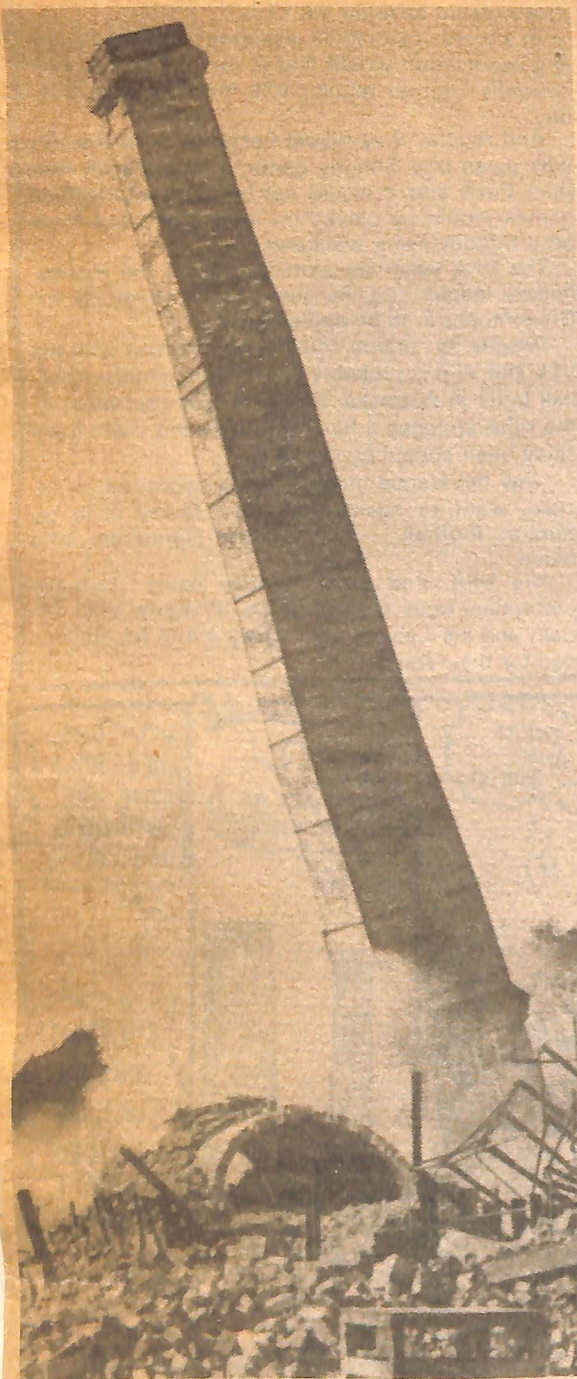


90 years ends ... in seconds!



PHOTOS: Stuart Penberthy

History crashes down

THE last 90-year-link with history came crashing down when a 50-metre chimney was demolished in Dandenong last week.

The chimney was the last of three to be demolished at the Kaiser brickworks in Stud Rd, which ceased operations in October 1982.

The other two huge chimneys were demolished in May.

The heat-resistant bricks used in the chimneys have all been bought by a private contractor.

TWO of three remaining 50 metre-tall chimneys at the Kaiser brickworks in Stud Rd, Dandenong, collapsed in a pile of rubble last week.

The chimneys were among the depleting number of brick stacks left standing at the brickworks which ceased production in October 1982.

The brickworks originally belonged to the Ordish family and it is estimated the chimneys were 90 years old.

It took 5kg of explosive in each stack to send them toppling to the ground.

The Able Blasting Company had spent two days hammering holes at the base of the four brick-deep chimneys, to make supporting pillars.

