

25-year history of Gordon A.

STORY BY DONNA DANIELLI AND PHOTOS PROVIDED



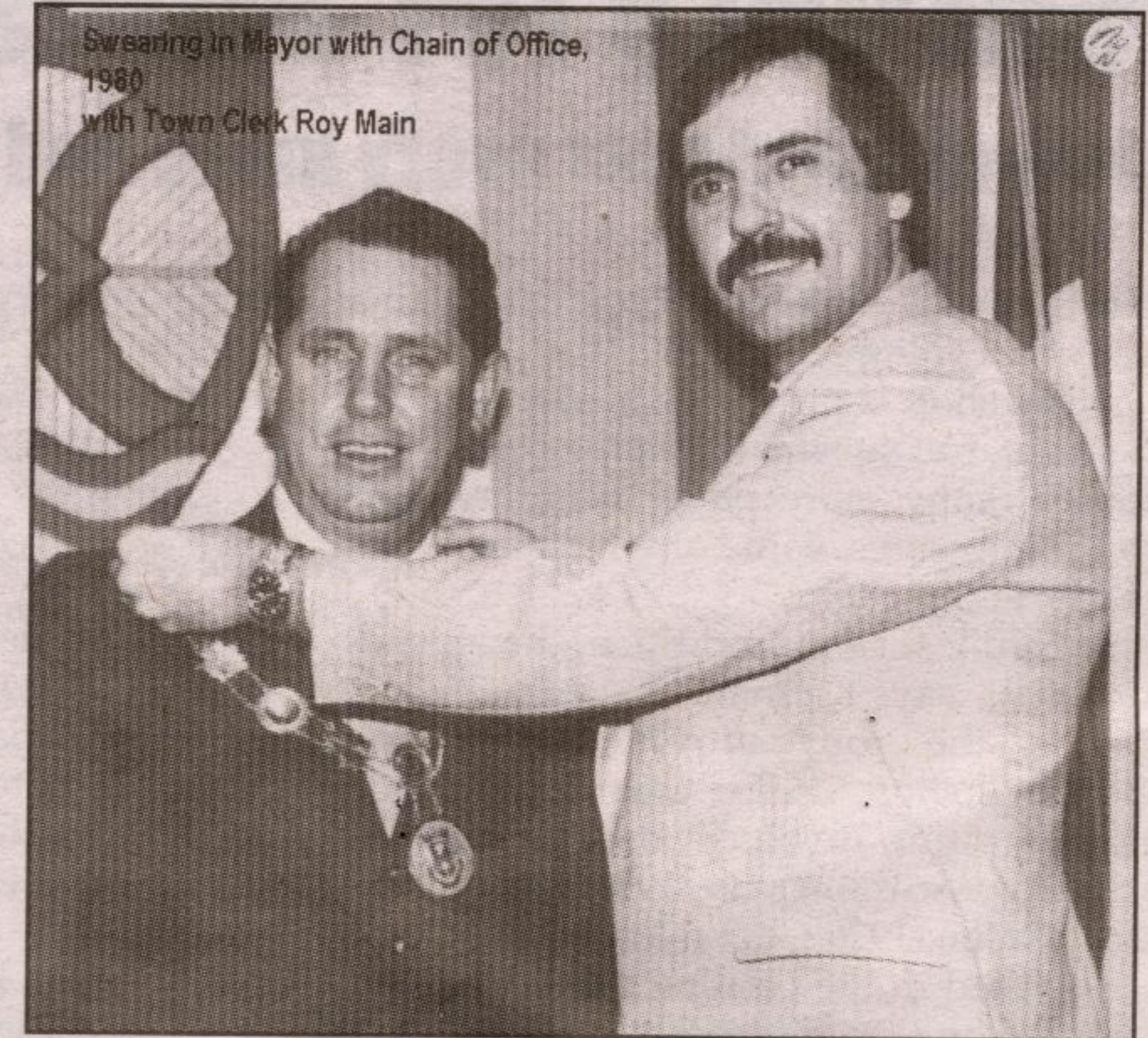
Elected Mayor, 1980
Gord and Olive Krantz

years and whenever anyone asks if we're happily married, I always say yes. I'm married and she's happy!"

