

A copy of the book, Lyon, M (2022), *These Are My War Time Diaries: Sumatra 1942-1945 Dr. [Miss] Marjorie Lyon*, published by Scotts, was provided as part of this submission.

While paragraphs of the book referred to on page one of the submission have been reproduced as per the submission, the full publication can be viewed by request at the Perth AEC office, Level 1/15-17 William St.

Alternatively, the book is available on request from the National Library of Australia, nla.gov.au.

Lyon, M (2022), *These Are My War Time Diaries: Sumatra 1942-1945, Dr. [Miss] Marjorie Lyon*. Scotts.

CITATION IN RESPECT OF DR. (MISS) MARJORY JEAN LYON

Miss Lyon after admirable work during the attack on Singapore was evacuated on the 12th of February, 1942, by S.S. Kuala - when this vessel was sunk by Japanese Dive Bombers she was directly responsible in rescuing the life of a Royal Army Medical Officer who had sustained a fractured skull by pulling her for 400 yards through dangerous waters where bombs were still falling. Upon arrival at POM POM Island, Miss Lyon, although suffering from the effects of shock due to the blast took over the complete charge of the many wounded on the island. Her tireless efforts saved many lives.

On arrival in Sumatra Miss Lyon refused opportunity to escape preferring to look after the welfare of the wounded. As the result of this she was interned for 3½ years during which time Miss Lyon as Commandant of various Women's camps displayed remarkable heroism when dealing with the Japanese and efficiently when conducting her medical duties.

In consideration of her valuable services, His Majesty the King has been pleased to appoint her to be an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

DECEMBER 1945.

A Fine Tribute to Australian Servicemen and Nurses

Testimony to Courage

Written for the Australian Women's Digest
by Lady Louis Mountbatten

THE last few weeks which I have spent working in the Far East amongst Allied Prisoners of War and Civil Internees, and helping with their care and rehabilitation, have brought me into very close touch with the Australians.

As far afield as Siam to Morotai, and in large areas in Singapore, Malaya, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Labuan, Manila and Hong Kong, I have been amongst Australian prisoners of war and internees both in the early days in their actual camps before the final surrender of the Japanese, and during the later stages of their transit and final evacuation homewards. For their courage, comradeship and magnificent spirit, whatever ordeals they had been subjected to, and however much they had suffered, no praise can be too high, and it was a real privilege to me to have been in so many places—

the first European woman to come amongst them for 3½ years. Australians were some of the first prisoners I saw in the early days of liberation in inner Siam, when I visited a large number of camps in the company of Colonel Coates, one of Australia's leading surgeons whose magnificent work, as well as that of Colonel Dunlop, Colonel Taylor and all of the R.A.M.C., no words can describe. Thousands of lives were saved by them, even though in most cases they had no medical supplies or equipment whatsoever. The way they improvised, however, was quite staggering, extracting drugs from

herbs and shrubs, making surgical and medical equipment out of old bits of tin, bamboo, shreds or whatever they could find or scrounge. They carried out successful operations and cures which, in the appalling conditions, and with the desperate shortages they were faced with, would have appeared to have been utterly impossible.

It was certainly the brave spirit and sheer determination to survive, and fine team work, together with real devotion and sacrifice that brought so many through, and for those who did not survive there can only be felt deep pride and gratitude.

I was touched by the lovely welcome I was given everywhere, including places where I often arrived unexpectedly by jeep accompanied by fully armed Japanese or natives who at the time were the only people we could work with, having not as yet been able to move any Allied troops into the area. In Sumatra, the whole of the evacuation of Allied Prisoners of War had to be carried out by air, river boat and sea without having one single Allied soldier ashore or even the Navy lying-off. Speed was essential, however, as the conditions in the camps in the Netherlands East Indies were, I think, the worst of any, and many more lives would have been lost had there been further delay.

