

BOB CAPS DAY WITH TOP CUP

By Kate Young - Thursday, July 26, 2007

A MAN who has been taking part in Wight In Bloom for more than 15 years scooped the main award at this year's presentation at Northwood House on Sunday.

Bob Frampton, 70, was presented with the Lesley Kenrick Cup for the best overall entry for his garden in Rogerson Close, Cowes.

Bob's wife, Angie, started him on the road to success, when she entered him into the awards in 1991.

He won two trophies that year and continued to be a regular category winner after the Island became a unitary authority and the event was re-christened Wight In Bloom from Medina in Bloom in 1995.

He was even a driving force behind Cowes Police Station winning a Wight In Bloom award, as he was a policeman at the station prior to retiring.

Last year, Bob won the trophy for best cottage garden for his plot, where he has been growing flowers for 30 years.

This year he was thrilled to discover he had gone one better and won the top accolade. He said: "I like to have lots of variety in my garden and I try to make sure there is as much colour as possible through the year.

"This year has been a bit of a challenge because of the rain, which means some of the plants have really come on, but others have not thrived because they didn't like the wet but it has been the same for everyone."

Another experienced Wight In Bloom entrant was Hilary Arnold. Judges awarded her work at W. W. Woodford, Butchers, the award for best business frontage for the second year running.

The frontage of the butchers' shop in Bembridge is smothered with bright bedding plants with an old bicycle as the centrepiece.

Hilary said: "I grow the flowers for my own pleasure but it's nice to know other people love looking at them too."

The shop has been owned by Hilary's husband, Peter, for around 35 years.

This year's Wight In Bloom saw a dramatic increase in the number of entries with a bumper crop of 126, up from 80 last year.

One of the newer entrants to taste success was Vectis Road Allotments Association (VERA), whose work on the Ferry Road project in East Cowes earned it the award for the best community project.

VERA was established in 2003 and is responsible for the flowers on the East Cowes side of the floating bridge and for troughs around Red Funnel's car park.

But while their fellow competitors have been affected by wet and windy weather, these gardeners were plagued by rabbits nibbling the plants. Providing alternative food for the rabbits has been tried in vain.

However, members were thrilled with their trophy for Ferry Road, which judges described as a delight to behold.

The category awards were presented by Cllr Roger Mazillius, chairman of the IW Council, and Kerry Jackson, of sponsors Wightlink, while the Lesley Kenrick Cup was presented by her husband, Ken Kenrick, and daughter, Nicky Yates.