Gord Krantz (along with Olive in her behind the scenes role) has made a career of serving the people of Milton. He first ran for Town Council 40 years ago after someone in the local barber shop heard him complain about an issue. "He said that if I thought I could do better, I should run," reminisces the Mayor. "I really knew the town and I knew the issues, but it wasn't until the night of nominations that I really made up mind and made the commitment to let my name stand. The residents agreed because I was readily elected." High on his victory, he admits that he was a little controversial that year, suggesting some radical changes. The following year's election came as a wake up call, when he won his seat by a mere two votes. "I realized that it's all right to be controversial, but change has to come slowly. You're not going to change the world overnight." He muses though that four decades ago, the biggest challenge facing him was the management of growth, an issue that is still present on the table today.

It is his approach to growth that leads many who have followed his career, fifteen years as Councillor, followed by twenty five years as Mayor, to sing his praises most loudly. "He's been a stalwart in the negotiations and in stick handling the management of growth," says Councillor Brian Penman, who along with Councillor Rick Day, have sat at the Council table with Mayor Krantz for the past two and a half decades. Councillor Penman points to the numerous plaques around Milton, commemorating the opening of sports arenas, schools, parks and more, all of which bear the name Mayor Gordon Krantz on them. "It's a reflection of the way he has anchored the growth in this community," he says. "If you have a proud community, it is sometimes an extension of having that proud mayor."

When reminded of the twenty five years they've served together, Councillor Rick Day jokingly comments "All those years and neither one of have learned a thing!" He turns serious though, when reflecting on Mayor Krantz's career, saying "he's been a great mayor for Milton. He can work with the people very efficiently and in a smart manner that benefits the town of Milton. He is really good at sizing up a situation and acting in the best interests of the town." He points to the Mayor's long years as a member of the Niagara Escarpment Commission where "he often used common sense



Swearing in Mayor with Chain of Office, 1980
with Town Clerk Roy Main

and sided with the families on the escarpment" as just one example of the Mayor's commitment to put people first. He's also quick to point out the time the Mayor was cited for contempt of court for refusing to pass the necessary by-laws to allow for the construction of the landfill site on Highway 25. "The bottom drops out of your stomach when three judges of the Supreme Court pronounce you guilty," admits Mayor Krantz. "I was a strong believer that that wasn't where it belonged. We were given thirty days to pass the necessary by-laws. It was a bitter thing at the time."

