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A frame arrangement for a picture or the like

THIS INVENTION relates to a frame arrangement.

It is an object of the invention to provide a picture frame arrangement which has many capabilities.

5 Accordingly, the invention provides a frame arrangement for a picture or the like, the arrangement comprising: a frame having a principal support member and a peripherally-extending boundary element projecting substantially perpendicularly from both front and rear sides of the support member, the rear side of the support member further comprising at least
10 one projecting means extending substantially linearly between opposed areas of the boundary element, the or each projecting means having at least one respective integral tab extending transversely thereof adjacent the boundary element; a window adapted to be positioned across the front side of the support member, the window comprising a peripheral rim adapted to engage
15 the boundary element to join the frame detachably to the window; and a hanger having an elongate body portion defining a longitudinal direction, from which body portion spaced-apart elements extend and from which a tongue projects, either the elements or the tongue or both being engageable
20 with the said projecting means to provide an appropriate mounting means for the frame.

 Preferably the principal support member comprises means by which the window may be displaced from engagement with the boundary element
25 and suitably the said displacement means is a finger-depressible element formed by a slot within the support member.

 Advantageously the peripheral rim of the window is formed by a protruding U-shaped member, portions of which are engageable with the
30 front side of the support member whenever the window is joined to the frame as said.

Conveniently the boundary element is integral with the support member and is J-shaped to define a long leg and a short leg, the long leg being flexibly engageable with the peripheral rim of the window.

5 Preferably the elongate body portion of the hanger has an opening therethrough.

10 Suitably the support member is substantially planar and there are two mutually perpendicular said projecting means, each comprising a pair of webs, the webs of each pair being located on respective sides of, and extending generally parallel to, one of the two lines bisecting the plane of the support member. Conveniently the separation of any one of the spaced-apart elements of the hanger from neighbouring elements is such that the hanger may bridge the webs of either of the said two pairs of webs.
15 Advantageously the extent to which the boundary element protrudes, parallel to the plane of the support member, beyond the support member is approximately half the separation of the distance between the two webs of each said pair.

20 Prefably the front side of the support member is provided with a pattern of ribs that extend beyond the surface of the support member.

25 So that the invention may be more readily understood and so that further features may be appreciated, various arrangements in accordance with the invention will now be described by way of example and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

30 FIGURE 1 is a top front perspective view illustrating one such arrangement;

FIGURE 2 is a top rear perspective view similar to that of Figure 1 of the same arrangement;

35 FIGURE 3 is a side elevation of the arrangement shown in Figures 1 and 2;

FIGURE 4 is a rear elevation of the same arrangement.

FIGURE 5 is an exploded front perspective view of the various frame arrangement elements and includes a partial phantom section illustrating the reversibility of the window member of the arrangement;

5 FIGURE 6 is a partial rear perspective view of the arrangement showing the hanger/holder member press-fitted against the rear of the frame in a position to allow wall mounting of the arrangement;

10 FIGURE 7 is a top plan view of the hanger/holder element of the arrangement;

FIGURE 8 is a cross-section taken along line 8-8 of Figure 7 and illustrates more clearly the construction of the hanger/holder;

15 FIGURE 9 is a partial cross-section taken along line 9-9 of Figure 6 and more clearly displays the positioning (a) of the window element within the frame such that it will position and securely hold a typical photograph and (b) of the hanger/holder element;

20 FIGURE 10 is an elevation showing two frame arrangements of similar size interconnected one to the other by a hanger/holder element;

25 FIGURES 11 and 12 illustrate alternative positions that the hanger/holder may assume in supporting a typical frame arrangement in accordance with this invention; and

FIGURES 13 and 14 are partial cross-sections similar to that of Figure 9 showing the window element in alternative positions for retaining either photographs or collectables within the frame recess.

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35 In the drawings the picture frame arrangements in accordance with the invention are indicated generally by the numeral 10 and incorporate in their construction a frame 12, a window 14 and a hanger/holder 16. More particularly referring to Figures 1, 2 and 5, it may be seen that the frame 12 comprises a principal support member 20 adapted to back a photograph or collectable (collector's item) positioned thereagainst for viewing. This principal support member 20 is planar, has a front side 24 and a rear side 26

and is surrounded by an integral annular boundary element 22. The arrangement will therefore be described with reference to forward, rearward and outward (either sideways or vertical) directions.

