

RAPID FIRE SARAH McLACHLAN

Grammy-award winner Sarah McLachlan is more at home surfing, telling rude jokes and cooking with her daughters than playing the celebrity circuit. Now the 42-year-old Canadian singer is bringing a taste of her Lilith Fair – her female-focused concert series she began 13 years ago – to Australia.

TELL US ABOUT THE FIRST LILITH FAIR. I remember learning very early on that you can't please everybody and to stick to your guns and make sure you're doing what you want to be doing. And the rest will fall into place. The same has applied this time around. It was amazing to reunite with a lot of the artists, some of whom I hadn't seen for 10 years.

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF OUR KATE MILLER-HEIDKE? She's fabulous. I'm excited to get to hear her live and play with her.

WHO IS LILITH? Lilith in Hebrew mythology was Adam's first wife before Eve. She refused to lay beneath him so she was cast out and vilified because she wanted to be treated equally. And I thought she was the perfect mascot for the tour.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF BRINGING UP DAUGHTERS?

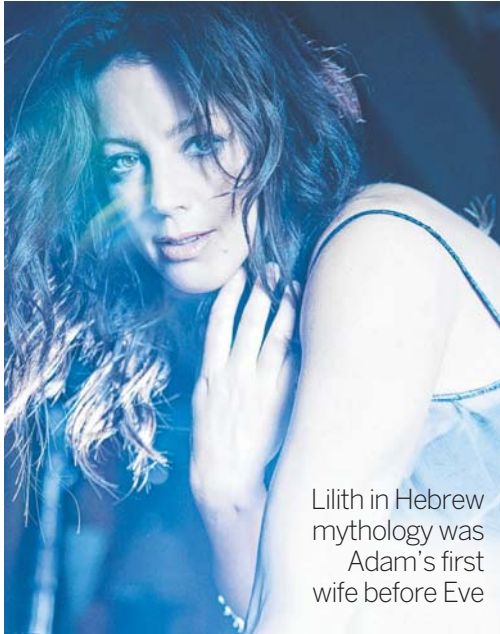
I was just talking to a friend whose daughter is 12 and one of the girls in her class is pregnant at 12. I thought, Jesus Christ, that is four years off – my daughter (India) is 8. I would move to the woods! There's so many scary things out there. The kids are maturing so quickly. My daughters (India and Taja, 3) are great. They're dynamic and smart and funny and saucy as all get-out. The trick for me is to try and instil compassion and kindness and empathy. It's a challenge.

WHAT DISHES DO YOU ENJOY COOKING?

I make good homemade macaroni and cheese and good chicken fingers. The girls love raw vegetables so I put a plate of those out an hour before dinner. They just munch on those.

WHERE DO YOU WRITE YOUR SONGS?

I have a piano in my living room and I have one down in the studio. I don't make it down to the studio that often because it's not in the house – it's another building – and I don't want to leave the girls. So I (write) mostly on the Steinway, but



Lilith in Hebrew mythology was Adam's first wife before Eve

quite often it's when the girls aren't home. Or early mornings.

TELL US ABOUT A SIGNIFICANT DREAM? They're all pretty disgusting. I have really, really violent dreams. It's usually either like a female Rambo, the last person on Earth with a big machine gun, in buildings of rubble and trying to survive. I watch too many action movies.

WHAT DO YOU SING AROUND THE HOUSE? A lot of nonsense. Sometimes I'll have one of my songs stuck in my head. I sing a lot of kids songs.

NAME A STORY YOU ENJOYED FROM YOUR YOUTH?

Watership Down. The bunnies... I read it as a child. My mum was an avid reader and had me reading when I was four. I was grounded a lot, so I read a lot.

WHY WERE YOU GROUNDED? I

had really strict parents, so if I talked back or anything I'd be grounded for a week. Pretty saucy.

YOUR PERFECT SUNDAY? I would get up late and have double espresso and head out to the beach and surf for two or three hours with friends, then have a nap in the sun. Then I would eat a really amazing meal.

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT YOURSELF? Probably more than one thing. My lack of willpower would be the first choice.

DO YOU HAVE PARTY TRICKS? I can stand on one hand. And I can tell really, really dirty jokes.

Sally Browne
Sarah McLachlan plays *A Taste of Lilith with Court Yard Hounds (Dixie Chicks)*, *Kate Miller-Heidke and The Verses*, *Brisbane Convention Centre*, October 16, ticketek.com.au or 132 849.

THE BACK STORY



THIS WEEK: Australia's unsung heroes are saluted in Sue Williams' latest book *Outback Spirit*. Among them is Anne Kidd, 68, a veritable angel of the Queensland Outback for nursing the sick over nearly five decades. She spoke to **Gillian Cumming**.

I've never regretted moving to Windorah (1060km west of Brisbane). I've never found the life too hard or had misgivings.

In those days (1963), you didn't look back. If you decided on something, you went ahead.

