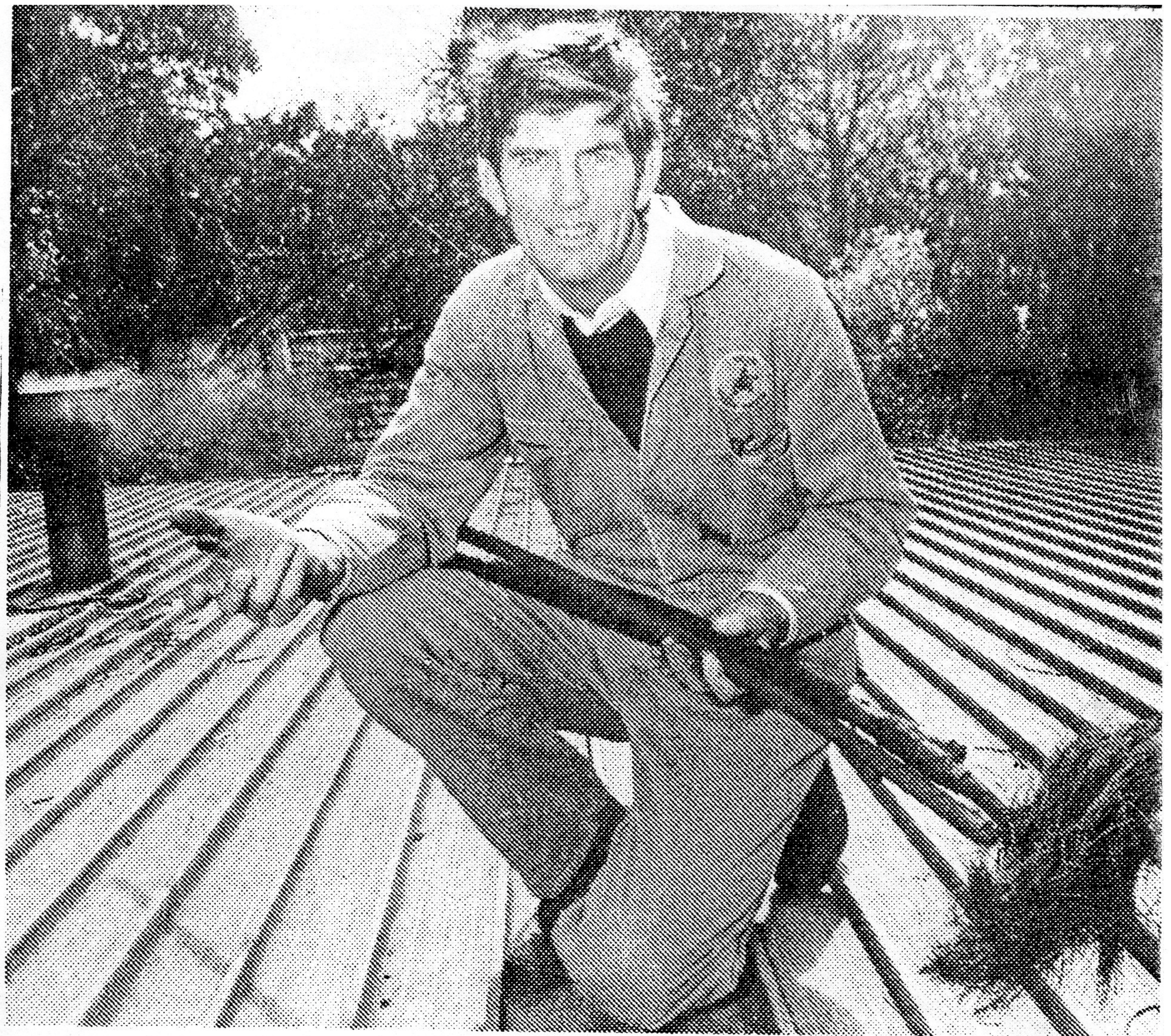


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Chimney sweep Ken Hyde . . . rising to great heights.

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## Ken's job really soots him

By CAROLYN DEED

**KEN Hyde makes a clean sweep in his business by doing a lot of dirty work.**

As a chimney sweep, the mental picture is of a soot-smearing sweep from a Charles Dickens era.

But Ken and many others have crept out of the woodwork and risen to great heights to make themselves known.

Ken turned the page on his career in a roofing business to become a chimney sweep five years ago, and now can be found scaling the roofs of houses in the southern and eastern suburbs.

With constant use of fire places, chimneys become clogged with messy resin, soot and ash, leaving many residents with blackened carpets and filth.

That's where Ken and his Hills Clean Sweep business step in and do the work with old fashioned techniques and know-how.

Although climbing roofs can be a little nerve-racking, Ken has never had a fall.

The utensils used are rather primitive including bristled brushes and rods but they do the job for most chimneys.

Different techniques are used to clean various types of chimneys. Some can be cleared from top up while others are cleaned with both feet on the ground.

Ken has a background in house construction and knows the quirks in most chimney designs.

"Most flues and chimneys aren't all that dirty and if you know how to tackle them you stay quite clean," Ken said.

So are chimney sweeps a dying race of yesteryear?

"Good ones are perhaps," Ken said.

"There are many people who think it's all easy and advertise to clean chimneys.

"But it's not as easy as it sounds and you have to know how to walk on roofs safely and have a bit of background in house design or along those lines," he said.

The job is rather seasonal although many people choose to have their yearly chimney cleaning after the winter months.

Ken will be proving you cannot keep a good man down as he aims to continue his trade seven days a week for many years to come.