



8<sup>th</sup> August 2003

## **Growing for Gold**

Two Whitefriars Housing Group tenants are celebrating after winning top prizes in the annual Whitefriars gardening competition.

Jean Bate from Foleshill took the overall prize beating 120 other entrants.

Alan Baldwin, from Holbrooks won the Novice and Area award for his area, which encompasses Holbrooks, Foleshill, Radford, Coundon and Alleseley village.

Jean Bate, a mother of three, won £45 and an engraved rose bowl for her display of roses, passion flowers and clematis.

She said: "It's excellent to win and feels wonderful. I first entered the competition four years ago and it's gone from there. It's the taking part that I enjoy but I'm over the moon about winning."

When it comes to a winning formula in the garden Jean just goes with what she likes, rather than following a set plan. "If I see a plant I like I'll put it in the garden and hope for the best," she said.

Alan Baldwin, a shift worker at Peugeot, won £50 in combined prize money and an engraved trowel for his display of marigolds, petunias and geraniums. He shares the accolade with his wife, the aptly-named, Rose, due to the huge effort she puts into their garden at home.

Commenting on the win, he said: "I've been gardening since I was old enough to hold a trowel. As I have an allotment and other land, the majority of the garden at home is done by my wife, who has done a brilliant job.

"She's a great fan of gardening programmes and that's why our shed is painted 'Ground Force' blue. To us the garden is another room of our house where we spend a lot of our time."

Sue Blackwell, a member of the Whitefriars communications team, who organised the competition, said: "These two winners are shining examples of gardening at its best. We have been overwhelmed by the amount and quality of entries. I would like to thank all those who took part in this year's competition and made it a success."

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