

[54] **PICTURE FRAME FOR FRAMING AND HOLDING A PLURALITY OF PICTURES**

[76] Inventor: John Caravello, P.O. Box 141,
Norwich, N.Y. 13815

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[51] Int. Cl. G09f 1/12

[58] Field of Search..... 40/104.18, 104.19, 158,
40/16, 152, 10

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Primary Examiner—Lawrence Charles
Assistant Examiner—Wenceslao J. Contreras
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Shoemaker and Mattare

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A picture frame for framing and holding a plurality of pictures in predetermined orientation, comprising a back support frame, an intermediate picture receiving frame having a plurality of pockets therein for receiving pictures and having a plurality of openings in registry with the pockets for displaying pictures in the pockets, and a front support frame having a plurality of openings therethrough in registry with the openings in the intermediate frame for displaying the pictures in the pockets and means thereon for engaging and holding said pictures in position.

13 Claims, 14 Drawing Figures

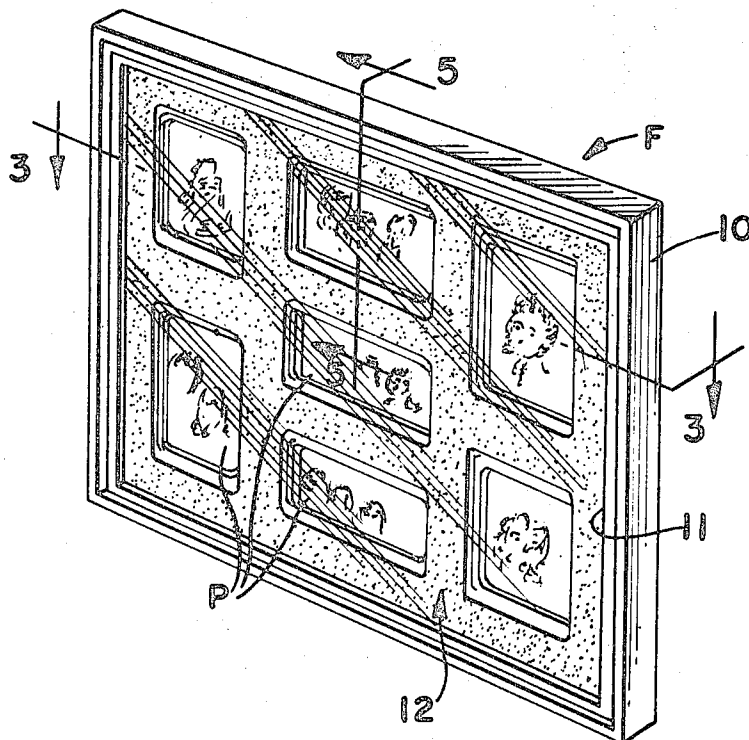


FIG. 1.

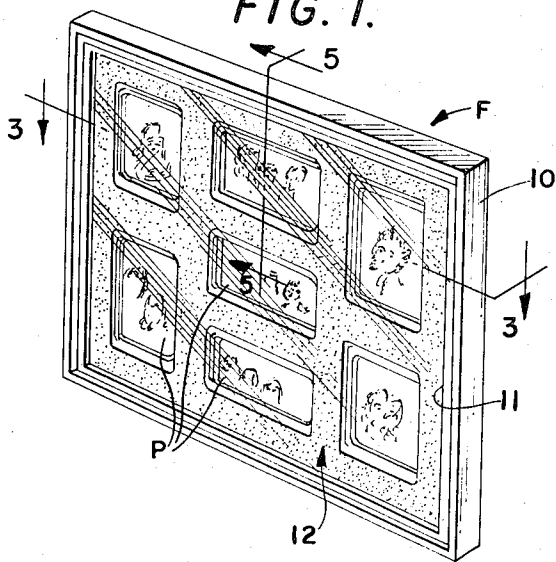


FIG. 2.

