



family affair

SARAH MCDONALD AND BEN BUCKLEY

BYRON BAY BEACH RESORT, BYRON BAY, NEW SOUTH WALES, 10TH OF NOVEMBER, 2007

STORY by Emma Duncan PHOTOGRAPHY by Go Photo & Web

SARAH, A BUSY MOTHER OF THREE, HAD MORE than her hands full in the lead up to her Byron Bay wedding to Ben Buckley. Employing a wedding planner to realise her dream of a celebration for family and friends on the beach, Sarah's experience turned out to be positively fun.

"I had our baby, Billy, in March and the wedding was six months later. The lead up was fantastic and quite stress free with the help of my wedding planner and it involved some great 'research trips' to Byron!"

The creative theme for the day was 'Tiffany', with its signature shade of turquoise reflecting the azure water of Byron Bay and Sarah's aquamarine and diamond encrusted engagement ring.

"Ben proposed to me at Icebergs in Bondi, with a card from Tiffany's. He passed a note over the table saying 'C'mon, marry me, will you?'"

Ben and Sarah initially met through work, and then bumped into each other 15 years later. During that time, Ben had married, had two children, and lost his wife to breast cancer.

"I always thought Ben was the most beautiful man I had ever met," said Sarah. "We were both a bit tentative on the first few dates, then I went on a dream trip to Bali and messaged him saying 'Come and join me in paradise...when was the last time you did something crazy?' He arrived the next day."

Creating a new family together was central to Sarah and Bens' wedding, with children Jack, Tessa and Billy playing a key

role. Family and friends converged on Byron Bay to share pre and post wedding festivities.

"My hen's night was stunning - 40 women of all ages with frangipanis in our hair, sharing special moments while drinking beautiful wine and champagne."

"The night before the wedding we held a stunning photo shoot with my kids and family, my bridesmaid and her two boys."

Dressed in a spectacular Luci Di Bella gown, Sarah's actual wedding day did not get off to a promising start due to torrential rain and the MC, Sarah's brother, reporting in sick.

Undeterred, the show went on, with the stormy weather actually enhancing the occasion. "There was a great moment when the sun came out and everyone spilled out of the marquee."

"As the sun set over Belongil Beach, following months of practice, Ben and I danced and it brought the house down."

Sarah's favourite moment was finishing her heartfelt and emotional speech, knowing she had controlled her nerves. Even the staff were in tears.

The party continued from lunch until midnight, with guests celebrating the joyous occasion of two people and their children, coming together as one happy family.

"It was well beyond our expectations of what we had in mind - we had wanted a great party but this was something else," said Sarah. ♡

THIS PAGE Sarah and Ben wanted their wedding to be simple - and they wanted to be able to enjoy every minute. Incorporating a relaxed beach feel, 'Tiffany Blue' was used for the couple's beautiful cake, flickering tea lights and the invitations and menus which featured an illustration of the Byron Bay lighthouse.

PHOTOGRAPHY by Georgie Imhoff (Principal) with Viola Nadi



GOWN: Luci Di Bella, 03 9500 2148 PHOTOGRAPHER:
 Go Photo & Web, 1300 303 904 CEREMONY
 LOCATION: Wategos Beach, Byron
 Bay RECEPTION LOCATION: Byron Bay Beach
 Resort, 02 6685 8000 RECEPTION CATERER:
 Dish Catering, 02 6685 7320 GROOM'S ATTIRE:
 Harrolds, 1300 888 828 PAGE BOY OUTFIT: Ralph
 Lauren FLOWERS AND FLORAL DECORATIONS:
 beautiflora, 02 6680 7432 STATIONERY:
 Wills Quills, 02 9411 2500 CAKE: Sweet Art,
 02 9361 6617 GIFT REGISTRY: Wedding List Co.,
 02 9698 4366 FIRST NIGHT: Raes on Wategos,
 Byron Bay, 02 6685 5366 HONEYMOON:
 Europe, London, Paris, Venice



THIS PAGE ♡ Vases of garden roses and chandeliers added a soft, feminine touch to the marquee. ♡ A highlight for Sarah was seeing Ben as she walked towards him - "he just looked incredible!" Sharing her wedding day with her children will also be something that Sarah will always treasure. "My two sons and daughter looked so beautiful - they brought tears to my eyes on the day." ♡ Carrying a beautiful bouquet of white peony roses tied with Tiffany blue ribbon, Sarah was stunning in her Luci Di Bella gown. "Sarah's 1940's inspired silk gown featured a pleated bust and French lace bodice with a flowing bias cut silk satin skirt," said Luci.