One marvelled at the glorious sense of humour of the men however ill or emaciated they might be, and their obvious re-

frusal to be got down by the Japanese whatever they were subjected to. The magnificent assistance given, in their evacuation by the Australian Air Force, and by doctors and nurses will be something I shall always remember. There were men from Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Victoria, Brisbane and all parts of Australia, and having spent happy days there myself some years ago, I was able to talk with many of them about their homes.

I met the grand Australian Army Nurses, the survivors of the tragic ships which were attacked by the Japanese either sailing from Singapore at the time of the surrender, and I marvelled at their fine courage and high morale after such suffering. I saw also an outstanding woman doctor, Dr. Lyon, of Australia, whose work with the civilian internees' camp in Sumatra will make history, and who succeeded in commanding and controlling the Japanese and seeing that they carried out her orders! I saw all these people either in the camps or in the hospitals, or on board the hospital ships bound for Australia.

Amongst the hospitals I visited, were many fine Australian ones including the 2nd 14th Australian General Hospital in Singapore, where I had the pleasure of meeting Miss Sage, Matron-in-Chief of the Australian Army Nurses for whom, and for whose service I would like to express my deepest admiration.

It was a real joy seeing all the liberated prisoners of war, and after the evacuation days in Siam, Singapore, Java and Sumatra,

at the kind invitation of Australia I visited Borneo, Labuan and Morotai in these places, as well as seeing ex-prisoners of war I met many of the Australian troops whose great feats in the New Guinea campaign were so crowned with success. Many of them were veterans also of the Middle East campaign; some had only recently come from Australia, but all were in high spirits and showed wonderful physical fitness.

The kindness and hospitality I was shown throughout the Australian theatre I shall always remember, as well as the wonderful care given to British prisoners of war and internees in the Australian Hospitals and Transit camps.

The contribution of the Australian Red Cross and its fine workers in all areas during the entire campaign cannot be sufficiently praised, and I saw much of it during my recent tours. Our British Red Cross and St. John have felt proud to have been so closely associated with it during the whole war.

By now I hope most of the prisoners of war and internees will have reached their homes safely and what I look forward to most in the near future is accepting the kind invitation I received from my charming Australian friends to visit them before very long.

Peace Now
Lady Mountbatten

In his book "Understanding the Young Child," Dr. W. E. Blatz hits the parental traits which "should constitute mother-love and father-love" as follows: "Affection without sentiment; discipline without aggression; humor without ridicule; sacrifice without obligations; companionship without possessiveness."

Weekend News, Saturday March 29
**OBE WINNING DR
DIES IN PERTH**

Dr Marjorie Lyon, who was awarded the OBE for saving the life of a woman after a ship was bombed, died last Wednesday.

Born in Northam in 1905, Dr Lyon attended Methodist Ladies College in Perth before qualifying as a doctor in Sydney.

She was the most highly qualified woman doctor when she became a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons (Edinburgh) and a member of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (London).

A degree in tropical medicine led to a position in Johore, Malaysia.

She was resident physician to the women of the household of the Sultan of Johore and remained in Johore intermittently until the fall of Singapore, when she was the last across the causeway before it was cut by the Japanese.

An Allied ship taking her to safety was bombed and Dr Lyon

supported another woman, Dr Elsie Crowe, as they swam several miles before being picked up and taken to Sumatra.

They arrived just before the island was taken by the Japanese.

The three years she spent in a POW camp administering to 2000 Dutch prisoners affected her health and eyesight.

On her release, Dr Lyon went to Sydney, returned to Singapore and finally came back to Perth.

For a short period she was in private practice and then was a medical officer with the Education Department.

Dr Lyon retired five years ago.

She had enormous stamina and extraordinary energy, and served the medical profession selflessly.

A private funeral was held for her today.

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53. Letter dated 3 June 1966 from Sir Albert Coates OBE FRCS from Melbourne.