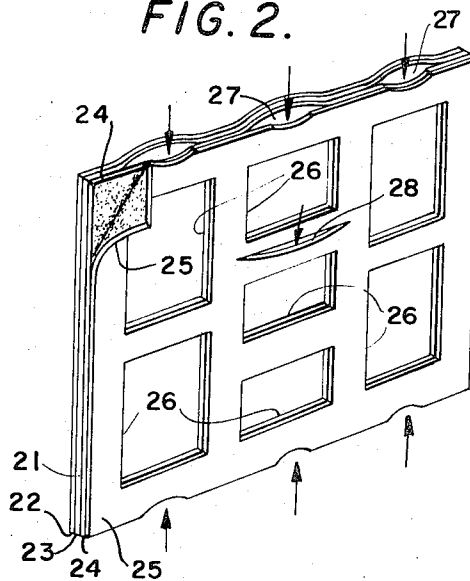


FIG. 3.

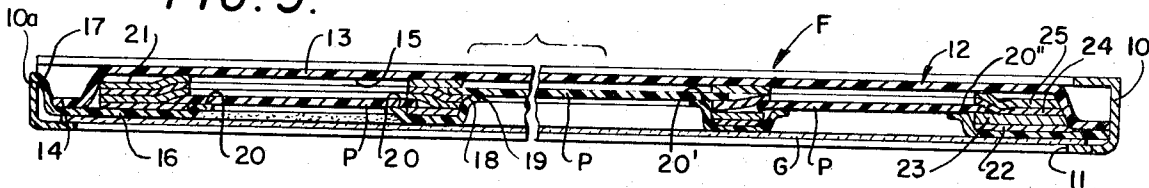


FIG. 4.

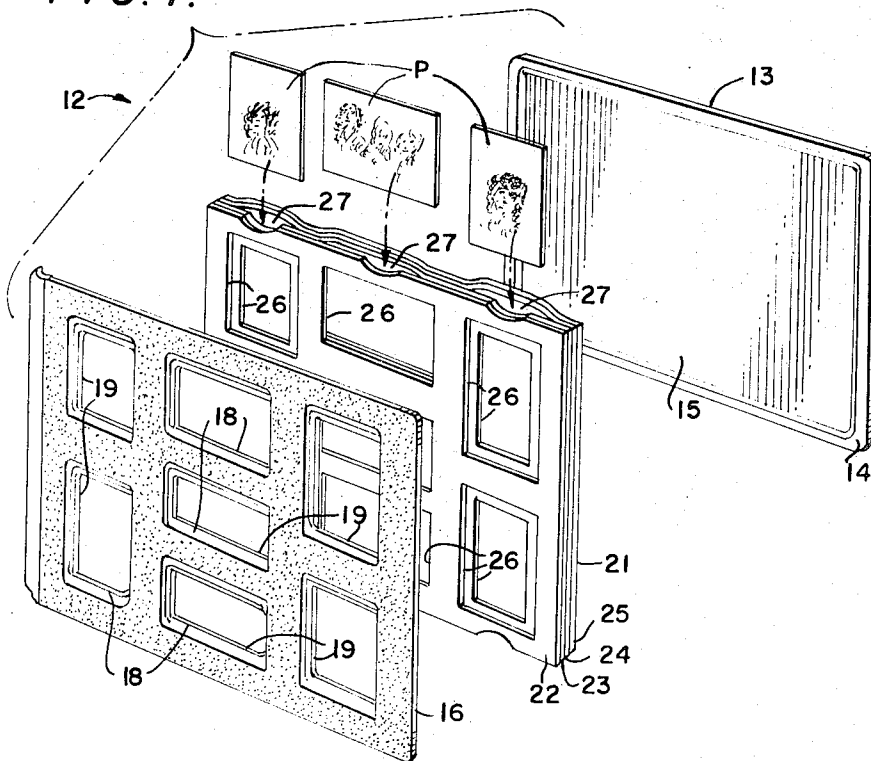


FIG. 5.

