

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person

Entry ID: AWE3704

Jenner, Dorothy Gordon (Andrea)

(1891 - 1985)

Born 1 March, 1891, Narrabri New South Wales Australia

Died 24 March, 1985, Kings Cross New South Wales Australia

Occupation Actor, Artistic director, Journalist, Scriptwriter, War Correspondent

Summary

Dorothy Gordon Jenner was an Australian actress, scriptwriter, newspaper columnist and controversial radio personality.

Biographical accounts of the early acting career of Dorothy Gordon are laden with contradictions. Due to a lack surviving archival material, what we do know about Gordon comes from her own memoirs which are criticised for being inconsistent and exaggerated. It does appear, however, that she did have a career in film, in Australia and abroad, which finished sometime in 1927. She then turned her hand to journalism.

After two unsuccessful marriages, Dorothy Jenner travelled to London in 1927, where she began a column for the *Sydney Sun* under the name of 'Andrea'. Hers was a gossip column, keeping Australian audiences updated on celebrity comings and goings in London and New York. After 1940, she toured south-east Asia as a war correspondent. She was captured by the Japanese in Hong Kong and spent nearly four years in Stanley prisoner of war camp. From 1951, Jenner was writing for the *Mirror*. She later switched to broadcasting, working for 2UE, and pioneering talk-back radio on 2GB.

Details

Gordon's acting career began in 1912 as a chorus girl in the Melbourne stage production of *Girl in a Train*.

In 1915 Gordon moved to America. In Hollywood she began work as a dressmaker in a costume department. In 1916, she began to appear as an extra in Famous Players-Lasky Corporation (later Paramount).

In her memoir *Darlings I've had a Ball!* (1975), Gordon claims to have appeared in at least two Valentino films: *The Sheik* (Melford, 1921) and *Blood and Sand* (Niblo 1922). Gordon recalled a close relationship with Valentino.

Gordon's memoir also claimed she worked regularly with Houdini and W.C. Fields. Gordon made uncredited appearances in *Unseen Forces* (Franklin, 1920) and *Wise Fool* (Melford, 1921).

In 1925, Gordon returned to Australia and was immediately cast as the lead in Raymond Longford's *Hills of Hate* (1926). There are no known surviving copies of this film.

Upon completion of *Hills of Hate*, Australasian Films approached Gordon and asked her to collaborate with Raymond Longford's son, Victor, on the script for the film *For the Term of His Natural Life* (Dawn, 1927). After the director dismantled their script their names were removed from the credits. Gordon did however continue to work on the film as an artistic director through prop and location research.

For the Term of His Natural Life was Gordon's last film.

Events

1920 - 1970

Published resources

Edited Book

200 Australian Women: A Redress Anthology, Radi, Heather, 1988

Book

Darlings, I've Had a Ball, Jenner, Dorothy Gordon (Andrea), 1975

Australian Film 1900-1977: A Guide to Feature Film Production, Pike, Andrew and Cooper, Ross, 1980

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Resource Section

Jenner, Dorothy Hetty Fosbury (Andrea) (1891 - 1985), Griffen-Foley, Bridget, 2006,
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A170594b.htm>

Site Exhibition

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

Archival resources

National Film and Sound Archive

[\[Gordon, Dorothy : Interviewed by Graham Shirley\]](#)

[\[Wilfrid Thomas Interviews : Russell Braddon : Dorothy Gordon\]](#)

[\[Hills of Hate : Documentation\]](#)

Author Details

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Created 3 October 2008

Last modified 17 January 2025