

Get Flower Parade book

The 50th Spalding Flower Parade is the culmination of a lot of work by different people and one man played his part by charting its history

YOU could say Doug Braybrooks is well qualified for the job, seeing as his father was one of the parade's founders, and Doug was involved with the parade himself for 30 years so writing the book was more a labour of love than anything else.

And now Spalding Flower Parade *The Golden Years*, available for £12.99 from the Lincolnshire Free Press and Spalding Guardian offices in The Crescent, Spalding, brings that passion to life.

Doug, who lives in Cowbit, wanted the book to tell the real story behind the parade, such as how it started and what it was like in the beginning.

He said: "It has changed completely over the years and although it had to keep up with the times, it was nice to give people an idea of what it used to be like.

"It's funny that one of the original ideas was to combine the parade with some kind of carnival. Even having bands on trailers was suggested and that's what they do now."

Doug said: "The parade was very much a growers' show.

"It was big business back then.

"There were 3,000 acres of tulips growing in the Spalding area and about 12,000 worked in the industry.

"Going back through the records I have been able to pinpoint the exact date when it was decided to start the parade and the people who decided it, one of whom was my father Horace.

"From that it grew into the parade it is today.

"It was huge at the time – people used to come from all over the country, the world even, to see it.

"But it was a different time



Doug Braybrooks with pictures during research on the history of the Spalding Flower Parade.

then and the parade has had to change to survive."

Doug first got involved with the parade when he left school and started dressing the floats.

He was later put in charge of getting the girls on and off the floats on parade day and then a few years later joined the committee.

He said: "The flower parade is definitely in my blood.

"I grew up with it.

"How could it not be?"

Doug later resigned from the committee but still helped out marshalling on parade day until around five years ago.

He added: "How many people remember that the parade used to be called 'The greatest free show on Earth'?"

"You used to be able to go anywhere in the world and mention Spalding and people would say 'that's where you have the flower parade'."

DON'T MISS....



Book signings

■ Doug Braybrooks will be signing copies of *Spalding Flower Parade – The Golden Years* on

● Saturday, May 3, at the Sir Halley Stewart Field, Spalding, and on Sunday, May 4, and Monday, May 5, at Springfields Events Centre, Spalding.

■ The book (£12.99) is also available to buy from the Lincolnshire Free Press offices, The Crescent, Spalding, PE11 1AB.

■ To have the book posted to you call 01775 765433.

Cheques £14.99, including post and packing, should be made payable to East Midlands Newspapers.

Video interview

Doug can be seen talking about his book on the Lincolnshire Free Press and Spalding Guardian website www.spaldingtoday.co.uk