

# IDEAS TO MAXIMIZE PHOTO IMPACT

“THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX”  
CAN GRAB ATTENTION FOR THIS MEDIUM.

compiled by Anne Vazquez

The nature of photographs often lends itself to framing in a variety of ways. Sometimes, for example, the owner of a photo, or photos, wants them to be housed with other items—those that relate to the person or scene in the image. By placing these items together in a frame design, one of the values of custom framing is exhibited—the ability to create something that does not exist anywhere else. With some ingenuity, and by gaining insight into what the customer envisions, you can create frame designs for photographs that can't be matched with a frame purchased off the shelf. Following are ideas from two framers that were inspired by thinking outside the box. The principles used in each of these projects can be used in designing for many types of photographs.

## “INSTANT ANCESTORS”

*Ira Freinckle, CPF and Berenyce Freinckle, owners of Creations 'n Things in Emerson, NJ, found a way to utilize vintage photographs to grab attention and increase sales.*

On a recent trip to Maine, the Freinckles discovered a source for a large number of antique photographs, with images of both people and places. As Ira explains it, they pur-

*At right: Creating a collage of antique photographs, with silk moire fabric matting evokes a feeling of antiquity to the frame design.*



*Below: At Creations 'n Things in Emerson, NJ, a variety of frames housing antique photographs and vintage-type framing were intermingled with other framed items.*





*Shown here is an example of framing a single photograph (in its original leather surround). The patterned matboard contributes an element of texture that adds interest to the piece.*



*Although the two people in these photographs may not have known each other, the similar color tones seen in the images enable them to be framed together for an heirloom look.*

chased a small collection of these photos and framed them when they returned to the shop. About 10 of these designs were then put on display in the front window, intermingled with other framing, and the display was named, “Instant Ancestors.”

“We even created names and professions for some of the people in the photographs,” notes Ira. “For instance, there was a photo of a young woman with pince-nez glasses; we named her Miss Snodgrass, the librarian. We would mention this to viewers and it not only brought a laugh, but also increased their interest.”

In addition to the photos of people, Ira notes that they have framed many photographs of the Hudson Valley in New York State, and locations around New Jersey. “We’ve found that photos of all types have an interest for different customers, even when they don’t know the people in the photo, or haven’t visited the place seen in the photo,” he says.

In framing the pieces that would be displayed and put on sale, the Freinckles used design elements they

thought appropriate for the period of the photograph. Ira explains, “Quite a few were done with hand-wrapped mats because fabric matting was popular during the period in which these photographs were created. That is probably because there was a very limited selection of matboard colors available at the time. We framed some of the pieces in stock frames, others were housed in custom frames, and a few were designed with stacked frames.”

While the framing was modelled after what might have been seen in the time period when the photograph was taken, Ira notes that one noticeable difference was the use of fillets in many of the designs. “We used fillets as an accent inside the frame, where framers working in those days [of the photograph] might have used an actual small frame inside the mat. We mimicked that with the fillets.”

Ira explains that he purchased some of the photos already framed; however, these were all reframed at the shop. “Existing framing for the photographs was either



Shown here is a close-up of the photograph housed with the American flag. Note the tie clasp, which belonged to the soldier, inserted into the lower part of the mat.



The flag alone is a treasured item, but the addition of the photograph to the frame makes the finished piece even more personal to the owner.

poorly done, or consisted of a damaged frame,” he says. Once reframed, the pieces were priced according to the shop’s existing pricing structure, with an amount added for the photograph.

With the initial window display, Ira recalls a noticeable increase in requests for framing of old photographs. When it came time to change the window display, the entire grouping of “Instant Ancestors” was relocated to a wall in the showroom. “It still draws attention,” says Ira. “This week alone, we framed eight old photos for three customers. In addition, we framed an old wedding certificate from one customer’s grandparents, and her mother’s birth certificate. The customer told us that she brought all of these in because she had seen the display.”

## A SOLDIER’S LEGACY

*Thomas M. Houston, CPF, owner of Houston’s Custom Framing & Fine Art in Ashland, OR, designed a frame to house an American flag from WWII brought home by his client’s father. The client wanted to include a photograph of his father during his service in the military. Thomas created a frame design that was made even more special with the inclusion of this photograph.*

When Thomas’ client brought in this flag and photograph, he wanted both items to be showcased for dis-

play in one frame. The flag was rescued from a P.T. (Patrol Torpedo) boat during WWII by the client’s father. It is signed across the white band along one of its edges by many of the soldiers who had been on the boat.

“Also to be included in the frame was a small, black and white photo of my client’s father,” notes Thomas. It was decided the the photo would be mounted at the left lower corner of the flag to emphasize the relation between the two items. And while the design was aimed at linking the two items in the frame design, Thomas also wanted to make sure the photo did not get “lost” in the larger frame. One measure to achieve this was choosing a moulding that was lighter in color than what was chosen for the larger frame. The photo was then matted with a V-groove design; inserted into a cutout in the bottom portion of the V-groove was the actual tie clasp being worn in the picture.

With several custom touches used to emphasize the photograph, this frame design became a treasured piece for the client. n