

# Lawrence W. Butler, 80, honored for technical achievement in films

Lawrence W. Butler, who received five Academy Awards for technical achievements including work done on "The Thief of Bagdad," died of a heart attack when his pickup truck crashed, officials said yesterday. He was 80.

Butler, who lived in the Fallbrook area, was head of the special effects department at Columbia Pictures in the 1940s. He received his most recent honor from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1975.

His pictures included "The Caine Mutiny," "The Devil at 4 O'Clock" and "Marooned."

Butler's pickup truck was north-

bound on De Luz Road in northern San Diego County when it ran off the road and smashed into rocks at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, said Highway Patrol Officer Sergio Flores.

Butler, who was alone in the vehicle, had major head trauma and was pronounced dead at the scene, Flores said.

The coroner's office listed heart attack as the cause of death.

The academy had bestowed awards on Butler since 1940, when he was saluted for photographic merit on "The Thief of Bagdad."

Subsequent technical honors were awarded for "That Hamilton Woman,"

1941, "Jungle Book," 1942, and "A Thousand And One Nights," 1945.

All of the awards were certificates or plaques, as distinguished from the Oscar statuettes presented in other categories.

"We were very good friends at work," said John Flynn, former director of industry relations and publicity at Columbia. "He was one of the fine special-effects men in the business."

"He was quite a famous director of special effects in the movies," said George Turner, editor of American Cinematographer.