"I am giving a lecture to the Women's Group of the Australian American Assn. on June 21st on "Women in Medicine in Peace & War". I propose to speak of you and your work amongst others. Could you give me some information of your activities after Padang March 1942. I went North to Burma and have met Col. Hennessey since - but my knowledge of your work after that is scanty.

I hope you are well. Col Warren & I spoke of you when I saw him in USA 15 years ago. You knew that we were nearly picked up. I hope this is not too much bother."

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55. Letter dated 4th April 1975 from Dr. Crowe from Oundle England to Mrs. Emily Lyon of Nedlands Western Australia, Marjorie's sister-in-law.

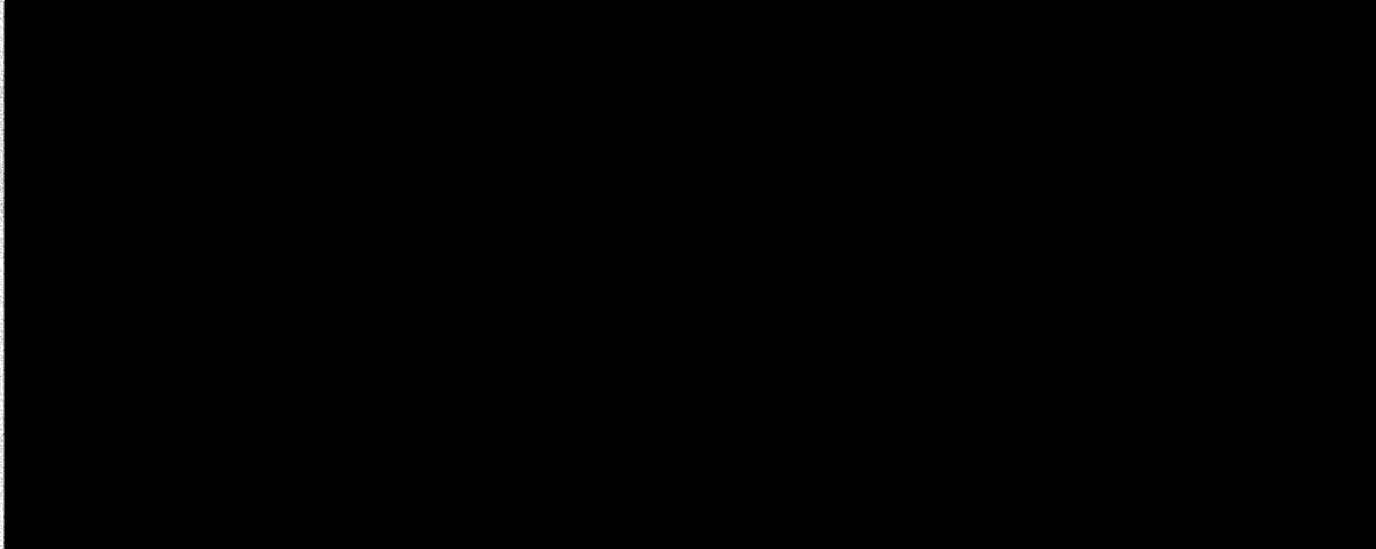
"Dear Emily

Your letter of March 29 came today - Thank you very much for writing to me so quickly to tell me the sad news - I had a letter from Marjorie last week (it must have been written only 3 days before she died). In it she told me she felt terribly tired and that there were lumps (cancer) in her armpit and neck. I knew (and I'm sure she did) that this was the beginning of perhaps great suffering as the growths spread - so I can't be too thankful that she died before this happened - thankful also that you found her looking as if she had fallen asleep - perhaps the heart attack was so sudden that she didn't even know it had happened - as you say to go so quickly and without fuss (and at home) was just what she would have wished. Indeed I can imagine your shock and grief and I too am feeling grieved - in spite of the fact of my thankfulness that Marjorie has been spared so much suffering.

