

>
Sarah Garnett.



**the(volunteer)
Sarah Garnett**

Director, the Footpath Library

Imagine a library that doesn't ask your name, or address, or even that you bring the books back.

The Benjamin Andrew Footpath Library was started in 2003 by Sarah Garnett, 48, a video and events producer. She wanted to help others and, while volunteering for a charity feeding the homeless, she saw a man engrossed in a crime novel. She brought him more novels, and soon the library was born.

It was mostly a one-woman operation until June this year, when it was launched with a board and a volunteer management team of seven. It still puts books on the footpath in the city every Tuesday night, and in Manly on Saturday nights, but now also puts books in hostels. It installs the shelves, and delivers around 1200 books a week to 15 shelters. They disappear every time.

Books are donated by publishers, bookstores, organisations including *The Sydney Morning Herald* and the public (visit www.footpathlibrary.org) and make a huge difference to the homeless. Says one user: "The Footpath Library has been a saving grace. Apart from being down and out in Sydney I've been down and out in Paris and London with George Orwell, [and] read about the homeless in Victorian London." (s)

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