

# Basic Detail Report

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**00046097**

**Title**

Seafolly 'Mini Tube' bikini bottom

**Date**

2009

**Primary Maker**

Seafolly Pty Ltd

**Medium**

Nylon/Elastane

**Dimensions**

Clothing size: 10 Overall (laid flat): 205 x 340 x 20 mm

**Name**

Bikini bottom

**History**

Seafolly has been at the centre of Australian beach style since 1975, and is one of the world's most recognised swimwear and beach lifestyle brands. Genelle Walkom joined Seafolly in 1983, developing a casual weekend wear range before moving to gym wear at the height of the eighties aerobics craze. Seafolly was the first company in Australia to design and produce gym wear and Genelle's designs earned Seafolly two Australian Fashion Awards (FIA). Following this success, Genelle progressed to swimwear and quickly stamped her mark on the Seafolly brand. Since then Genelle has been instrumental to the success of Seafolly and today her swimwear is worn by millions of women all over the world. In her role as Head Designer, Genelle is involved in every element of the design process, from developing concepts, to working with graphic artists to create the latest fashion forward prints and fabrications, all of which are unique to Seafolly and most importantly inspired by the Australian lifestyle. The style and fit of each swimsuit is also crucial and Genelle works closely with the pattern makers to ensure a perfect fit for every 'body' is achieved. Genelle believes that the key to designing great swimwear is to fuse Australia's love of the beach with international fashion trends, but more importantly understanding customer needs is paramount. In this sense Seafolly leads the world in swimwear design. Seafolly is one of the contemporary swimwear designers invited to reinterpret the classic one-piece swimsuit using a technologically advanced wool/lycra textile for ANMM's 2009 exhibition Exposed! The Story of Swimwear. The use of this fabric articulates the technological importance of performance textiles to fashioning a modern garment, whilst acknowledging the importance of wool as a yarn to Australia and the swimsuit's history. In the early 20th century most swimsuits were produced in wool, in part due to its ability to reveal less of the body when wet. There was early experimentation with developing rib-like knits that were more elastic, followed by the

use of Lastex, a rubber yarn that created a garment with less sag and drag. In the 21st century, advances in textile technology have resulted in the development of wool jersey fabrics with a high compression Lycra component. Looking to the past and designing for the future, the swimsuit designs embody a contemporary aesthetic and active glamour inspired by the original mermaid, Annette Kellerman. Kellerman (1886-1975) was the 'Australian Mermaid,' the 'Diving Venus' and the 'Perfect Woman.' Through a career as a long distance swimmer, diver, vaudeville performer and silent movie star she became a global identity associated with glamour and physical beauty. She was the first woman to attempt to swim the English Channel, and swam her way across Europe and the United States. Kellerman was a controversial individual. She was allegedly arrested for indecency preparing to swim along the coastline at Revere Beach, Boston in 1907 and expressed her independence and self-possession through bodily spectacle in daring swimsuits styled on the existing one-piece swimsuit design for men. There were initially no modifications made to the original, masculine design; no structuring to the contours of a woman's body, in particular the breast area, and it would not be until the 1930s that designers would feminise the swimsuit, and new technology would assist the development of textiles that would enhance its fit and performance. Kellerman's innovation was revealing the female body, which had been concealed beneath layers of clothes and corsets for centuries in the public arena. She was a role model for women, encouraging self-motivation and self-development. Kellerman extolled the virtues of exercise and a healthy diet to shape the body naturally. In 1918 her book *Physical Beauty: How to Keep It* was published, and it promised that through a series of simple daily exercises in the home, every woman could achieve a level of physical beauty that was essential to the wearing of a body hugging one-piece swimsuit with confidence. As a prototypical Hollywood star she prefigured the celebrity culture focused on the body that has predominated since then.