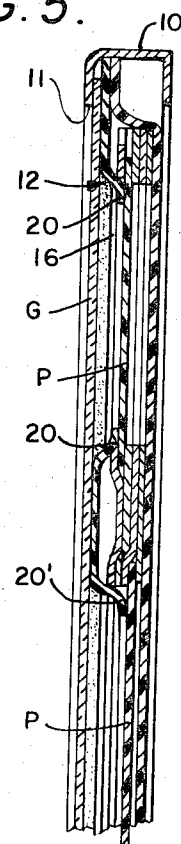


FIG. 6.

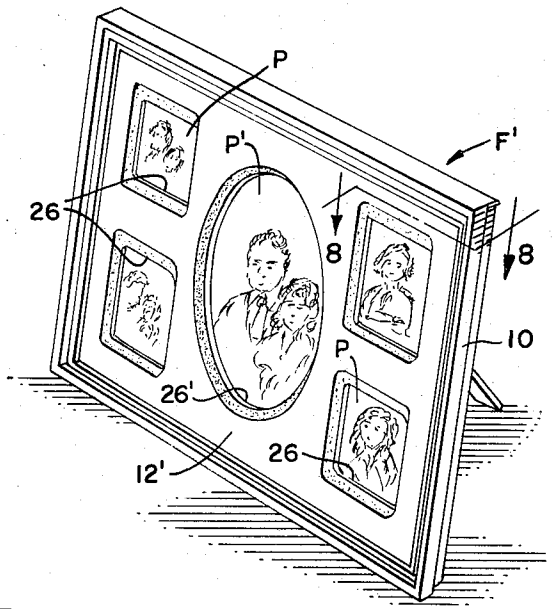


FIG. 7.

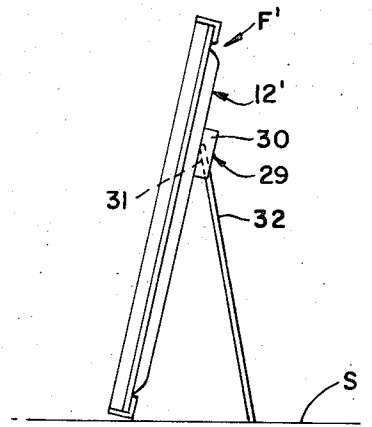


FIG. 8.

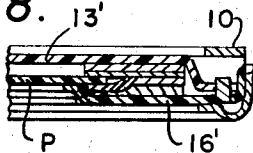


FIG. 10.

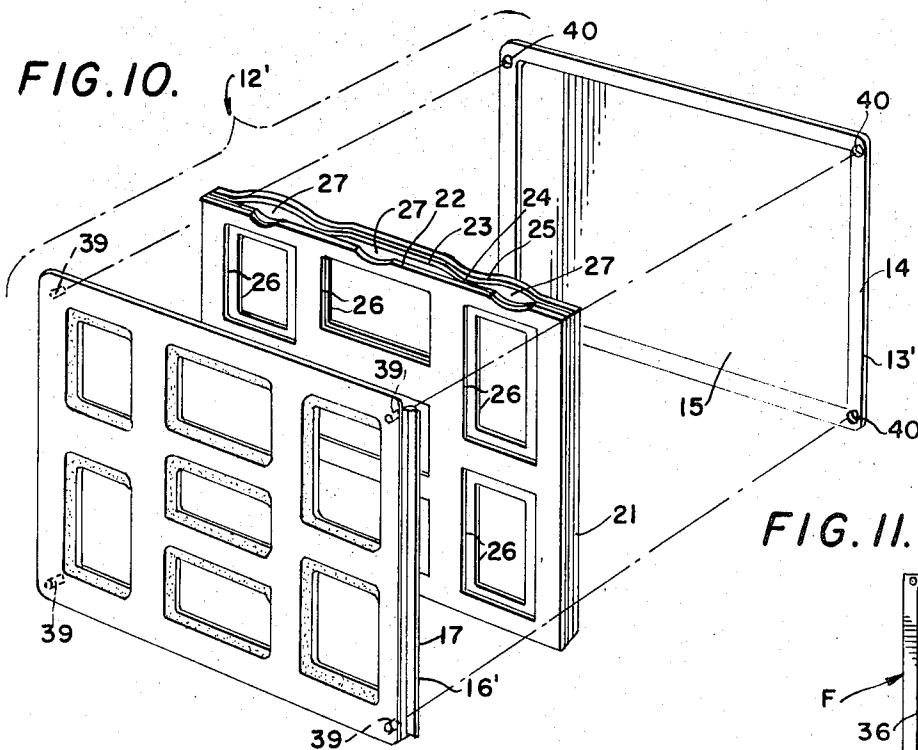


FIG. 9.

