



## #WhenIWas15

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Next Address prop tech entrepreneur and advocate chats about being 15 in Australia with LinkedIn.

Sandman's, Molly, and Disruption: were my life as an Aussie teenager.

The year was 1975, and Gough Whitlam, the Australian Prime Minister, was controversially sacked. Medibank, a universal healthcare system, was introduced. A brilliant comedian, Graeme Kennedy's catch cry of FAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRK got him sacked from TV, and Aussie radio was beginning to change with 2JJ the predecessor of Triple J was born. I was shocked when respected Australian journalists, now known as the Balibo Five, were tragically killed by Indonesian troops in Portuguese Timor. Director Peter Weir's, 1st major movie, Picnic at Hanging Rock, was released. The Holden Sandman was on the market, intended for storing surfboards and ending up being used for stealing kisses! Mama Mia by Abba went

global TV show Countdown, and I turned 15.



Australia in 1975 was changing.

I am told by family members and friends that I was a girl full of conviction and a bit of a rescuer. I do remember I could pick a bully a mile off and had a robust anti-bully sentiment that saw me champion many an underdog. I understood bullies then, and the power they held. This ability to spot one has carried through to my older years; I can see my sense of injustice infusing so many things I do. Even now, give me a bully, and I will try and find a solution to platform those in need of assistance or revelation! Next Address anyone? Ahem. The real estate industry and big business, in some ways, has, unfortunately, become the adult bullies playground. But this is changing.

My 15th summer was spent learning to surf and gazing at surfers at Diamond Bay, a small ocean beach, on the Mornington Peninsula. My education was enjoyed at a small private girl's school in inner Melbourne, seasoned with good friends, a love of sports, netball mostly and an interest in politics of the day. The day Gough was sacked and the injustice I felt still resonates with me loudly all these years later. I can still clearly see our politics teacher Miss Richie coming into our classroom crying, saying that Australian politics would never be the same, she was right.



I wasn't the genius of the class, but I wanted to know and understand why things happened, and I never settled for empty answers or the "they just do" response. Curiosity may have killed the cat, but satisfaction always bought it back!

At 15, my parents were instilling a strong work ethic, expecting me to have a part-time job. They owned a successful transport company for years, and I think determination and business grit is in my blood. Interestingly my extended family has always either been in business, creating or inventing, so I guess running my own is in my DNA. The world was secure, and family focused and happy, and there was an air of freedom in the wind. I think I saw the world as fair but not equal. Milkshakes and mixed lollies were the staple reward after school. (McDonald's were still yet to arrive in





At 15 I wasn't sure what I would do when I grew up! But it was expected, at my school, that we would go on to tertiary education. Eventually, I did, but this was after a couple of years in the workforce. Initially, I worked as a nursing aid for intellectually disabled adults and children who were in institutional care. I found myself not content with the nursing side of it but reveled in the ability to organize holidays and events for my charges using my parent's holiday house! I married young to a lovely fella I am still very happily attached to, and we have a gorgeous brood of 3. A successful marriage forged, and I am so very grateful for this.

If I could step back in time to the year 1975 and speak to my 15-year-old self, I would tell her to listen to her head and heart in unison. Not just one or the other and if it doesn't feel right, it's not right. Have a go, what's the worst that can happen? Owe some money, make some mistakes but along the way, you will have an incredible journey of self-discovery, friendships, and learning.

Did I imagine, #WhenIWas15, one day I was going to lead the charge of creating innovation and forge the way to create positive change in real estate with Next Address. Did I know I would be able to rally a divergent team across three states and march forward overcoming hurdles with an effort of sporting gumption! NO, but wow am I proud to be doing so now.

So, my message to my 15-year-old self and anyone else who wants to listen would be, embrace the inner you, the side of yourself you know fills your heart with glee, find your passion and bring it to life. And as ABBA reunites after 35 years .... There's a fire within my soul, Mamma Mia, here I go again, my, my, how can I forget you?

I found my fire at 15, when I witness the injustice of Gough Whitlam's sacking, find yours.

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