I know how much you and Marjorie meant to each other - it has always been a comfort to me to know you were there, living so near her and always ready to give her any help she

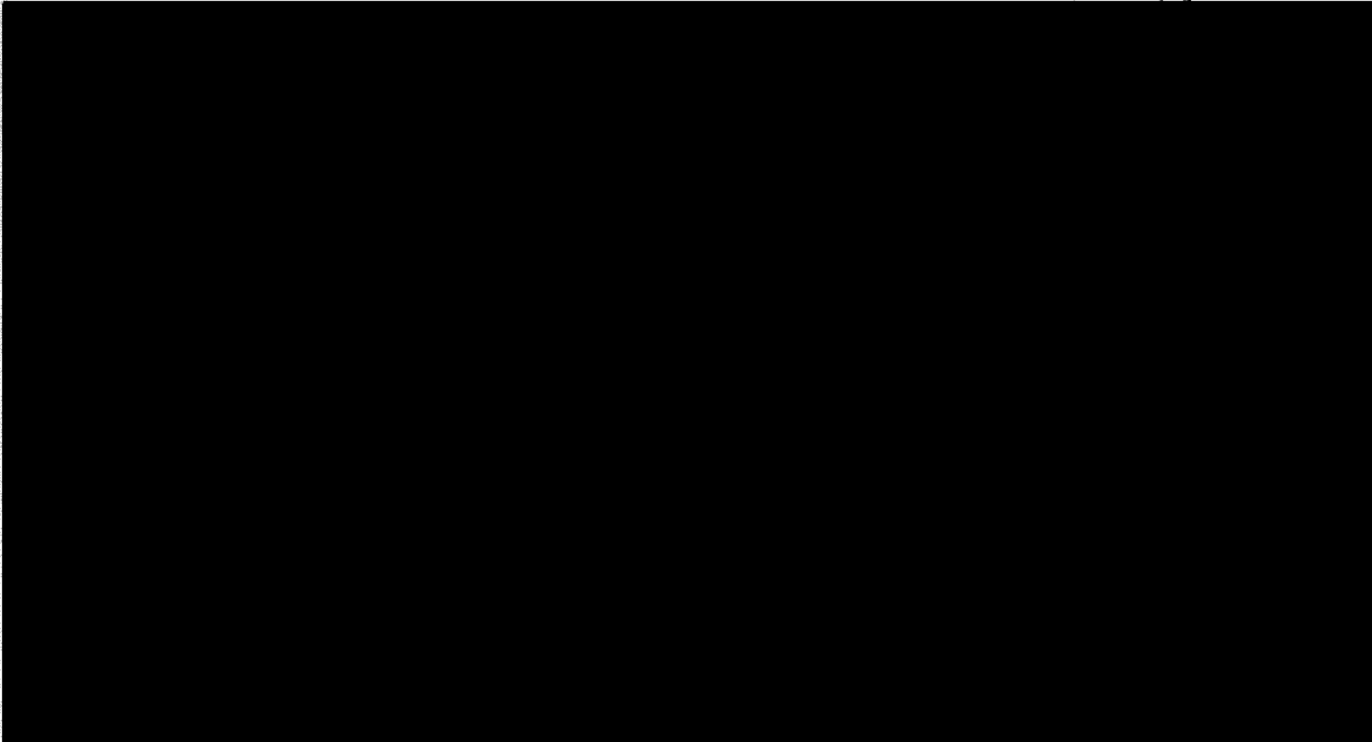
Appendices

needed. You will miss her terribly. She was a wonderful person and the staunchest, most loyal friend – I shall never forget all she did for me during more (than) 3 ½ years of internment. I've never known so utterly honest a person – integrity and Marjorie are synonymous to me – I'm proud to have been her friend”



58. Letter dated 4 April 1975 to Mrs. Emily Lyon from Emmy Klienger – Nobel (1892 – 1985) German Jewish close friend and Microbiologist, Lister Institute. Robert Koch Medalist. Marjorie travelled to Nazi Germany in 1930's and retrieved items for her.