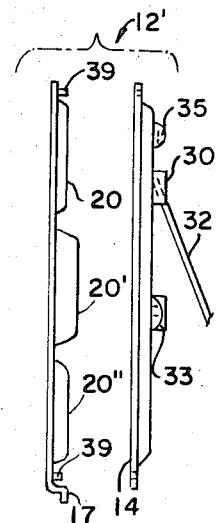


FIG. 11.

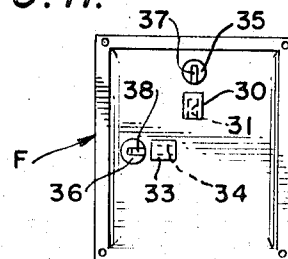


FIG. 12.

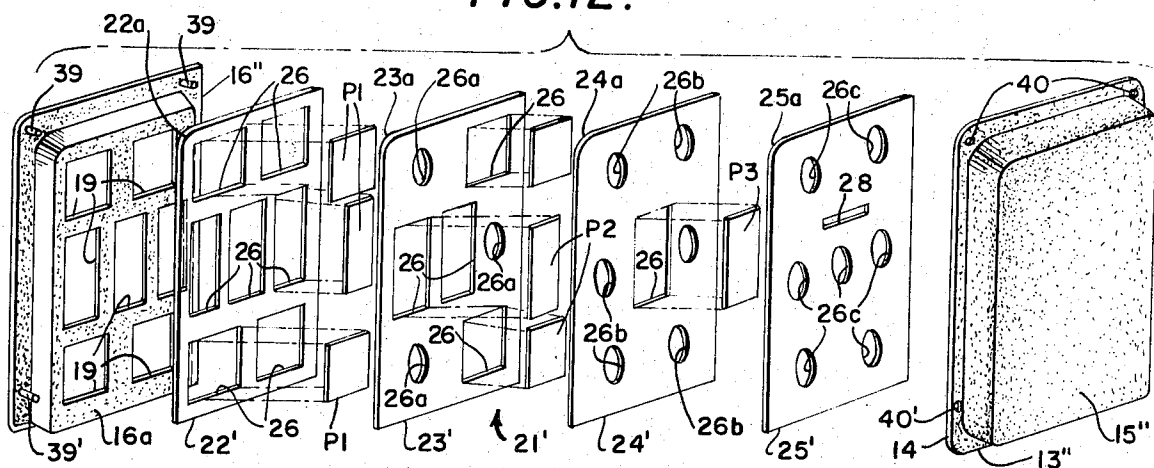


FIG. 13.

