

Sky's the limit!

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Section: Lifestyle , Retirement Living



FLYING HIGH – Irene O'Shea flies into her second century with the help of instructor Jed Smith from SA Skydiving.

A 100-year-old South Australian great-grandmother has proven you're never too old to try something new by taking a tandem skydive just 12 days after her birthday.

Irene O'Shea is believed to be the oldest South Australian and second-oldest Australian to take a tandem parachute jump, including a thrilling 35-second free fall.

"It's something I've always wanted to do," Irene said.

"It was great – I really enjoyed it." Irene admits to being something of a daredevil. She has ridden pillion on a Harley Davidson motorcycle, has travelled to more than 22 countries and driven herself across much of Australia. Irene's husband died at the age of 43 in 1953, leaving her with two children, Michael and Shelagh.

In 1974 she followed Shelagh and her family and emigrated from England to Australia.

Many of Irene's five grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren watched her skydive.

The spritely centenarian still drives, despite having suffered a mild stroke a couple of years ago. She lives at home with support for shopping, domestic help and gardening from ACH Group.

Tragically, Irene lost her daughter Shelagh to motor neurone disease at the age of 67. She used the jump to raise funds for research into the degenerative disease.

Family and friends were asked to donate to the MND Foundation in lieu of presents at Irene's 100th birthday celebration.

To contribute to Irene's MND fund, www.gofundme.com/100yoskydiveforMND