



WAY BACK THEN...

1980: *Key Global Events and Trends*

It was 1980... the start of a new decade... and the mind-boggling, multi-coloured **Rubik's Cube** hit the UK toy market with a vengeance...



The ubiquitous Rubik's Cube launched on the brink of a brand new decade with its raft of fresh challenges, hopes and dreams... Within weeks of its appearance, The Cube took the world by storm. And out there in the real world, life was continuing to evolve apace. Even without the Rubik's Cube, 1980 was a year to remember:

Politics



In January **Indira Gandhi's** Congress Party won the elections in India, while back in the USA Democrat President **Jimmy Carter** handed over the reins of the USA Presidency to Republican **Ronald Reagan** in the November of 1980 – clearing the way for the development of a unique relationship between Margaret Thatcher and Reagan, the likes of which had never been seen before between the two countries.

In the UK, **Margaret Thatcher** settled into office as the country's first female Prime Minister. At the 1980 party conference, she set out the mode of leadership she would adopt during her premier years, with her now infamous statement "U-turn if you want to. The lady's not for turning."

Saddam Hussein invaded Iran and sparked off a war with his neighbours that would last most of the decade. Iran was in the news in the UK too, when the SAS staged the dramatic rescue of 19 hostages from the **Iranian Embassy** in London.

Lech Walesa formed the Union Solidarity in Poland, and **Robert Mugabe** became the first Prime Minister of newly renamed Zimbabwe.

Sport

At the **1980 Winter Olympic Games** in Lake Placid, New York, bobsledders Willie Davenport and Jeff Gadley became the first African American athletes to represent the United States.

The **1980 Moscow Summer Olympic Games** were boycotted by the USA and others as a protest against Russia's invasion of Afghanistan – thus enabling the USSR team to scoop the most Medals (195) including 80 Golds.



Larry Holmes defeated **Muhammad Ali** to retain the **WBC World Heavyweight** title in what was Ali's last world title bout.

Bjorn Borg and **John McEnroe** slogged it out in a gloriously entertaining **Wimbledon** final - with Borg finally getting the better of his petulant rival to raise the coveted Wimbledon trophy. McEnroe, however, went on to claim the **US Open** title.



Fashion and lifestyle

Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy celebrated presidential success with a style that included fashionable, conspicuous clothes and social events to display the affluence of American society to a world audience...

During 1980 the die was cast for a global social sea-change – the beginnings of the new 'consumerism'. Despite an originally downcast economic climate, as the eighties powered on, **branding and designer labels** became status symbols for sports gear and sportswear, perfumes, electrical equipment, cars and fashion designer goods such as clothing, bags, luggage, scarves and glasses.

Shopping malls – the new temples to modern living – started springing up throughout the Western world, as society got set to consume and consume – with a passion. Women dressed for success with what has now become known as **power dressing** – based on the perfect suit for climbing the corporate ladder. The ubiquitous **shoulder pad** dominated every female top garment, from power suits to knitwear, from t-shirts to bed attire. Hair also became scarily 'big' and bouffant.



... And a charmingly timid **Lady Diana Spencer** entered the world stage, opting for the 80s alternative fashion strand of romantic glamour, in stark contrast to Margaret Thatcher's trademark power suits. (As the whole world knows, Diana married the heir to the British throne, Prince Charles, on 29 July 1981.)

Music

Music fans could now listen to all of the big hits on their brand new **Sony Walkmen**, launched in 1980, alongside **Philips' Compact Disc** digital audio format, revolutionising the way we consumed our music.



Meanwhile, the pop music scene was dominated by romantic ballads from **The Captain and Tenille**, **Paul McCartney and Wings**, **Air Supply**, **Elton John**, **Bette Midler**, and **KC and the Sunshine Band**, while punctuated by the introduction of more diverse and challenging sounds such as **Pink Floyd's** anarchic *Another Brick in the Wall* and **Gary Numan's** electronic mantra, *Cars*.

We were also rocked and roused by **Blondie** (whose single, *Call Me* was the number one selling single of the year), **Michael Jackson**, **Queen**, **Adam Ant** and **Diana Ross**. More eclectic sounds were provided by the likes of **Joy Division**, **Elvis Costello**, **The Cure**, **Talking Heads**, **David Bowie** and **The Jam**.

Film and Television

Star Wars follow-up ***The Empire Strikes Back*** raked in the biggest box office gross, with ***Superman II*** coming a close second in terms of box office success.

However, the **1980 Academy Awards** were dominated by Director **Robert Redford's** ***Ordinary People***, which scooped three Oscars for Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor (**Timothy Hutton**) and Best Director (**Redford**). **Robert de Niro** walked off with the Best Actor Award while **Sissy Spacek** was voted Best Actress, and **Mary Steenburgen** Best Supporting Actress.



They don't hand out Oscars for "Most Over the Top" Actor, but if they did, in 1980 the undisputed winner would have been **Jack Nicholson** for his outrageously manic performance in ***The Shining***.

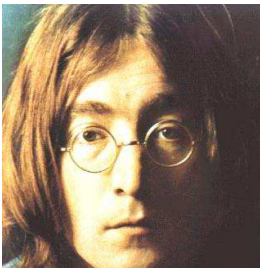


CNN was launched as the first global TV news network.

Top television shows included ***M*A*S*H***, ***The Dukes of Hazzard***, ***Taxi*** and ***Little House on the Prairie*** – and the world was on tenterhooks waiting to learn who shot JR Ewing in the glossy American soap ***Dallas*** ... the event became an international obsession!

Births

Famous people born in 1980 include ex-US President Bill Clinton's daughter, **Chelsea**, tennis champions **Venus Williams** and **Martina Hingis**, current Formula 1 Champion **Jenson Button**, and pop diva **Christina Aguilera**.



Farewells

The world was shocked by the assassination of ex-Beatle and peace promoter **John Lennon** (1940-1980) - and also bid farewell to **Alfred Hitchcock** (1899-1980), **Steve McQueen** (1930-1980), **Peter Sellers** (1925-1980), **Jean-Paul Sartre** (1905-1980) and **Mae West** (1890-1980).

And finally ...

The NASA space probe **Voyager I** made its closest approach to Saturn, when it flew within 77,000 miles of the planet's cloud tops and sent the first high resolution images of the world back to scientists on earth.



Post-It Notes were introduced by **3M**, **British Airways** was privatised, **small pox** was considered eradicated by the World Health Organisation, **Japan** passed the US as the **world's largest car manufacturer**, and 'ghetto-blaster' was included in the English dictionary for the first time...

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NOTES FOR JOURNALISTS AND BROADCASTERS

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Please note that Erno Rubik does not give individual interviews

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