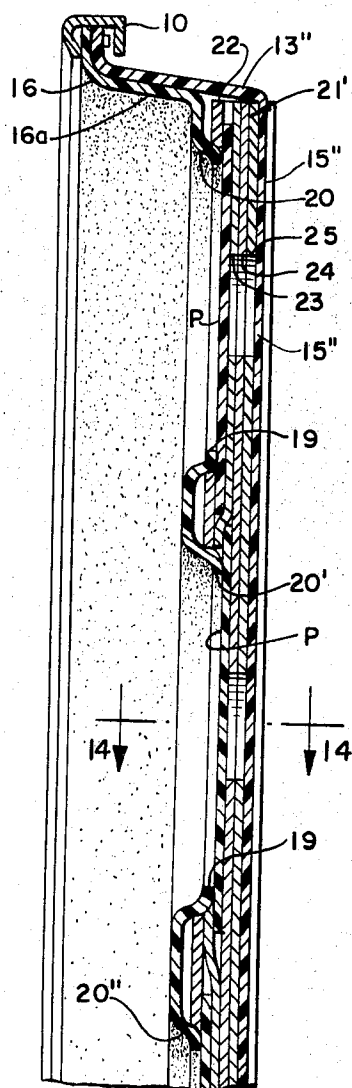
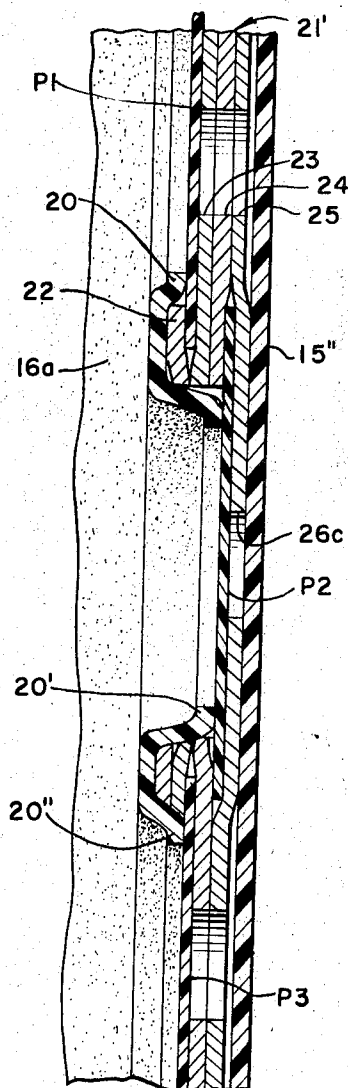


FIG. 14.



PICTURE FRAME FOR FRAMING AND HOLDING A PLURALITY OF PICTURES

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a unique and aesthetically pleasing picture frame for holding and displaying a plurality of pictures such as photographs and the like in a predetermined orientation.

Many different types of picture frames are known in the prior art for holding and displaying pictures such as photographs and the like. Most such prior art picture frames are capable of displaying only one picture at a time, while some prior art picture frames have means for displaying more than one picture or photograph; but such prior art picture frames are relatively complicated and expensive in construction and the construction of the frame is such that it is difficult to place pictures in the frame or remove them therefrom.

With the present invention, the frame is simple and economical to construct and assemble, and it is easy to place a plurality of pictures in the frame and remove the pictures therefrom; and the pictures are securely held in predetermined position in the frame when the frame is used. Moreover, the pictures in the invention are received in pockets larger than the pictures and arranged so that the edges of the pictures in adjacent pockets may be moved past one another without interference therebetween.

OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of this invention to provide a picture frame for framing and holding a plurality of pictures such as photographs and the like in predetermined orientation and wherein the frame includes means for displaying a plurality of pictures and for engaging and holding the pictures securely in position while enabling the pictures to be easily inserted in and removed from the frame when desired.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top perspective view of the frame in accordance with the invention, having a plurality of pictures therein.

FIG. 2 is a top perspective view of the back of a portion of the frame of the present invention illustrating the manner in which the photographs are added to and removed from the frame.

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along line 3—3 in FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is an exploded perspective view of the frame of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary sectional view taken along line 5—5 in FIG. 1.

FIGS. 6—11 are views of a modified frame, and FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the modified frame in accordance with the invention depicting one manner in which the frame may be used.

FIG. 7 is an end view in elevation of the frame of FIG. 6.

FIG. 8 is a fragmentary sectional view taken along line 8—8 in FIG. 6.

FIG. 9 is an exploded view in elevation of the frame of FIG. 6.

FIG. 10 is an exploded perspective view of the modified frame.

FIG. 11 is a rear view in elevation of a frame according to the invention showing the different types of supports with which the frame may be supported from a supporting surface.

FIG. 12 is an exploded perspective view of a modified frame according to the invention.

FIG. 13 is an enlarged, partial, sectional view of the frame of FIG. 12.

FIG. 14 is a further enlarged view in section taken along line 14—14 in FIG. 13.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

In the drawings, wherein like reference numerals indicate like parts throughout the several views, a frame in accordance with the invention is indicated generally at F in FIG. 1 and comprises a conventional, rectangularly shaped frame 10 defining a large central opening 11. A frame 12 in accordance with the invention is received in and supported by the conventional frame 10 for displaying a plurality of pictures, such as photographs P or the like, and a sheet of glass G, or the like, is provided over the frame 12 and pictures P, if desired.