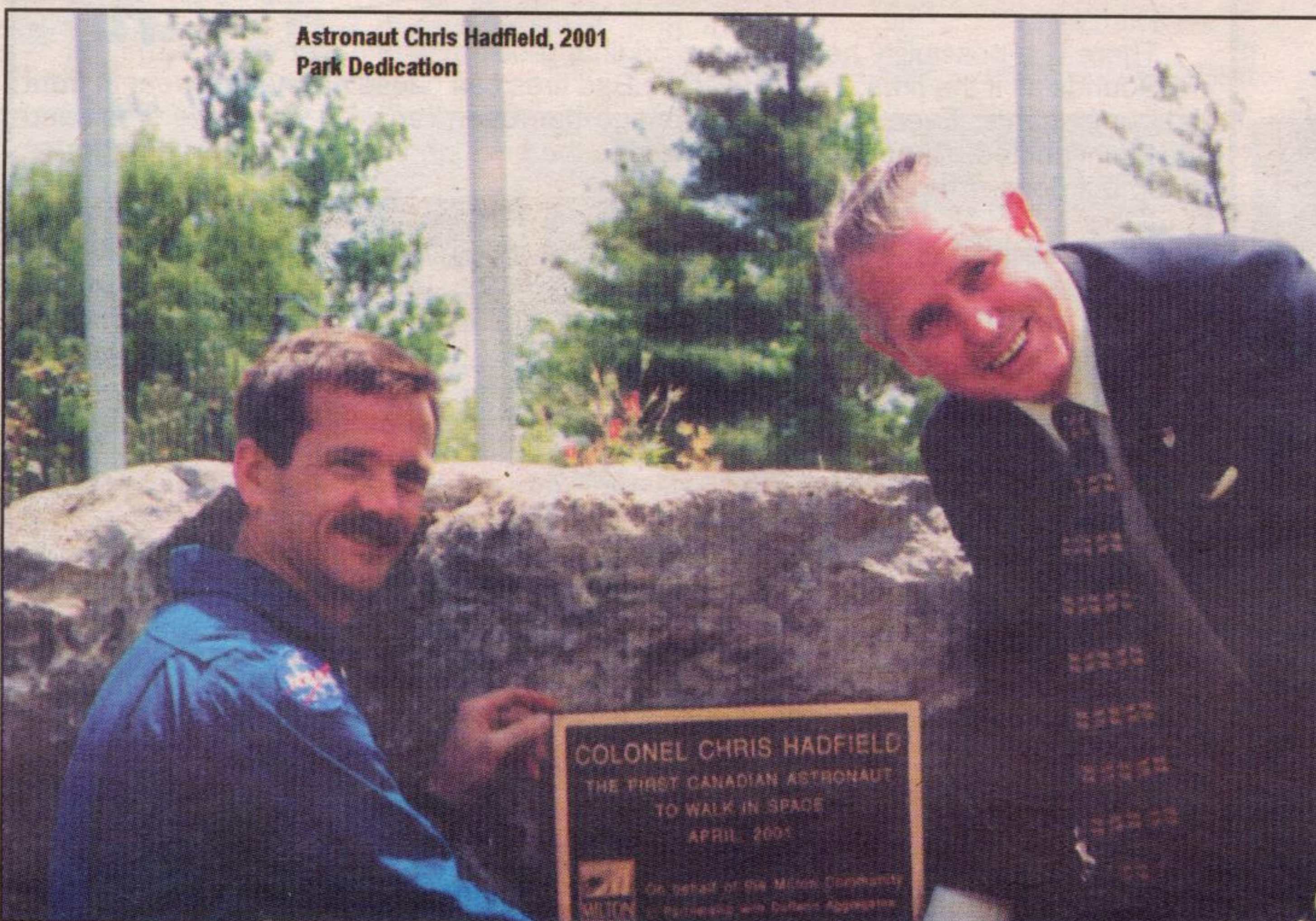
It's that empathy, that kind heart and that consideration of others which the Mayor embodies that has struck a chord with so many of the people he has come in contact with over the years.

"When I think of Gord, I think of Milton," says long-time friend and colleague, Father Mark Curtis. "He has a real gentle, kind heart and he really thinks of his community. He wears his heart on his sleeve when it comes to dealing with people." In fact, it was his long-time friendship with the Mayor that led Father Mark to take on the new role of Town Councillor. "I got into politics because of him," he explains. "I was inspired by him and the impact he's had. He's brought a community together and he makes Milton proud because he represents the heart of the



James Snow, Parkway Opening, 1983

There's a treasure trove hidden in the Krantz basement, a wealth of historical archives celebrating a lifetime of dedication. Not only are all four walls of Mayor Gord Krantz's recreation room packed with framed photos, banners, mementoes and more, but two large book shelves nearby bear the burden of dozens of scrapbooks lovingly kept up by Olive Krantz. Crammed into the books, stored two deep on the sturdy shelves are reminders of days gone by: programs, badges, newspaper articles, dried boutonnieres, membership cards, thank you cards and more. "What I tried to do is put things in that Gord is interested in," says Olive, before laughingly commenting that she might not have started the project had she known she would still be doing it forty years later. "Sometimes he needs to find out something from years ago, so he'll look through them." A quick look at the front page of Olive's first scrapbook though, dated September 1965, bears witness to the mayor's contention, that no matter what, "Olive will keep me from getting too swelled a head" as the book begins with this neatly typed quote: "The human brain is a wonderful thing. It starts working the moment you are born and never stops until you stand up to speak in public." When reminded of the quote, the Mayor sighs before returning a zinger of his own - "We've been married 47



Astronaut Chris Hadfield, 2001
Park Dedication



Chains of Office, 1997
Region of Halton Chair
Mayors of Burlington, Halton Hills,
Milton, Oakville