5 The construction of the boundary element 22 and its association with the support member 20 are more clearly displayed in Figures 9, 13 and 14 where the boundary element can be seen to have a "J"-shaped configuration in a section taken perpendicular to the plane of the support member 20. The shorter leg of that "J" extends inwardly to merge with a rearwardly-
10 extending flange at the periphery of the support member 20 and the longer leg forms the exterior wall of the frame arrangement 10. The longer leg of the "J" extends forwardly beyond the front side 24 of the support member 20 to produce a frame recess between the front side 24 of the support member 20 and the inside face of the forwardly protruding part of the boundary
15 element 22. The J-shaped construction lends a flexibility to the boundary element 22 so that it may act in a spring-like manner against the periphery of the edges of the window 14 when in association with the frame.

20 The principal support member 20 also comprises a rearwardly-projecting means 28 which takes the form of two mutually perpendicular pairs of mutually parallel webs, the webs of each pair being spaced symmetrically about a respective one of the two imaginary centre lines bisecting the plane of the support member 20. These webs 28 are integrally
25 connected with the rear side 26 of the support member 20 and, at their respective ends, with the shorter leg of the "J" of the boundary element 22 of frame 12 at opposed areas designated as numerals 30. The webs 28 produce a rearwardly-facing channel-like network as is apparent in Figure 2. Adjacent each end of each channel, a respective tab 32 extends either
30 entirely or partially across the inside of the channel. These tabs 32 function to support the hanger/holder 16 firmly in its association with the frame 12 (as may best be seen in Figures 2, 3 and 4) so that the frame may be conveniently stood on a generally planar support surface. This aspect of the invention will be discussed more fully hereinafter.

35 The principal support member 20 is modified in several locations to comprise a corresponding number of finger depressible elements 34. Each depressible element 34 is formed by the inclusion of a narrow slot 36 which

extends entirely through the support member 20 from the front 24 to the back 26. Pressure on each depressable element causes displacement of the window 14 and/or mounted photograph or other collectable from engagement with the frame 12.

5 The front side 24 of the support member 20 incorporates a series of ribs 38, which ribs are only slightly raised beyond the plane of the front side 24 and which respectively correspond in position to the webs 28 that project
10 from the rear side 26. These ribs 38 are intended to elevate slightly and separate an encased photograph or the like from intimate uninterrupted contact with the entirety of the front side 24 of the support member 20 and thereby assure that the photograph will not become affixed too rigidly to the front side 24.

15 The window 14, as seen in Figures 5, 9 and 10, comprises a forwardly-projecting integral peripheral rim 40 formed by a "U"-shaped member having two parallel wall legs 44 and an interconnecting wall 46. The rim 40 bounds the principal translucent surface or viewing area 42 of the window and joins the rim at what would otherwise be the free end of the inner wall leg 44. As
20 can be appreciated from Figures 5, 9 and 13, the "U"-shaped construction of the peripheral rim 40 lends flexibility (spring-like action) to the rim 40 to enhance the effect of the press-fit interengagement of the rim 40 with the "J"-shaped boundary element 22 of the frame 12. Thus, the window 14 is firmly maintained in appropriate contact with the frame 12.

25 Furthermore, as is apparent from these Figures, reversal of the window, due to the projecting configuration of the rim 40, provides for either a very close juxtaposition of the principal or viewing surface 42 to the front side 24 of the support member 20, or for a greater separation of
30 the viewing surface 42 from the front side 24 so that a variety of collectables may be appropriately mounted in the frame arrangement 10. Accordingly, in the configuration of this invention shown in Figures 9 and 13, pictures, photographs, drawings, postcards, reproductions and other flat and thin art work or the like may be mounted for viewing. Contrary to that
35 arrangement, one may reverse the window, as is illustrated in Figure 14, and thicker collector's items such as coins, medallions, dried flowers, butterflies or the like may be mounted within the frame. A single frame arrangement thus has many uses.

