket 130 may be connected between bottom 112 and the vertical wall for stability and as a guard against accidental removal of the unit from hooks 126.

The fabric drying apparatus may optionally be supported on a horizontal surface by a plurality of casters or rollers 131 as shown in FIGURE 9 to provide a fabric drying apparatus movable as a portable device. Another optional method of supporting the drying apparatus is to mount the device on a plurality of feet 133 extending downwardly from the bottom 112 of the enclosing member as shown in FIGURE 8.

By way of summary, operation of the device will be considered. The operator may initiate energization by operating the timer dial 123. Upon such actuation, the motor 110 will be energized and upon the motor 110 reaching a predetermined rotating speed, the heater will be energized. The motor 110 will rotate the impeller 80 at first speed of approximately 1700 r.p.m. and will simultaneously rotate the container 23 at a second speed at 52 r.p.m. The fabrics within the container 23 will undergo a tumbling operation while heated air is moved through the fabric container to effect a drying operation.

The airflow system, moving air at a rate of approximately 75 c.f.m., includes bringing air from the room atmosphere into the cabinet 12 through the louvered openings 134 in the rear panel 14 toward the shroud area is indicated by the arrow 135 in FIGURE 1, and then across the heater and into the fabric container 23 through the perforations in the front wall 66. The airflow continues through the fabric container 23 and filter 81 into the blower housing 45 through the perforations in the central portion of container wall 68, and then out through the exhaust vent 51 provided in the rear panel 14. Drying is

thus effected through a cooperative action of the tumbling and the movement of heated air through the fabric container.

It is thus seen that the device shown in the instant application is an improved drying apparatus having compact characteristics made possible at least in part by improved cabinet structure, supporting arrangements, and a novel blower construction with the impeller supported by the fabric container. This drying apparatus is capable of effecting an efficient drying operation in a device characterized by a compact, simplified construction.

In the drawings and specification, there has been set forth a preferred embodiment of the invention and although specific terms are employed, these are used in a generic and descriptive sense only and not for purposes of limitation. Changes in form and the proportion of parts as well as a substitution of equivalents are contemplated as circumstances may suggest or render expedient without departing from the spirit or scope of this invention as further defined in the following claims.

I claim:

1. In a fabric treatment apparatus, the combination comprising; a structural rear panel; peripheral enclosure means forming top, bottom and opposite sidewalls of the apparatus; means for rigidly connecting said enclosure means to said rear panel; front panel means connected to said enclosure means to form with said enclosure means and said rear panel a unitary cabinet structure; a fabric container supported within said cabinet structure and rotatable about a substantially horizontal axis; access means in said cabinet structure and said fabric container for inserting articles to be treated into said fabric container; and means associated with said structural rear panel for supporting said cabinet structure on a vertical wall through said rear panel whereby the entire load of said cabinet structure and said rotatable fabric container is supportable by said rear panel.

2. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said fabric container includes an annular axially extending rear portion and wherein an axially extending arcuate flange is fixed to said rear panel for supporting said axially extending rear portion.

3. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said fabric container includes an annular forwardly extending portion and an annular rearwardly extending portion and wherein a rearwardly extending arcuate flange is fixed to said front panel means and a forwardly extending flange is fixed to said rear panel for rotatably supporting said fabric container at said annular portions.

4. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said rear panel supporting means includes bracket means secured to said vertical wall and means formed in said rear panel detachably engageable with said bracket means for supporting said cabinet structure on said vertical wall.

5. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said bottom wall of said enclosure means defines means for selectively receiving mounting supports engageable with a horizontal surface for optionally supporting said fabric treatment apparatus on said horizontal surface.

6. In a fabric treatment apparatus, the combination comprising: a structural rear panel; peripheral enclosure means forming top, bottom, and opposite sidewalls for the apparatus; means for rigidly connecting said enclosure means to said rear panel; front panel means connected to said enclosure means to form with said enclosure means and said rear panel a unitary cabinet structure; a fabric container supported within said cabinet structure and rotatable about a substantially horizontal axis and including a perforate back wall; access means in said cabinet structure and said fabric container for inserting articles to be treated into said fabric container; blower housing means positioned between said rear panel and said back wall of said fabric container and including a sidewall portion

fixed to said rear panel; and means associated with said structural rear panel for supporting said cabinet structure on a vertical wall through said rear panel whereby the entire load of said cabinet structure and said rotatable fabric container is supportable by said rear panel.

7. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 6 wherein said rear panel forms the rear wall of said blower housing means and defines an egress from said blower housing means.

8. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 6 wherein said blower housing sidewall portion includes a forwardly extending flange means and said container includes an annular rearwardly extending rear portion engageable with said flange means for rotatably supporting said fabric container and for substantially aligning said perforate back wall with said blower housing means.

9. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 8 and further including a rearwardly extending flange fixed to said front panel means and an annular portion extending forwardly from said fabric container engageable with said rearwardly extending flange for rotatably supporting said fabric container within said apparatus.

10. A fabric treatment apparatus comprising a cabinet structure having a rear panel; a fabric container positioned within said cabinet structure and rotatable about a substantially horizontal axis, said fabric container including front, back and sidewalls; access means in said cabinet structure and in said fabric container for inserting articles to be treated into said fabric container; supporting means engageable with at least one of said fabric container walls for supporting said fabric container for rotation about said axis; blower means positioned between said cabinet rear panel and said fabric container back wall, said blower means including impeller means supported by said fabric container and operable for moving air through said fabric container; and means for driving said fabric container to effect tumbling of articles therein and for driving said impeller means to move air through said fabric container.

11. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 10 wherein means mounted on said fabric container back wall rotatively supports said impeller means on said fabric container for rotation relative thereto.

12. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 10 wherein said drive means includes means for driving said fabric container at a first speed and said impeller means at a second speed.

13. A fabric treatment apparatus comprising: a cabinet structure having a rear panel; a fabric container positioned within said cabinet structure and rotatable about a substantially horizontal axis, said fabric container including front, back, and sidewalls; access means in said cabinet structure and in said fabric container for facilitating insertion of articles to be treated into said fabric container; supporting means engageable with at least one of said container walls for supporting said fabric container for rotation about said axis; blower means positioned between said cabinet rear panel and said container back wall and including blower housing means defined at least in part by said rear panel and said container back wall, said blower means further including an impeller supported by said container and positioned within said blower housing means and operable for moving air through said fabric container; and means for driving said fabric container to effect tumbling of articles therein and for driving said impeller to move air through said fabric container.

14. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 13 wherein said blower housing means is further defined by scroll-shaped sidewall means extending substantially axially between said cabinet rear panel and said container back wall.

15. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 13 wherein shaft means extending rearwardly from said

container back wall rotatably supports said impeller on said container for rotation relative thereto.

16. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 15 wherein said impeller supporting shaft is positioned at said horizontal axis and wherein the central portion of said container back wall defines perforations for admitting airflow into said blower means.

17. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 16 wherein said shaft means includes a forwardly extending portion and wherein filter means is positioned on said forwardly extending portion coaxially to said back wall perforate portion for filtering particles from the airflow.

18. A fabric treatment apparatus comprising: a cabinet structure having a rear panel; a fabric container positioned within said cabinet structure and rotatable about a substantially horizontal axis and including front, rear, and sidewalls, at least one of said container walls including a substantially axially extending portion; access means in said cabinet structure and in said fabric container for facilitating insertion of articles to be treated into said fabric container; supporting means within said cabinet structure engageable with said axially extending portion for supporting said fabric container for rotation about said axis; blower means including an impeller supported by said fabric container and positioned between said cabinet rear panel and said container back wall and operable for moving air through said fabric container; and means for driving said fabric container to effect tumbling of articles therein and for driving said impeller to move air through said fabric container.

19. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 18 wherein shaft means is supported by said container back wall for rotatively supporting said impeller and wherein filter means is supported on said shaft means coaxially to said impeller for rotation with said fabric container.

20. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 18 wherein said container front wall defines an access opening into said fabric container and said container back wall defines a perforate ingress portion into said blower means.

21. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 20 wherein said container front wall includes an annular axially extending portion encircling said access opening and said container back wall includes an annular axially extending portion encircling said perforate ingress portion and wherein said container supporting means is engageable with said front and back axially extending portions for supporting said fabric container.

22. A fabric treatment apparatus comprising: a structural rear panel; peripheral enclosure means forming top, bottom, and opposite side walls of the apparatus; means for rigidly connecting said enclosure means to said rear panel; front panel means connected to said enclosure means to form with said enclosure means and said rear panel a unitary cabinet structure; a fabric container positioned within said cabinet structure and rotatable about a substantially horizontal axis, said fabric container including front, back and sidewalls; access means in said cabinet structure and in said fabric container for inserting articles to be treated into said fabric container; blower housing means positioned between said rear panel and said container back wall, said housing means including a flanged ingress opening coaxial with said horizontal axis, said container back wall including an annular rearwardly extending portion insertable into said flanged ingress opening and supported thereby, said annular rearwardly extending portion including a plurality of openings permitting fluid flow from said fabric container into said blower housing means; impeller means supported within said blower housing means by said annular rearwardly extending portion and operable for moving air through said fabric container; and means for driving said fabric container to effect tumbling of articles therein and for driving

said impeller means to move air through said fabric container.

23. A fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 22 and further including shaft means supported by said annular rearwardly extending portion of the container for supporting said impeller means within said blower housing means coaxially to said horizontal axis.

24. A fabric treatment apparatus in claim 23 and further including filter means supported by said shaft means within said container juxtaposed to and coaxial with said annular rearwardly extending portion of the container.

25. In a fabric treatment apparatus, the combination comprising: cabinet means including a rear panel; a rotatable fabric container supportable within said cabinet means on a substantially horizontal axis, said container including a back wall rotatable with said container and comprising a perforate portion and an axially extending annular portion; access means in said cabinet means and said fabric container for inserting articles to be treated into said fabric container; blower means positioned between said rear panel and said container back wall and including a housing portion fixed to said rear panel; bearing means engageable by said axially extending annular back wall portion for supporting the rear of said fabric container on said axis; and means for supporting the front of said fabric container on said horizontal axis.

26. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 25 wherein said blower means includes an impeller positioned between said rear panel and said container back wall and supported by said fabric container.

27. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 25 wherein said container back wall further comprises a radially outer imperforate portion and wherein said axially extending portion is interposed between said perforate portion and said radially outer imperforate portion.

28. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 25 wherein said cabinet means includes a front panel having an arcuate flange and said container includes a front wall defining said access and having an axially extending portion engageable with said arcuate flange for supporting the front of said fabric container on said horizontal axis.

29. In a fabric treatment apparatus, the combination comprising: cabinet means including a rear panel; a rotatable fabric container supportable within said cabinet means on a substantially horizontal axis, said container including a back wall rotatable with said container and comprising an imperforate radially outer portion, a perforate radially inward portion and an axially extending portion; blower means positioned between said rear panel and said container back wall and including a housing having a portion fixed to said rear panel, said housing defining an opening into said blower means; and means including flange means engageable with said axially extending portion for rotatably supporting said fabric container on said horizontal axis with said perforate back wall portion aligned with said blower opening.

30. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 29 wherein said blower housing is defined in part by said rear panel and includes a sidewall portion fixed to said rear panel.

31. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 29 wherein said flange means is fixed to said blower housing adjacent said blower opening and wherein said axially extending portion is interposed between said perforate and imperforate back wall portions and is engageable with said flange for supporting the rear of said fabric container on said horizontal axis with said perforate back wall portion aligned with said blower opening.

32. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim 31 wherein said perforate and axially extending portions telescope into said blower opening for engagement of said axially extending portion with said flange to support the rear of said fabric container on said horizontal axis.

33. In a fabric treatment apparatus as defined in claim

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31 wherein said blower means further includes an impeller positioned within said blower housing between said rear panel and said perforate back wall portion.

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