

DEM DAYS

CHAT GROUPS

Topic – News Back Then

Making News in the 70s

- **The Dismissal (1975):** In Australia's most infamous political crisis, Governor-General Sir John Kerr sensationally sacked Prime Minister Gough Whitlam following a prolonged supply deadlock in the Senate.
- **The Whitlam Era (1972-1975):** The election of the Whitlam Labor government ended 23 years of conservative rule. It ushered in rapid societal changes, including the introduction of universal healthcare (then called Medibank), free tertiary education, and the lowering of the voting age to 18.
- **The White Australia Policy:** In 1973, the Whitlam government definitively renounced the divisive immigration policy, opening the door for widespread multiculturalism.

National Disasters & Environment

- **Cyclone Tracy (1974):** In the early hours of Christmas Day, a tropical cyclone devastated the city of Darwin, killing 66 people and destroying over 80% of homes in what remains one of the worst natural disasters in Australian history.



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Culture & Social Movements

- **Women's Liberation:** The decade saw massive pushes for equality, including the fight for equal pay, increased access to abortion, and the introduction of no-fault divorce in 1975.
- **Indigenous Land Rights:** The movement for Aboriginal rights accelerated, prominently marked by the establishment of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy outside Parliament House in Canberra in 1972.
- **Gay & Lesbian Rights:** Homosexuality began its path to decriminalization, and the first wave of activist groups was born, which eventually paved the way for Sydney's first Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras in 1978.
- **Iconic Media:** Culturally, the decade brought "ocker" comedy to the screen, iconic shows like *Number 96*, and the global rise of homegrown bands like AC/DC.

Sports & Entertainment

- **World Series Cricket (1977):** Media tycoon Kerry Packer revolutionized the sport by splitting from traditional cricket establishments to create World Series Cricket, fundamentally changing how the sport was televised and played professionally.
- **Sydney Opera House (1973):** Australia's architectural jewel was officially opened, changing the face of the country's arts scene internationally.