Guilty as Framed
FRAME ART CRAFTS
©Lois Winston

Thinking about the empty frames hanging where stolen art once hung in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum gave Anastasia the idea for the craft projects for the latest issue of *American Woman*. These are some of the ideas she came up with for taking plain, inexpensive wooden picture frames and transforming them into one-of-a-kind works of art to display family photos from vacations, holidays, and special events.

Road Map Decoupaged Picture Frame

Nowadays we use the map apps on our phones, but it's still fun to buy maps of the places where we've travelled, or you may have some sitting around from pre-smart phone days.

Materials: unfinished wooden picture frame (available at craft stores), road map, craft stick (optional,) foam brush, scissors, decoupage medium, tweezers (optional).

1. Cut out sections of the map into manageable pieces, about 3" - 4" in length and wide enough to wrap around the frame.
2. Using the foam brush, apply decoupage medium to the wrong side of the map cut-outs.

3. Position a map cut-out on the frame, wrapping around to the inside and outside so that all exposed sections of the wooden frame are covered. Use the tweezers to aid in placement.

4. Eliminate wrinkles, air bubbles, and excess medium by gently pushing down on the map with your fingers or the craft stick, working from the center outward. Remove any excess decoupage medium with a damp cloth.

5. Glue the next section of map onto the frame, overlapping the first piece slightly. Repeat until entire frame is covered.

6. Allow decoupage to dry completely. Once dry, apply several coats of decoupage medium to the entire surface, allowing each coat to dry completely before applying the next coat.

Decorative Photo Mat

Any paper souvenir items, such as postcards, ticket stubs, maps, menus, programs, etc. will work for this project. For larger souvenir items, follow directions below. For smaller items, create a collage, gluing randomly around the mat. Follow directions below for finishing edges.

Materials: photo frame, pre-cut mat or cardboard the same size as frame, paper souvenir items, ruler, craft knife, glue stick, photo, photo tape.

1. If your frame didn't come with a pre-cut mat, create one by cutting an opening centered in the cardboard, slightly smaller than the photo you plan to use.

2. Cut larger souvenir items slightly larger than the mat.
3. Apply glue to the surface of the mat. Glue the souvenir to the mat. Allow glue to dry.

4. Turn the mat to wrong side. Using the craft knife, make angled cuts in the paper in each corner of the cutout. Trim the four sides of the paper to 1/2" from the interior opening of the mat.

5. Apply glue to paper, then fold edges around to wrong side of mat.

6. Trim the paper even with outer edges of mat.

7. Tape picture behind mat. Insert mat into frame.

Shabby Chic Picture Frame

This frame makes a wonderful Valentine's Day gift. You might want to frame a vintage Valentine rather than a photo. It also works as a frame for a wedding photo or a bridal shower gift with a photo of the lucky couple.

Materials: unfinished wooden photo frame (available at craft stores); white primer spray paint; assorted lace trims, ribbon, buttons, beads, and other accessories; fabric glue and jewelry glue.

1. Spray frame with light coat of primer. Leaving some of the wood grain showing through the paint will add to the antique look.

2. Position the lace trims and ribbons on the frame to form an appealing collage effect. Glue in place with the fabric glue.

3. Place the buttons, beads, and other accessories around and on top of the lace and ribbons. Glue in place with the jewelry glue.

Seashells, Buttons, Charms, or Beads Frame

Here's a way to make use of all those seashells you've collected at the beach or the spare buttons and beads you have sitting around in a drawer or closet.

Materials: wooden frame; assorted small seashells, buttons, charms, or beads; hot glue gun or jewelry glue.

1. Glue shells, buttons, charms, or beads in a grouping at one corner of the frame or randomly around the entire frame.