



Media Release  
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## Mobile Library keeps rolling

She recognises the faces of the kids in the district, knows many of the back roads like the back of her hand and has shared many laughs with Selwyn residents along the way. She is Anita Sears – Selwyn's mobile librarian.

The Mobile Library Service has been running since 2001 and Anita has been driving the bus from the beginning, for the first 8 years with her faithful dog Barney. She says that although it was a lengthy process to set up the service, it has all been worth it for the community.

"Running the mobile library is a great job as I meet new people, instil a love of libraries and reading in all the local schools and pre-schools, and I get to know my customers really well - some have become personal friends. They trust me to choose their books for them and I trust them to bring them back!" says Anita.

The mobile library bus makes over 600 stops in rural communities and local schools and pre-schools a year, travelling around 20,000 kilometres in total. The service can be used by anyone living in Selwyn.

While Anita is confident behind the wheel today, it hasn't always been a smooth journey. "When I first started driving I got lost a couple of times and had some adventures, but now I know the back roads pretty well," says Anita.

"A few years ago when we were doing the Arthurs Pass route we had a tyre blowout. This was a bit scary but some helpful people gave us a hand and we were back on the road in no time."

Anita says that through the earthquakes and other emergencies like the winds last September she has developed a strong connection with the people who regularly use the service.

The service is popular with Selwyn residents. Shona Nee of Rakaia Huts has been visiting the mobile library since she retired. "It is great because the bus comes right to my back door. While I love the libraries in some of the bigger towns in Selwyn, it is wonderful we can get books from the bus. Every fortnight after our exercise class a group of us have a lovely morning tea and we all go to get our new books," says Mrs Nee.

Bill Oliver of Hororata likes the mobile library because he doesn't have to travel far to choose some new books to read. "The best thing about the mobile library is that Anita can check on the system which books I have and haven't read, so I always get something new and exciting. This week it's a war fiction novel," he says.

Ella Pountney, a part time outreach teacher at Southbridge School says the mobile library teaches the students how to be independent in choosing their own books and that using libraries can be a great learning experience.

“With the mobile library service along with our online services we now offer a much better service to people living in rural areas and to people who can’t easily travel access library services,” says Anita. “The mobile library has children’s and adult’s non-fiction and fiction books, magazines, DVDs, CDs and audio books. If we don’t have it, we will do our best to get it.”

You can join a Selwyn Library by visiting the mobile library or your local library. The mobile library schedule of visits is published in Council Call in local newspapers and online at [www.selwynlibrary.co.nz/about-us](http://www.selwynlibrary.co.nz/about-us).

Ends

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