“Thank you very much for your kind letter and the Newspaper cutting. Yes you are right Marjorie was one of my best friends and her loss saddens me deeply. I knew that she was very ill and I am grateful with you that at least the end was so peaceful. Marjorie and I met first in 1934 at Crosby Hall here in London where we lived together for a year or so and became very good friend though I was a good deal older than she was, namely 13 years. We saw a lot of each other at that time and went on excursions together on Sundays. I saw her again after the war when she spent about half a year in London 20 years later she had three months holiday which she spent mostly in London and then she also stayed with me at my flat. I saw her last 4 years ago when I visited Western Australia, mainly Perth. She took me round in her car and was very good to me. I always realised what a wonderful person she was and how much she had achieved in her life, though she was so modest and restraint (sic). We exchanged letters through all the years of our friendship.”



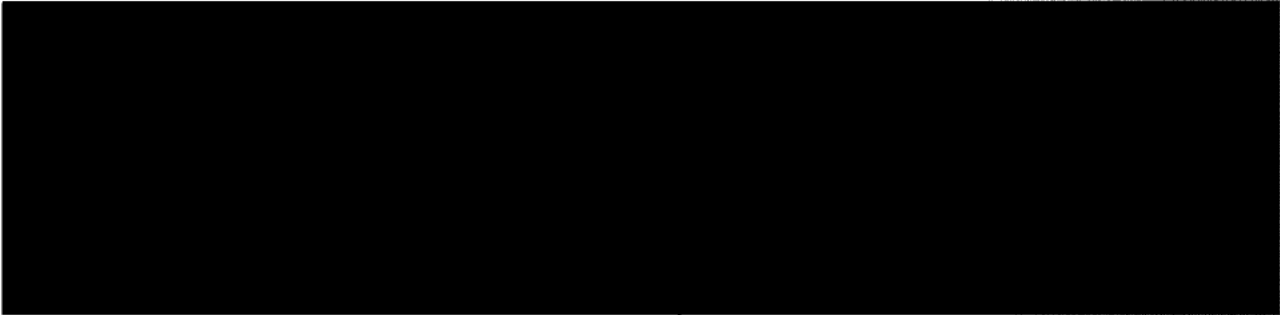
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67. Letter undated (received Christmas 1975) from Captain Martine Krauth from Stuttgart to John Lyon. A significant letter.

"In Remembrance to Dr. M.J. Lyon. I send you this Handkerchief with all this Names that are the Names of the People hoe Dr. Lyon brought in, in our Hospital from Salvation Armee, of last moment before the Japanees came in at Padang. Some Frather brought this transport with all this wundet and bombed people. Dr. Lyon and Dr crowe and some Susters had been for 3 days on one islet, out food or frinks,. No body was living on this islet. 3 ½ years served Dr. Lyon the medical Profession selflessly, in a POW – Camp, to 2400 Woman and Children. We had been for this time altogether. I send you at Handkerchief she made for me and a little photo from Jan. Please at is for you. Just in this time I often thingking on Dr. M.J. Lyon.