As seen best in FIGS. 2, 3, 4 and 5, the frame 12 comprises a rectangular, substantially tray-shaped back support frame 13 having an annular, forwardly facing rim or flange 14 and a central, generally flat, recessed planar portion 15. The frame 12 also includes a substantially rectangularly shaped front support frame 16 having a rearwardly and outwardly curved lip or flange 17 on one end thereof and a plurality of rearwardly projecting indentations 18 therein spaced over the area of front support frame 16. A rectangular opening 19 is through each indentation, and the rearwardly projecting indentations 18 define a plurality of rearwardly facing annular clamping rims or flanges 20 bounding the openings 19. Sandwiched between the front and back support frame is an intermediate, picture receiving frame 21 having a generally rectangular configuration and of multi-layered construction, comprising four laminations 22, 23, 24 and 25 suitably secured together, as with an adhesive or the like, as seen in FIG. 2.

The laminations have a plurality of spaced apart openings 26 therethrough in alignment with the openings 19, for displaying pictures such as photographs P received in pockets 27 formed between the laminations. As seen, adjacent pockets are not formed between the same two layers, but are between alternate layers so that the edges of adjacent pockets overlap with one another and the photographs in adjacent pockets can be moved edgewise past one another to enable accurate centering of the photographs or portions of the photographs in their respective openings. For example, the left hand photograph in FIG. 3 is positioned between laminations or layers 22 and 23, while the center photograph is positioned between layers or laminations 24 and 25, and the right hand picture is positioned between layers 23 and 24. As seen in FIG. 3, the clamping faces or flanges around openings 19 in the front support frame 16 have different depths, depending on which pair of laminations the associated picture P is received between and the corresponding number or combined thickness of laminations the recessed portion 18 and flange 20 must extend through. For example, the left hand flange 20 in FIG. 3 extends rearwardly to about the plane of the pocket or picture between lami-

nations 22 and 23, the center flange 20' extends rearwardly to about the plane of the pocket or picture between laminations 24 and 25, and the right hand flange 20'' extends to between laminations 23 and 24. The openings through successive laminations may be of the same or of slightly smaller size than the openings 26 in the front lamination, so long as the openings through the laminations in front of the pictures are of the same size and are large enough to properly display the pictures therein. The openings to the rear of the pictures need only be large enough to enable the fingers to be positioned therethrough to engage the pictures to enable centering of same. In the particular embodiment described, and as seen best in FIG. 2, the picture receiving frame has a total of 7 openings therein for receiving seven pictures, with two vertically aligned openings adjacent each of the opposite ends thereof and three vertically aligned openings between the opposite ends of the frame. Of course, the frame could have as many openings as desired, and the particular number and orientation of openings as disclosed herein is not intended to be limiting. A separate opening or slot 28 is in the rear lamination 25 for access to the central opening in the picture receiving frame so that a picture may be inserted and removed from the central opening without necessitating removal of a picture from the opening on opposite sides of the central opening.

In use, the pictures P are inserted edgewise in the pockets 27 through the space left between the respective laminations and into alignment with the openings 26 and 19. The pictures may be engaged with the fingers through the openings 26 to the front and rear of the pictures for centering the pictures in the openings. The picture receiving frame 21 and pictures held therein are then placed within the central area 15 of the back support frame 13 and the front support frame 16 is placed thereover, with the picture receiving frame sandwiched between the front and back support frames. The rim 14 of the back support frame is engaged by the peripheral marginal edge of the front support frame 16, and the spacing of the plane of the flange of rim 14 from the central position 15 is such that the rearwardly facing clamping surface 20 around openings 19 engage the pictures and hold them against the central portion 15 of back support frame to maintain the pictures in their properly oriented positions. Of course, the frictional engagement of the edges of the pictures between the adjacent laminations is sufficient to hold the pictures in position after they are centered. The frame 12 is then slid endwise into the conventional frame 10 and the lip 17 on the front support frame 16 engages behind a marginal edge portion 10a of the conventional frame 10 for holding the frame 12 in position within the conventional frame.

