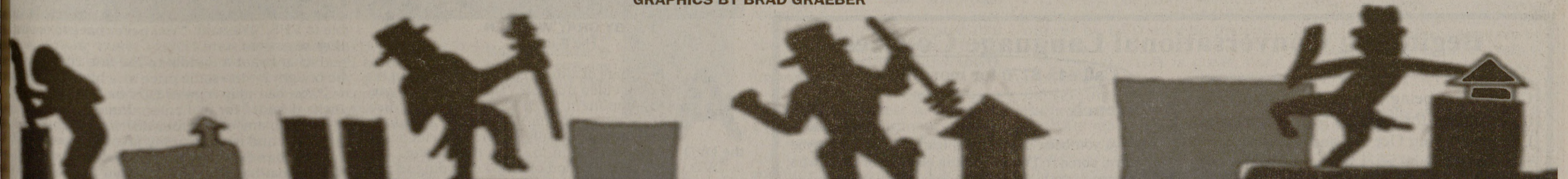


Aggielife

Chim-Chim-i-ney

Heat, short winters don't keep chimney sweeps from work

STORY BY MARIUM MOHIUDDIN
GRAPHICS BY BRAD GRAEBER



Chimney sweeping was glamorized by Dick in Dyke and his ot-clad dancing coworkers in the Disney movie *Mary Poppins*. Since then, the life of a chimney sweep is a mind-boggling mix of people dancing on rooftops, dealing with animals, and surviving the hot sun and near falls off of rooftops, there is obstacle that stand in the chimney sweeps' way.

Judy Bruce, co-owner of Chim Chimney Sweep, said the profession may seem out of place in Texas, but they have a lot of business.

"We work all-year long but it is more of a yearly business," she said. "The busiest time for us is from September to February because this is when it gets the coldest and this is when everyone wants to use their chimneys."

"We may not clean as much as those up north," Bruce said. "But, we keep our business going by doing other things associated with chimneys like inspections."

The heat in Texas and the luxury of heated homes may limit the use of a fireplace.

However, those few cold days in Texas make a fireplace enjoyable.

Bob French, chief meteorologist for KBTX-TV, said with the onset of the winter season, he had his chimney swept in preparation.

"We usually build a fire about 20 to 30 times during the winter when the weather gets cold and nippy,"

he said. "We don't use it to often, but I knew we had to get it done because we have not had it cleaned for a few years."

A chimney sweep's work can amount to a mess.

Bruce said it requires an extensive set-up so furniture will not get damaged.

"To prepare for the job, a chimney sweeper has to make sure the house does not get messy," she said.

"Everything has to be covered. After the set up inside is clean, then a sweeper will sweep down the chimney with special brushes from the rooftop. Then he cleans up inside the chimney with a special vacuum. They have to make sure there is no

debris inside the chimney."

If a fireplace is not used often, it is recommended the chimney be cleaned every 3 to 4 years.

If a fireplace is used more often, it is better to have this done every 2 to 3 years.

Bruce said over the years they have found many interesting things in chimneys.

"The most unusual thing we have found in a chimney was a snake," she said. "Some people say it goes up there to go after the birds, but then others say that it goes up into a chimney so it can hibernate for the winter. The chimney provides a nice dark place to sleep."

"But we have also found raccoons, ducks, cats, baseballs, basket balls and towels," Bruce said. "When workers come to work on roofs, they leave a lot of debris in chimneys. Basically, if you can name it, then we probably have found it."

The fireplace sits in the home and does not get much attention until the cold weather rolls in.

French said he had not cleaned

his fireplace in six years, but understood the dangers involved.

"The soot can collect up in the fireplace, and when that catches on fire, it can be a long, slow fire, like charcoal," he said.

Ashley Elderidge, technical director of the National Chimney Sweeps Guild, said a Texas sweeps' work is limited because of the state's short-burning season. However, she said, there are enough families in Texas who enjoy getting their chimneys cleaned by a sweep.

"It is important for the chimneys to be swept clean," he said. "The tops of chimneys can be unsteady and they may collapse. It is also important to watch the levels of carbon monoxide."

Bruce said some people do not

understand the harmful effects soot has on respiratory systems.

"Anybody who has a chimney needs to have it cleaned because it can be dangerous to leave it," Bruce said. "When you burn wood, the sap that is burned gets stuck onto the inside of the chimney in the form of creosote. This is very dangerous because creosote is flammable."

Bruce said there are dangers involved with the profession. "If you loose your footing, then that is it — you are going to fall," she said. "Some people even have tin or metal roofs, so it can get hot. But, it can be a beautiful sight."

Elderidge said chimney sweeps have a big advantage over other professions.

"The roses we can stop and smell are better than those of others," he said. "Being on the top of a roof and being so high is like being a bird. You feel this intense freedom because you are overlooking everything."

CLASS OF 2002

Election Run-Offs

Tues. Oct. 6
Wed. Oct. 7
9am - 5pm

Your Vote...Your Voice

MUD, SWEAT AND LEATHER

10% OFF BOOTS WITH A VALID STUDENT I.D.

RED WING SHOE STORE
Located 1mi. North of TAMU on Texas Ave.
846-3813

WORK HARD

DAVID PETERS HYUNDAI SUBARU SOON TO BE

PAT SUMMERALL
1309 Texas Ave. **IMPORTS INC.**
Bryan

WITH THIS COUPON YOU'LL BE THE RECEIVER!
Home of the '99 OIL CHANGE CARS & LIGHT TRUCKS
Gasoline Engines Only - Any Make - Any Model

\$ 9.95
Expires 10/31/98

INCLUDES: 4 Quarts Oil & 1 Oil Filter

822-2446

"The Home of the FREE Commemorative Autographed NFL Football" with purchase of vehicle

PITT-DES MOINES, INC.

Pitt-Des Moines, Inc., a world leader in engineering, fabrication and construction of storage tanks and related systems will be on-campus on October 22, 1998 to interview December '98 and May '99 Civil Mechanical Engineering and Construction Engineering graduates for General Management Trainee positions for its domestic and international operations.

Successful candidates will spend two years in the GMT program to become familiar with various career opportunities at PDM in Engineering, Fabrication, Construction, Project Management and Sales.

To learn more about PDM and how it can provide a rewarding career for you, plan to attend the group presentation on Wednesday, October 21, 1998 at 6:30 p.m. at 704 Rudder.

Contact the TAMU Career Center to submit a resume and schedule an interview with PDM.

WORK TRAVEL ABROAD

Dominican Republic, England, Germany

MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness

Interested?

Come to an Informational!

October 8	6:00pm	Rudder 502
October 13	8:30pm	MSC 231
October 20	1:00pm	MSC 230
October 22	7:00pm	MSC 229

Visit Us Online! <http://Ltjordan.tamu.edu>

For more information or to inform us of your special needs, please call the Jordan Office at 845-8770 or come visit us in MSC 223-1.

2 more reasons why you should take our **LSAT** course

Small Group Study
During class, you'll engage in small group activities that maximize your understanding of the LSAT.

You'll love us
Over 90% of our students are referred to us by former students.

THE DECEMBER EXAM IS YOUR LAST CHANCE FOR FALL '99 ADMISSIONS! CLASSES START IN THREE DAYS!

Call us today at **409.696.9099**
www.review.com

THE PRINCETON REVIEW

The Princeton Review is not affiliated with Princeton University or Law Services.