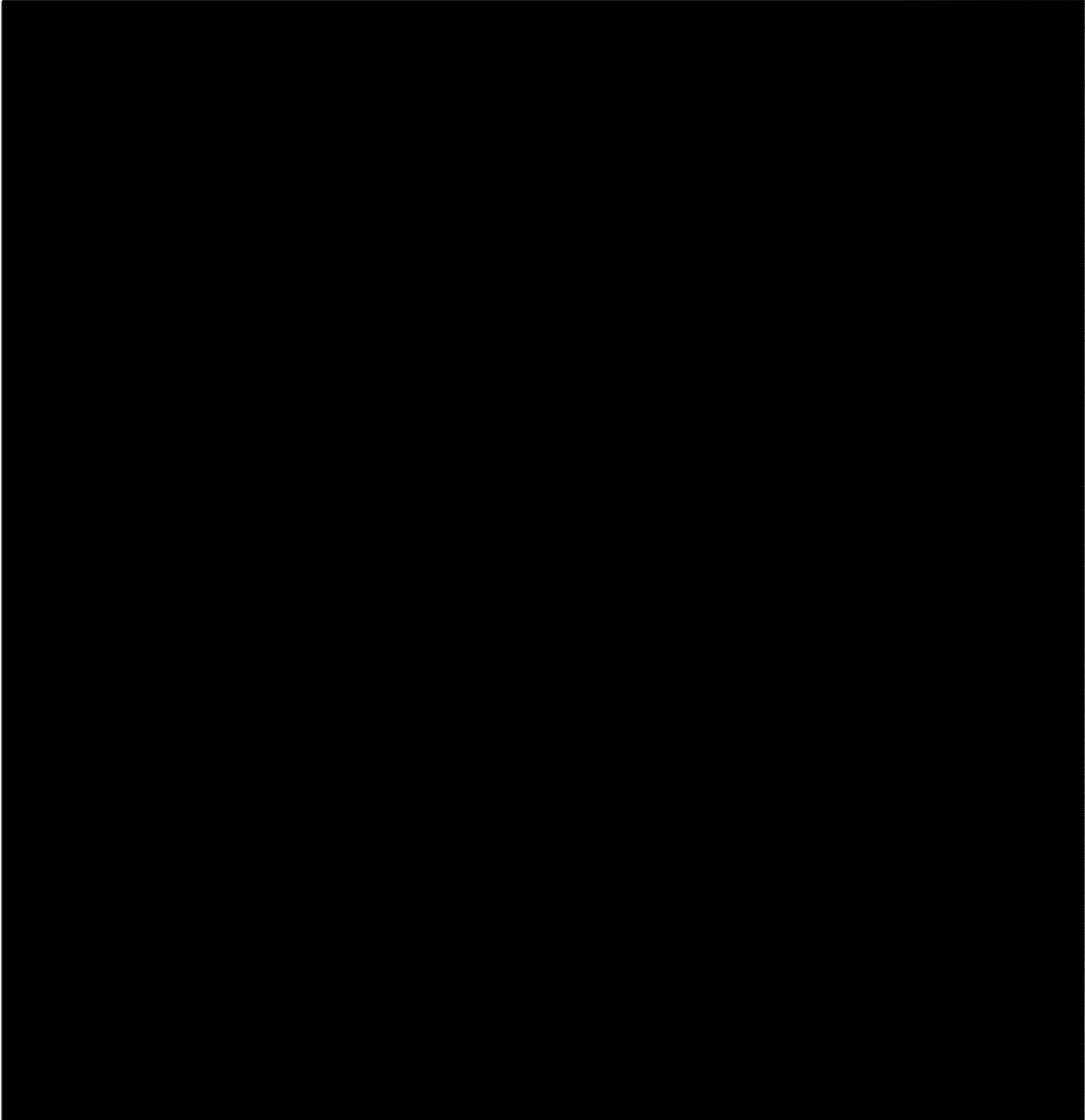
I wish you and your Familie a happy Xmas and a good New Year. God Bless you".