In order to remove the frame 12 from the conventional, rectangular frame 10, the front support frame 16 is engaged near the lip 17 and urged rearwardly and at the same time pushed edgewise out of the frame 10.

A modification of the invention is illustrated in FIGS. 6-11, and in this form of the invention, corresponding parts are indicated by like reference numerals primed.

In FIGS. 6 and 7, a frame F' comprises a slightly modified frame 12' supported within a conventional frame 10, and the frame F' is supported in a generally

upright position for displaying a plurality of pictures P in the frame. Conventional support means 29 are on the back or rear surface of the frame 12', and the support 29 includes a prop block or stop 30 having a recess or opening 31 therein in which an elongate leg 32 of a desired length may be positioned at one end and extending into engagement at its other end with a supporting surface S for supporting the frame F' and the pictures P displayed therein in a desired inclined position.

The frame also includes a second prop block or stop 33 disposed at 90 degrees to the first stop lock or prop 30 and has a recess or hole 34 therein for receiving a prop such as 32 for supporting the frame F' in a desired inclined position while the frame is resting on another edge disposed at 90 degrees to the edge on which the frame is resting as viewed in FIGS. 6 and 7.

Similar hanger means or blocks 35 and 36 are on the rear surface of the frame 12' adjacent the prop blocks or stops 30 and 33 and have recesses or holes 37 and 38 therein, respectively, by which the frame F' may be hung in one of two positions disposed at 90 degrees to one another. A relatively short, rearwardly projecting pin 39 is on each corner of the front frame support 16' and an opening 40 is in each corner of the rear frame support 13', extending through the rim or flange 14 and in alignment with the pins 39 on the front frame support 16' so that when the front and rear frame supports are brought into juxtaposition with one another, the alignment pins extend through the holes to maintain the front and back frame supports in proper aligned relationship with the picture receiving frame 21 sandwiched therebetween. The central three openings in the frame 12' may be replaced with a single, enlarged opening 26' of oval or other shape, if desired, for display of an oval or other shape picture P', as seen in FIG. 6.

A third form of the invention is shown in FIGS. 12-14, and in this form of the invention, the front and back support frames 16'' and 13'', respectively, have deep offset center portions 16a and 15'' so as to actually position the photographs P rearwardly of the plane of the frame 10. The openings 19 and clamping faces 20, 20' and 20'' are the same as in the other forms of the invention. The frame also includes alignment pins 39 and holes 40 as before, with at least one pin 39' and hole 40' offset to insure proper positioning and orientation of the front and back support frames. Further, the laminations 22', 23', 24' and 25' comprising the center, picture holding frame 21', each has a rounded corner 22a, 23a, 24a, and 25a, to insure proper assembly to the front and back support frames, which have corresponding rounded corners. Also, only the front layer or lamination 22' has all large, picture displaying openings 26 therethrough for displaying all pictures held behind this lamination in the frame 21'. Thus, pictures P1 held between layers 22' and 23' can be seen, as can pictures P2 held between layers 23' and 24', and pictures P3 held between layers 24' and 25'. Layer 23' then has only four large picture displaying openings 26 therethrough and has three finger access openings 26a for access from the rear of layer 23 to pictures P1 for centering the pictures. The layers 24' and 25' have similar access openings 26b and 26c therethrough, with layer 25' not having any picture displaying openings 26 therethrough. The rounded corners, or other indexing means, and the different size openings 26a, 26b, 26c

may be employed in all forms of the invention, if desired, as may the deepdish construction of FIGS. 12-14.

The front and back support frames and the picture receiving frame may be made of any suitable material, such as plastic, metal, paper, or the like, and may be cast, molded, stamped, or otherwise suitably formed. Further, the front face of front support frame may be embossed or provided with a design or roughened surface for aesthetic purposes, if desired.