When Sandy (the son of the pastoral family who had employed 21-year-old Anne to nurse Sandy's elderly grandmother) proposed, it didn't take a lot of thought to accept, because I knew he was the one. I felt it was right.

The farming life – going off with Sandy rounding up cattle – took a lot of getting used to, because I had no experience of the land. I was dead scared of horses and no better with sheep or cattle. I was completely useless until I got used to it.

We had five children in six years. There was no time to think about anything, really. You just did everything. We had to go into Longreach (320km northeast of Windorah) four weeks beforehand and wait for the baby to be born. You still have to do that now, out in these places. I've only had to deliver a couple of babies myself out here because of that.

When I did my nursing training in Brisbane, we had to go through different sections. At the children's hospital we did nursery, medical, surgical and outpatients, then we did the adult's – surgical, psych, women's, orthopedic – everything. It was four years – nearly all hands on.

A lot of the time here I was advising people, especially mothers with kids. I'd worked in gastro wards with kids and I knew how to treat them – back in those days, it wasn't so much medication as getting the fluids into them, so I was able to reassure the mothers. A lot of those women had no idea and no one to help them. (Anne offered nursing care to mothers and other medical emergencies voluntarily for 29 years

before her nursing expertise was officially employed.)

I've seen a lot over the years. I'm not particularly fond of rodeo accidents, that sort of trauma. I've seen a lot of broken bones. The first gymkhana I went to, before we were married, somebody came off their horse and was knocked out or something – and in those days there were no ambulances. They'd look at you and say, "What do we do?". You just had to organise things... and get on to the flying doctor. Back then it took a while for the flying doctor to get here (from Charleville), too.

It wasn't easy getting used to people expecting me to take charge. But I just had to make a decision to tell them what to do.

I was dead scared of horses and no better with sheep or cattle

Finally in 1992 I started to get facilities and equipment. Oh, it was absolutely unreal. We got a clinic and pharmacy items and I was employed for four hours a week officially (though Anne continued to be on-call 24/7 as she always had been).

Over the years, I've updated my skills regularly at Longreach Hospital, where I'd go for a couple of weeks' training. Every year we do refreshers like advance cardiac life support, pediatric life support...

I've done suturing on my kitchen table. This was before I had equipment or drugs. Nursing friends would send me the gear and anaesthetic. I'd boil the gear on the stove for 10 minutes to sterilise it. I've even sutured my own kids.

Outback Spirit (Penguin, \$32.95) is out on August 30.

ITCH – WHAT'S HOT ON THE RADAR



FASHION FOR MEDICAL AID

Brisbane fashion, music and graphic designers showcase their wares at a charity show on Wednesday at The Zoo, Fortitude Valley, from 7.30pm. Funds raised by student organisers TIME will provide medical equipment in developing countries. Fashion names include Billabong and Skye Kerr (above); time.fashion2010@gmail.com.



LIKE A ROLLING STONE

Artisan Gallery, also in the Valley, has quite a coup with its *Rolling Stone Australia* best covers show, from September 2 for one month. You'll see our own Kylie, who graced the cover (above) of the mag in March 2002. Covers on show span the past 38 years. Mag editor-in-chief Matt Coyte will open the show. Details: artisan.org.au.



I LIKE THE WAY YOU MOVE

Justice Crew, winners of reality TV show *Australia's Got Talent*, are attracting quite a fan base on YouTube, where their debut single *And Then We Danced* landed as a teaser a few days ago. The video, with random footage on handycam, can be seen at youtube.com/watch?v=fn4-YRwBmlw. The single is on radio now.



KING OF JAZZ HITS NOOSA

James Morrison, Australia's King of Jazz, will be in Noosa during the Sunshine Coast's upcoming jazz festival, performing at Berardo's. Morrison (above) will be accompanied by Emma Pask and Dan Barnett on vocals. Enjoy a four-course dinner while they make music, September 2-5. Details: usmevents.com.au/noosajazz.



SEE SOME REEL ANIME

Enjoy the thrills of anime on the big screen with a selection of feature films from Japan, at Dendy Portside, Brisbane. *Summer Wars* (still, above), *Girl Who Leapt Through Time*, *Evangelion 2.0: You Can (Not) Advance*, *Redline* and *King of Thorn* feature in the September 2-15 festival; 3137 6000 or dendy.com.au.



THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING

The Imperial Russian Ballet returns to perform the ageless tale of bravery and dreams that is Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, to be staged at Gardens Theatre, Brisbane, September 7-14. The company will also be touring Queensland. To find out where, go to rusianballet.com.au/nutcracker.html.



MARCIA WEAVES A TAPESTRY

Marcia Hines's upcoming album includes a tribute to '60s legend Carole King, specifically King's famed *Tapestry* recording. It's out on October 1, we can't wait to hear Hines's interpretation of King's exquisite songs. "It's the truest representation of my voice I've ever heard," Marcia (above) says. The two-disc set includes her greatest hits.