The hanger/holder 16, as may best be seen in Figures 7, 8 and 9, comprises an elongate body portion 48 one area 60 of which is canted upwardly (in the orientation shown in Figure 5) and incorporates an opening 54. The underside of the elongate body portion 48 has a downwardly-
5 depending (Figure 5) surrounding wall 56 comprising two longitudinally spaced-apart pairs of downwardly-projecting elements 50, the elements of each pair being equidistant from the longitudinal mid-line of the body portion 48. The longitudinal and transverse spacings of these elements 50 are each approximately equivalent to the distance between the exteriors of
10 adjacent webs 28 on the rear of the support member 20. This enables the user easily, yet firmly, to clip the hanger/holder 16 to the rear of the frame 12 in the position shown in Figure 6 so that the opening 54 in the canted area 60 is positioned adjacent the upper portion of the frame and so that the frame arrangement can be wall-mounted on a typical picture hanger.

15 Furthermore, due to the construction described above, this same hanger/holder may be used to clip frame arrangements of similar or different sizes together. Such an assembly can be seen in Figure 10 where the hanger/holder 16 is attached to frame arrangements of similar size and
20 the longitudinal spaces between the downwardly-projecting elements 50 of the hanger/holder bridge the mutually abutted boundary elements 22 of adjacent frames 12. Accordingly, it is clearly apparent that the width of each boundary element 22 is approximately half the distance between the exteriors of adjacent webs 28.

25 Although not shown, frame arrangements of varying sizes may be grouped together so long as they incorporate the constructional features described above.

30 One further feature of the hanger/holder 16 is the incorporation, at the end opposite to that having the canted area 60, of a tongue 52 projecting from the body portion 48. This projecting tongue 52 comprises, on the outer edges of its upper surface (as seen in Figure 5), raised lips 58 which together
35 with the tongue are adapted to interengage the webs 28 and/or the tabs 32 to provide a standing support for the frame arrangement as is shown in Figures 1, 2, 11 and 12. Figures 11 and 12 also illustrate that the mounting or use of the hanger/holder 16 may be such that frame 12 is supported at different angles on a table or other surface area.

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Although the frames shown and described are rectangular, it will be appreciated that the invention is not restricted to this shape. Preferably, the portions of the frame that receive the hanger/holder do not deviate markedly from a straight line but the remaining portions may be curved as desired.



CLAIMS:

1. A frame arrangement for a picture or the like, the arrangement comprising: a frame having a principal support member and a peripherally-
5 extending boundary element projecting substantially perpendicularly from both front and rear sides of the support member, the rear side of the support member further comprising at least one projecting means extending substantially linearly between opposed areas of the boundary element, the or
10 each projecting means having at least one respective integral tab extending transversely thereof adjacent the boundary element; a window adapted to be positioned across the front side of the support member, the window comprising a peripheral rim adapted to engage the boundary element to join the frame detachably to the window; and a hanger/holder having an
15 elongate body portion defining a longitudinal direction, from which body portion spaced-apart elements extend and from which a tongue projects, either the elements or the tongue or both being engageable with the said projecting means to provide an appropriate mounting means for the frame.
2. A frame arrangement according to claim 1 wherein the principal
20 support member comprises means by which the window may be displaced from engagement with the boundary element.
3. A frame arrangement according to claim 2 wherein the said displacement means is a finger-depressible element formed by a slot within the
25 support member.
4. A frame arrangement according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the peripheral rim of the window is formed by a protruding U-
30 shaped member, portions of which are engageable with the front side of the support member whenever the window is joined to the frame as said.
5. A frame arrangement according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the boundary element is integral with the support member and is J-
35 shaped to define a long leg and a short leg, the long leg being flexibly engageable with the peripheral rim of the window.

6. A frame arrangement according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the elongate body portion of the hanger/holder has an opening therethrough.
- 5 7. A frame arrangement according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the support member is substantially planar and there are two mutually perpendicular said projecting means, each comprising a pair of webs, the webs of each pair being located on respective sides of, and generally parallel to, one of the two lines bisecting the plane of the support member.
- 10 8. A frame arrangement according to claim 7 wherein the separation of any one of the spaced-apart elements of the hanger/holder from neighbouring elements is such that the hanger may bridge the webs of either of the said two pairs of webs.
- 15 9. A frame arrangement according to claim 7 or 8 wherein the width of the boundary element in a direction parallel to the plane of the support member, is approximately half the distance between exteriors of the two webs of each said pair.
- 20 10. A frame arrangement according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the front side of the support member is provided with a pattern of ribs that extend beyond the surface of the support member.
- 25 11. A frame arrangement substantially as described herein with reference to, and as shown in, Figures 1 to 9 and 11 to 14 of the accompanying drawings.

