

Windows Have Been His Business

R. Earl Ricketts — known to Santa Cruzans as the “man who brought animated Christmas windows to Leask’s — is retiring after nearly 25 years in that firm’s display department.

The Christmas scenes have become a tradition in the big corner window of Leask’s; memorable ones were Santa’s Toy Shop, a skiing scene and toy work shop.

Ricketts, who will retire Thursday, started in the retail business in 1919 at Bamberger and Company in Newark, N.J., where there were 44 windows to arrange. Following an apprenticeship there, Ricketts went to New York City, Brooklyn and to Hartford, Conn., where he worked as millinery display manager.

During World War II he attended University of Connecticut School of Engineer-

ing to earn a certificate in Applied Metallurgy, then worked at Pratt and Whitney as a foreman in the physical testing department of the Engineering section. While there he earned a Navy “E” for excellence, unique for a civilian at that time, according to Ricketts.

He came to California to Lockheed at Burbank where he worked on the staff at the engineering metallurgical laboratory where he was responsible for setting up the procedure for heat treatment for titanium, an achievement of which he is proud. He also attended UCLA while in Southern California.

In 1944 Ricketts again entered the retail business with Leask’s in Santa Cruz.

Future plans include travel and establishing a mail order business for a product he has invented and presently



R. Earl Ricketts and a model of one of his animated Christmas windows at Leask’s.

markets through two national magazines.

Ricketts is a long-time member of the International Order of Odd Fellows and has served as noble grand of Santa Cruz lodge; chief patriarch of Santa Cruz En-

campment; captain of Canton Santa Cruz; major of IOOF Patriarchs Militant; district deputy grand master, and color bearer of the Grand Lodge of California, IOOF.

—M.K.

Rainbow Installs