

Leathercraft has made her a top prize winner

by Elizabeth Holden
Toro A Public Relations

Developing a year-round hobby which wins major awards at the CNE in Toronto is the way Gladys Riddell, Official P.B.X. board, Toronto Area Traffic, is preparing for retirement.

Gladys, who has 24 years of service with the Company, has developed her hobby of leathercraft so successfully that this year she has won three major awards—1st prize for leathercraft (women's division); the International Assembly Leathercraft Award; and the Chatelaine Award for Leathercraft presented to the exhibitor at the CNE gaining the highest points in five categories in leatherwork.

To gain the Chatelaine Award, Gladys topped all exhibitors in her section from across Canada.

This is the fourth successive year that she has won 1st prize at the CNE for leathercraft. Over the same period she has gained some 15 ribbons for her exhibits.

Eight years ago

"I first became interested eight years ago when my daughter decided to go to school to learn about leathercraft," she says. "She didn't want to go by herself so I went with her. I thought I should develop an interesting hobby so that I would have more interests when I retired. My daughter has since dropped out of the class but I keep getting more and more involved with leatherwork."

Being an Associate of the Canadian Society of Creative Leathercraft, qualifies Gladys to teach the craft. This spring she hopes to obtain her Fellowship in the Society



by submitting four articles for exhibition.

Good leather, Gladys says, can be identified by touch or smell, and she uses vegetable dyes to stain the natural hide. When creating heavy leather objects, such as penholders, trays or lampstands, she must first moisten the hide, partially dry it, then mould and stretch it by hand—work which occupies some 10 hours of her leisure time weekly.

"As soon as the CNE ends I start preparing for next season," says Gladys. "This is why I say my hobby is a year-round one—exactly what I want to keep me active when I eventually retire."