

# Fritz Franzisco (Fred) Gfeller

16 February 1927 - 2 June 2022

53240 Sergeant Australian Army Band Corps



*Fred and Eileen*

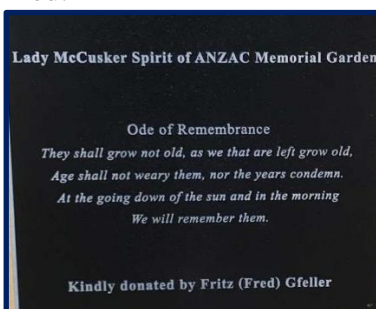
Fred, a Member of our RSL for nearly 30 years, passed away on the morning of 2 June 2022. He is fondly remembered for his friendship, attendance at our Sub Branch meetings and ANZAC and Remembrance Day commemoration events.

Fred came to Australia from Steffisburg, Switzerland in 1948 at the age of 21 on the SS Groetekerck, a cargo ship carrying 71 Peugeot, Fiat and Renault cars, and 15 passengers. Fred, a cabinet maker, was the only one from Switzerland among mainly Dutch and 2 British passengers. It was reported in the Melbourne Herald on 28 June 1948 that each of the passengers had plans for settling in Australia and that Fred wanted to *“try some of the beautiful Australian woods as a cabinet maker”*.

The welcome Wall in Fremantle states that he built his first home in South Guildford in 1951. He became an Australian citizen in 1954 and later joined the Australian Army where he served for 22 years as a Bandsman, attaining the rank of Sergeant and on 14 July 1977 was awarded the National Medal for his service. This experience gave Fred a strong sense of Australian mateship, motivating him to dedicate his life to honouring the diggers.



When Fred and his wife Eileen moved to Lady McCusker Village in Duncraig he established a Memorial Garden within the grounds, dedicated as the “Spirit of the ANZACS Memorial Garden”. The Garden incorporated the “Spirit of the ANZACs” Grevillea and a plaque donated by Fred.



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