Furthermore, the frame 12' of FIGS. 6-11 could be used alone, without the rectangular frame 10, if desired, if the pins 39 fit snugly in holes 40 so as to frictionally interlock the front and back support frames together.

As this invention may be embodied in several forms without departing from the spirit or essential characteristics thereof, the present embodiment is therefore illustrative and not restrictive, since the scope of the invention is defined by the appended claims rather than by the description preceding them, and all changes that fall within the metes and bounds of the claims or that form their functional as well as conjointly cooperative equivalents, are therefore intended to be embraced by those claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A picture frame for framing and holding a plurality of pictures, comprising a laminated picture holding frame having a plurality of separate picture holding pockets between the laminations thereof and having a display opening in registry with each pocket to display pictures held in the pockets, each pocket having an access opening thereto for insertion and removal of a picture into each pocket independently of the other pockets, a back support frame of approximately the same size as the picture holding frame, a front support frame of approximately the same size as the back frame and having a plurality of openings therethrough in registry with the openings in the picture holding frame for displaying the pictures in the pockets, rearwardly extending flange means on the front frame around each opening therethrough extending rearwardly toward and into engagement with the pictures held in the picture holding frame holding the picture holding frame and pictures substantially flat against the back frame and framing each picture at a predetermined depth rearwardly of the plane of the front support frame, said picture holding frame disposed between said front and back frames with said front and back frames in surrounding, confining relationship to said picture holding frame, and means on said front and back frames releasably holding the frame together.

2. A picture frame as in claim 1, wherein said front, back and picture holding frames are substantially rectangular in shape.

3. A picture frame as in claim 2, wherein the back support frame is substantially tray shaped, and has a peripheral, forwardly facing rim or flange, and a large, shallow, rectangularly shaped central recess in a plane spaced rearwardly from the rim or flange.

4. A picture frame as in claim 3, wherein said picture holding frame has a size and configuration substantially

the same as the size and configuration of the recess in the back support frame and is received in said recess.

5. A picture frame as in claim 4, wherein said front support frame has a peripheral, marginal edge portion in confronting abutting engagement with the face of the rim on the back support frame.

6. A picture frame as in claim 5, wherein a rearwardly and outwardly curved lip or flange is on one end of the front support frame, said lip projecting rearwardly beyond the flange on the back support frame and cooperating with a marginal edge portion of a rectangular frame in which the front, back and picture holding frames are received for holding the frames in position in the rectangular frame.

7. A picture frame as in claim 6, wherein the central portions of said front and back support frames are offset substantially from the plane of the rim or flange therearound so as to space the pictures supported therein substantially rearwardly of the plane of the rectangular frame.

8. A picture frame as in claim 7, wherein at least one corresponding corner of each of the front, back and picture holding frames is rounded to aid in placing the frames together in proper orientation.

9. A picture frame as in claim 6, wherein the plurality of laminations of the picture holding frame are secured together at preselected portions thereof to define the plurality of picture receiving pockets therebetween, and said access openings comprise slots between said laminations for inserting and removing pictures between said laminations and into said pockets.

10. A picture frame as in claim 9, wherein said front and back support frames have alignment means thereon for automatically aligning the front and back support frames when the frame is assembled and for maintaining the front and back support frames in aligned relationship.

11. A picture frame as in claim 10, wherein means are on the back of said frame for supporting said frame in a desired position on a supporting surface.

12. A picture frame as in claim 1, wherein at least one of said picture engaging flanges projects farther rearwardly of the front support frame than the remaining flanges, and adjacent picture-receiving pockets are disposed between alternate laminations, the adjacent edges of adjacent pockets overlapped with one another, thus enabling adjacent pictures to move past one another at their adjacent edges for accurate centering of the pictures in the openings and pockets.

13. A picture frame as in claim 1, wherein the laminations disposed behind a picture supported in the picture holding frame have an opening therethrough in registry with a picture received in a pocket between a pair of laminations, said opening being smaller than the picture displaying opening through each lamination in front of the picture, whereby the pictures may be readily centered in the openings by engaging the front and back of the picture with fingers extended through the openings in front of and behind the pictures.

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