

Still making a splash at 100



Margaret Gardiner, with her daughters Kristine, 69, and Joan, 73, just turned 100 and still goes to the Seaford Swimming School every Wednesday for an aqua class. PICTURE: AAP/EMMA BRASIER

PORT NOARLUNGA

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FISH 'N' CHIPS twice a week – and lots of swimming – is the key to a long life, says centenarian Margaret Gardiner.

When the *Southern Times Messenger* met the Port Noarlunga resident at the Seaford Swimming School last week, she displayed the benefits of that diet and exercise combination. At 100, she still lives independently and enjoys an active lifestyle.

Mrs Gardiner spoke highly of the takeaway menu at her local shop, Jimmy's Fish and Chips on Saltfleet St – the suppliers for 26 years of her favourite takeaway dinner and a sweet biscuit or three.

"When I pick up her shopping list it's all caramel wafers, lemon biscuits and cheese and onion crisps," says daughter

and next door neighbour Joan, 73.

"She's never smoked or been a drinker but her one vice is food."

I've been blessed with good health – the only unlucky thing is, the mosquitoes love me.

Margaret Gardiner

Mrs Gardiner loved roller skating in her younger years and won all the mothers' races when her children were school-aged, but swimming was always her first love.

As a "wee child", she learnt to swim in the cold North Sea off Scotland's coast, her uncle holding her chin above the salty waves.

In the 1950s when the fam-

ily of five emigrated to Australia, Mrs Gardiner insisted to her husband Jimmy, who died seven years ago aged 96, they take the children – Jim, now 77, Joan and Kristine, 69 – to live by the sea.

"I wanted to live on The Esplanade but we compromised and moved in a block behind," Mrs Gardiner recalls fondly.

"It's in my blood – I love the sea and I feel ill if I'm not near it.

"There's nothing nicer than looking out at the sea."

Mrs Gardiner, resting comfortably on a pool noodle ahead of her class at Seaford Swimming School, says she has a lot to be thankful for.

"I'm very spoiled – I have someone in to clean the house each week and my shopping done for me.

"I've been blessed with good health – the only unlucky thing is, the mosquitoes love me."