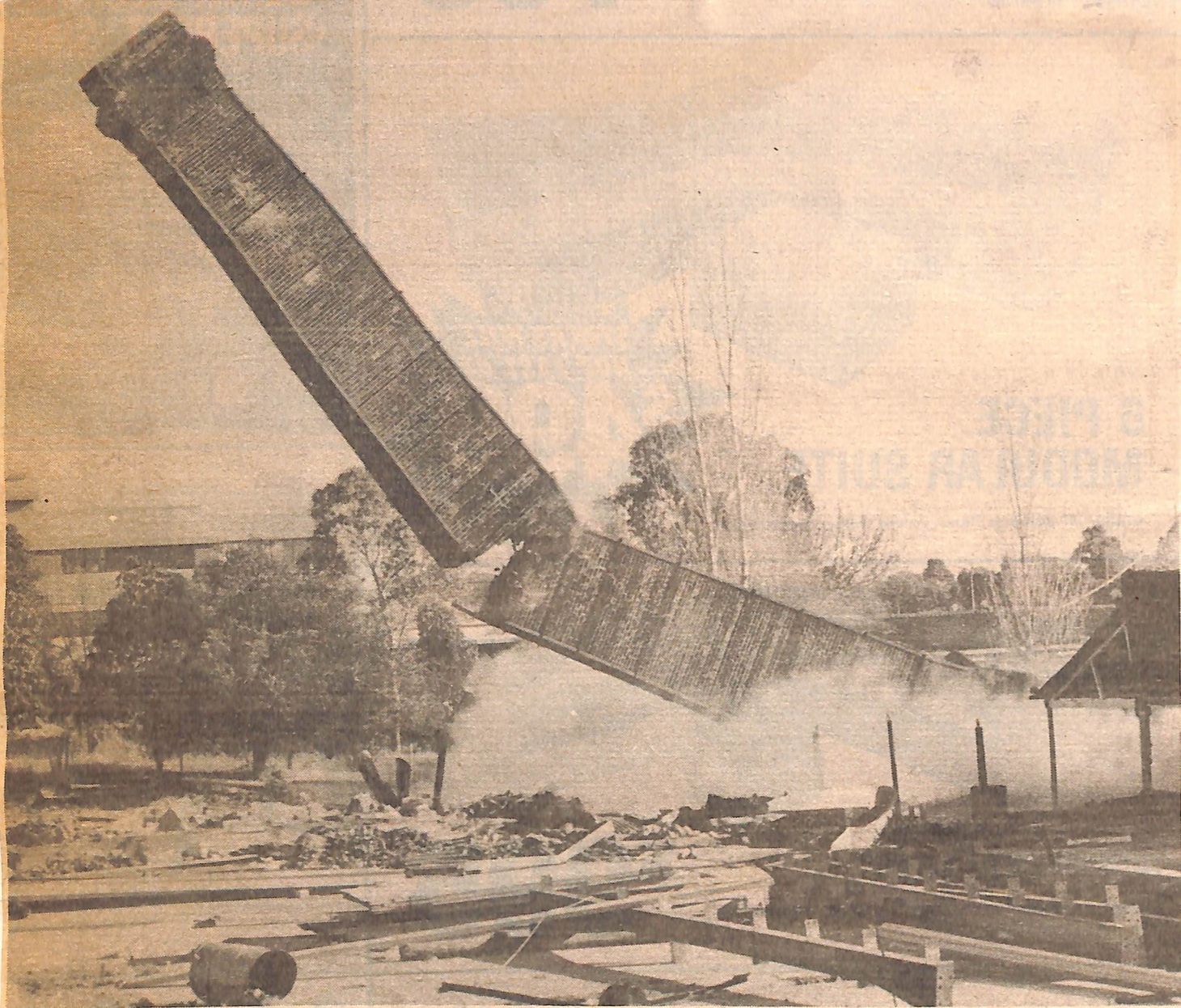
By detonating explosives in two of the pillars, they were able to determine the direction of the fall.

Kaiser brickworks employed 130 people to produce refractory (resistant to heat) bricks at a rate of about 1100 tonnes a month.

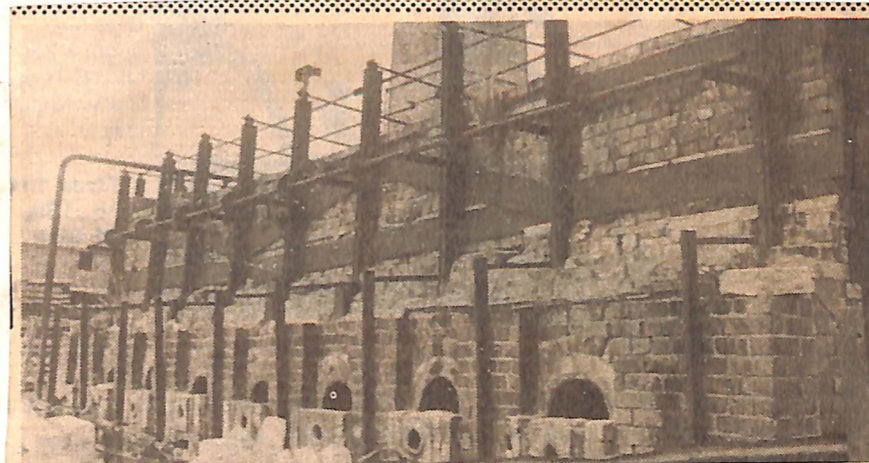
The bricks used in the chimneys are themselves refractory and have been bought by a private contractor.

The last of the chimneys will be demolished within the next two weeks.

An application to build a retirement village on the site, with 116 independent-living units and 100 hostel-type units, has been made to Dandenong Council.



AND down she comes! The last of the three chimneys is no more . . . photos by STUART PENBERTHY



THE kilns at the Ordish fire brick works in Stud Rd, Dandenong, cold after 90 years of firing bricks for Australia's heavy industry. The works will be demolished.

The economic slump has hit one of Dandenong's oldest industries.

Kaiser Refractories have closed the Ordish fire brick plant in Stud Rd, which has operated for 90 years.

The company has had to retrench about 80 men as orders fell since early last year.

About 30 men were left at the plant when it closed on 1 October.

Only a skeleton staff remains, tidying up in preparation for the plant's demolition.

The company's plant manager, Mr N. Sharma, said today the company had been making bricks for the steel

Brickworks close down

concrete, aluminium and other heavy industries.

These were the secondary industries which had been hit hard as the Australian recession worsened.

One indication of the recession is BHP's decision to close two of its four blast furnaces at Newcastle, and three of its five at Port Kembla.

The steel company has announced that 1700 jobs would be lost at Newcastle and 800

at Port Kembla before the end of the year.

The Ordish plant has been making fire bricks since 1892.

It was taken over by Newbolds Refractories in the early 1960s which were in turn taken over by Kaiser Refractories in the late 1970s.

The Treasurer, Mr Jolly, who represents Dandenong in the Legislative Assembly, said today: "I'm concerned about the closing down of the plant."