

# The Australian Women's Register

---

**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE0350

## Jackson-Nelson, Marjorie

(1931 - )

---

**Born** 13 September, 1931, Coffs Harbour New South Wales Australia

---

**Occupation** Commonwealth or Empire Games Gold Medalist, Governor, Olympian, Track and Field Athlete

---

### Summary

Sprinter Marjorie Jackson-Nelson was commonly known as 'The Lithgow Flash', after the New South Wales town in which she was brought up. Jackson-Nelson became the Governor of South Australia on 3 November 2001. She won two Olympic gold medals (Helsinki 1952) and seven Commonwealth Games gold medals for athletics. Jackson-Nelson also founded the Peter Nelson Leukaemia Research Fellowship, for which she has fund-raised since 1977.

### Details

The daughter of William Alfred and Mary (née Robinson) Jackson, Marjorie Jackson was the first Australian woman to win an Olympic gold medal for track and field and the first Australian (male or female) to win an Olympic gold medal on the running track since 1896. During her athletic career Jackson broke world sprint records on ten occasions. In 1953 Jackson married Peter Nelson, an Olympic cyclist. Following his death from leukaemia in 1977 she launched the Peter Nelson Leukaemia Research Fellowship and has since dedicated herself to raising funds to sponsor research into fighting this disease.

In 1988, Jackson was nominated by the Governor-General and the Prime Minister as one of 20 living members of the '200 Great Australians' recognised by the Australian Bi-Centenary Committee. In 2001, Jackson-Nelson was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia and, as Governor, was appointed a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order by Her Majesty The Queen on the occasion of the Royal Visit to Adelaide in February 2002.

### Events

#### 1953 - 1953

Appointed Member of the British Empire (MBE) for services to women's athletics

#### 2001 - 2001

Appointed Companion of the Order of Australia (AC)

#### 2002 - 2002

Appointed Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (CVO)

#### 1997 - 1997

Member of the South Australian Olympic Council

#### 1998 - 2000

Member Sydney Organising Committee of the Olympic Games

#### 1990 - 1992

Deputy Chairperson of the Adelaide's bid to host 1998 Commonwealth Games

#### 1998 - 1998

Athletes Liaison Officer for the Commonwealth Games, Kuala Lumpur

#### 1994 - 1994

General Team Manager for the Commonwealth Games Victoria (Canada)

**1986 - 1986**

Women's Section Manager for the Australian Commonwealth Games Team

**1982 - 1982**

Women's Section Manager for the Australian Commonwealth Games Team

**2000 - 2000**

Bearer of the Olympic Flame at the Opening Ceremony Olympic Games, Sydney

**1998 - 1998**

Nominated by Governor-General and Prime Minister as one of the 200 Great Australians

**1999 - 1999**

Voted as one of the Australians of the Century *Herald Sun*

**1998 - 1998**

Honoured by Australia Post on a postage stamp titled 'Olympic Legends'

**1995 - 1995**

Paul Harris Fellow Rotary

**1985 - 1985**

Admitted into the Australian Sporting Hall of Fame

**1952 - 1952**

Recipient of the Australian Sportsman of the Year

**1952 - 1952**

Athletics – 100m and 200m (world record)

**1954 - 1954**

Gold medal winner at the Commonwealth Games, Vancouver

**1950 - 1950**

Athletics – 100y; 220y; 440y Medley Relay; 660y Medley Relay

**1977 - 1977**

Founder of the Peter Nelson Leukaemia Research Fellowship

**1995 - 1995**

Legend for Australian Sport

**1986 - 1986**

Outstanding Athlete award from the International Amateur Athletics Association

**1952 - 1952**

Outstanding Athlete award from the Helms Foundation United States of America

**1953 - 1953**

Married Peter Nelson (deceased 1977)

**2001 - 2001**

Governor of South Australia

**1954 - 1954**

Athletics – 100y, 220y and 4 x 110y Relay

## Published resources

### **Edited Book**

Who's Who in Australia 2002, Herd, Margaret, 2002

S.A.'s greats: the men and women of the North Terrace plaques, Healey, John, 2001

### **Resource Section**

Governor of South Australia, South Australian Government,  
<http://www.governor.sa.gov.au/>

### **Resource**

Australia at the Games, Australian Olympic Committee, 2006,  
<http://corporate.olympics.com.au/index.cfm?p=25>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### **Site Exhibition**

She's Game: Women Making Australian Sporting History, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2007,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/sg/sport-home.html>

Faith, Hope and Charity Australian Women and Imperial Honours: 1901-1989, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2003,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/honours/honours.html>

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders>

### **Author Details**

Anne Heywood

**Created** 27 March 2002

**Last modified** 11 September 2015