**Entry type:** Person
**Entry ID:** AWE4065

# Alison, Dorothy

(1925 - 1992)

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| **Born** | 19250304, Broken Hill New South Wales Australia |
| **Died** | 19920117, London United Kingdom |
| **Occupation** | Actor |

## Summary

Dorothy Dickson left Australia in 1949 and made a career in the British film industry under her stage name, Dorothy Alison. She won two BAFTA awards (1952 and 1956) and one Logie award for her role in the film version of *A Town Like Alice* (1981).

## Details

Dorothy was the daughter of William Edward Dickson and Alice Cogan. William had migrated to Australia from Lancashire, United Kingdom, at the age of 20. He found work at the South Mine in Broken Hill, but left the mine during the 1919 strike. William and Alice were married in 1922 and William worked for a time at the *Barrier Daily Truth* before moving to Sydney as Advertising Manager for the *Daily News*. He was elected to the Legislative Council in 1939.

Dorothy was the elder sister of Beth, Wendy and Marion – two other siblings died in infancy. As a child she took dancing lessons in Broken Hill and took part in theatrical productions. Once in Sydney, she trained with Doris Fitton of the Independent Theatre. Finding employment in commercial radio, she changed her name to Dorothy Alison. After working for film producers Charles and Elsa Chauvel, she appeared in two Australian films, *Sons of Matthew* and *Eureka Stockade*.

In 1949 she left Australia for London, but found little work until 1952 when she played Miss Stockton in *Mandy*, earning herself a BAFTA award for Most Promising Newcomer. She won a second BAFTA – for Best British Actress – four years later for her role as Nurse Brace in *Reach for the Sky*. Subsequently, Dorothy's career encompassed film, television and stage productions. She returned to Australia in 1986 and toured with Lauren Bacall in *Sweet Bird of Youth*. The link with Australia continued, and Dorothy won the 1982 Logie Award for Best Supporting Actress in a Single Drama or Mini Series for her role as Mrs Frith in *A Town Like Alice*. In 1988 she starred opposite Meryl Streep as Lindy Chamberlain's mother in *Evil Angels* (or, *A Cry in the Dark*).

Dorothy Alison's full filmography can be found on the Internet Movie Database at http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0019704/.

## Published resources

**Book**
Some Outstanding Women of Broken Hill and District, Camilleri, Jenny, 2002

**Site Exhibition**
Unbroken Spirit: Women in Broken Hill, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2009,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/bh/bh-home.html

**Resource**
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

## Archival resources

**National Library of Australia**
[Alison, Dorothy (actor) : programs and related material collected by the National Library of Australia]

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