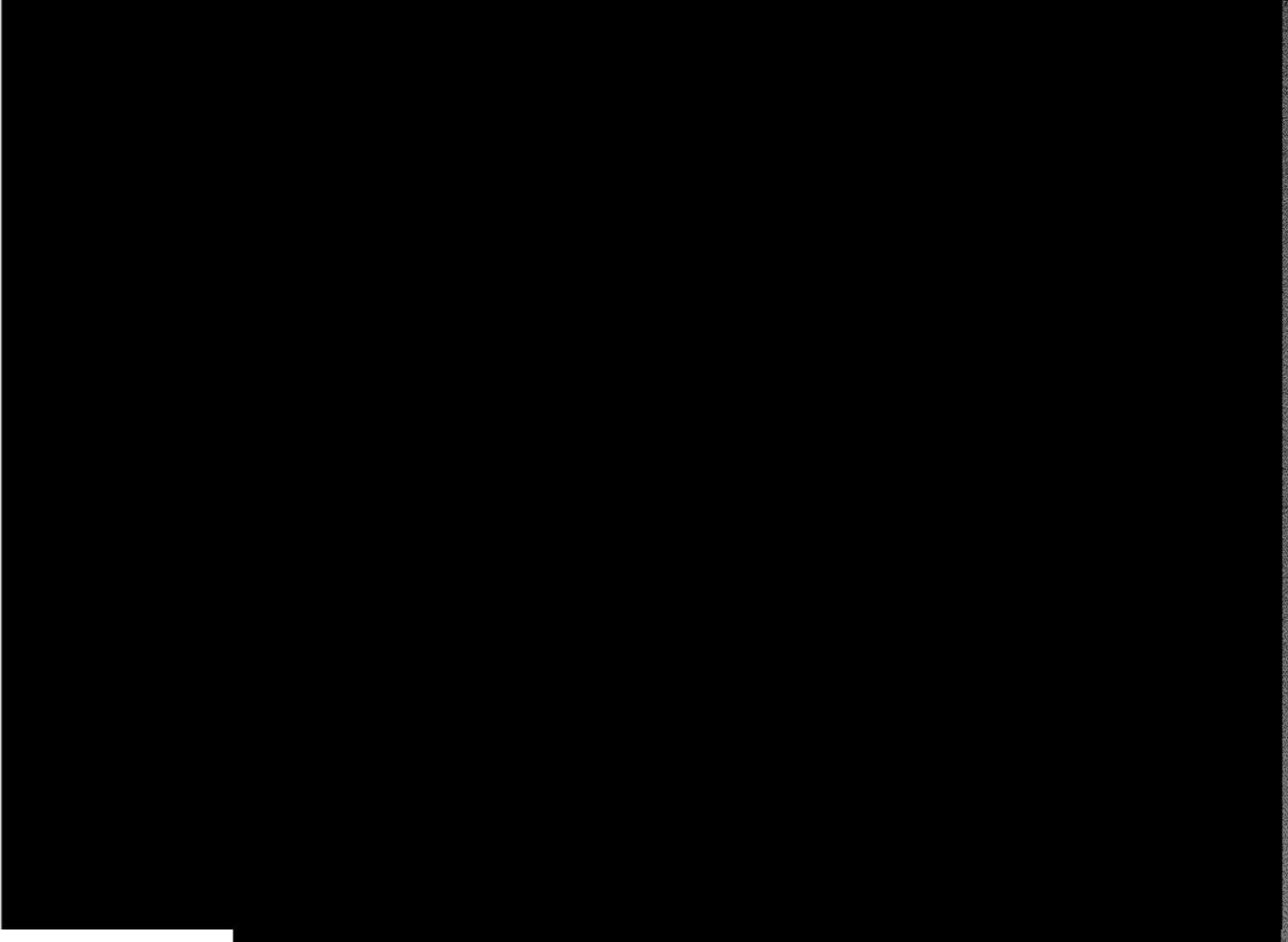
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73. Letter to John Lyon 7 October 1988 from The Australian Bicentennial Authority.

“Congratulations on having been selected among the final list of two hundred nominees.”
The outcome was Marjorie’s selection as one of the only 200 “Unsung Heroes & Heroines of Australia”.



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83. Letter dated 16 June 1925 from Marjorie's uncle, Dr. John MacMaster from Neutral Bay, Sydney to Marjorie's father (Patrick) Pearson Lyon in Northam, Western Australia.
- "We have Marjorie with us for a fortnight. ... Marjorie helped Donnie (John MacMaster's brother Dr. Donald MacMaster, a surgeon) through at Strathfield for some weeks. She is doing so well and no doubt – she is a dear girl – so gentle and kind and I am sure she will do well later on.
- We are all very fond of her'.