

# Publisher with loaded heart defies the odds

STARTING her own publishing company became a “staying alive” project when Adrienne Sallay was diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

Earlier this year the Roseville resident was told by doctors to get her affairs in order – but she defied the odds and since then has founded Ace Press and published five books, one of them her own.

“I was diagnosed with one of the cancer nasties one day and in hospital the next,” Dr Sallay said.

“I felt like I’d been kicked by a horse for weeks (after the operation). But I was also told that a positive attitude would really help me and I’d rather be laughing than crying.”

While recovering at home only a month later, she’d already decided to launch a boutique publishing house.

Her husband Chris had also been diagnosed with a form of cancer, lymphoma. He is in remission after recovering from a bone marrow transplant last year.

“I remember asking him the first thing he wanted to do so he went out and bought a big motorbike,” Dr Sallay, who is in her 60s, said. “Then I had to ask myself the same question. I want to see more Australian literature out there, it’s my passion and hobby.

“We’ve been through a lot together in the past five years so we’re already in the groove of living from day to day. But I wanted to make a mark on the world.”

Her first novel, *Loaded Hearts*, a historical romance, is among the first flush of books she has published with Ace Press.

Ace is designed for self-motivated,



emerging and independent writers seeking small or niche runs for literary fiction, biography or autobiography.

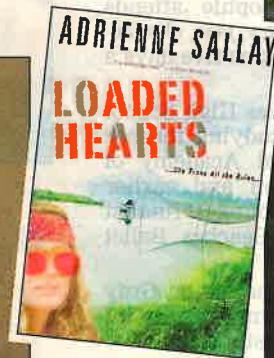
Dr Sallay, who received a PhD in creative writing from Macquarie University, said most writers found it too expensive to print their work.

“Publishers often can’t take a risk on a new author so all of this beautiful writing ends up in bottom drawers,” said the former teacher and librarian.

“I saw an opening for a small publishing house because no one was doing short stories in small runs.

“I want to discover manuscripts on Australian literature so we can add to the richness of our literary landscape.”

Conceding it was “mad” to open a publishing company when bookshops



**MAKING HER MARK:**  
Boutique publisher Adrienne Sallay has long loved books.

Main picture: PAUL MELVILLE -PP417123

were closing, she said she was determined to keep her business modern by going digital.

All of the books will be available online (and at the Constant Reader in Crows Nest and the Lindfield Bookshop) and she will eventually turn *Loaded Hearts* into an open source network, in which readers can add their own photos, comments and links.

But she said her main task was to look for what gave her pleasure.

“I like simple pleasures such as eating a piece of toast with homemade jam or smelling jasmine,” Dr Sallay said.

Her second book, *Mother of the Bride*, will be published early next year.

