Fred Negro Band History

1979 - The Editions
1983 - I Spit on Your Gravy
1984 - The Band Who Shot Liberty Valance
1984 – The Gravybillies
1988 - The Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre
1994 – Shonkytonk
1994 - The Fuck Fucks
1998 - Squirming Gerbil Death
2000 - The Twits
2010 - Little Freddie and the Pops / The Eggs
2010 - 57 Pages of Pink
2010 – Current - The Black Molls
2016 – Current – The Peptides, Hanksaw, I Spit on Your Gravy reformation

Discography

Albums:

- I Spit on Your Gravy, *Fruit Loop City* LP (Virgin Records, 1987)
- The Band Who Shot Liberty Valance, *Outlaw Death Lager Drinkers from Hell* LP (Virgin Records, 1988; rereleased on CD by Turkeyneck Records, 2008)
- The Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre, *Desperate Football* LP/CD (Shagpile Records/Shock Records, 1992)
- The Fuck Fucks, *…Here* CD (Shock Records, 1997)
- The Fuck Fucks, *Millennium Buggery* CD (I Envy Us Records, 1998)
- Shonkytonk, *I Can't Believe It's Not Butter* CD (Shonkytonk Record Company, 1998)
- The Twits (without Fred), *Albert Road* CD recorded at The Espy on 30 June and 32nd (1999)
- The Twits, *The Twits Play Music* CD (Pure Pop Records, 2002)
- The Twits, *She May Look Clean, but…You Can't Beat The Axis If You Get VD* CD (Pure Pop Records/Inertia, 2005)

Eps:

- I Spit On Your Gravy, *St Kilda's Alright!* 12" EP (Man Made Records, 1984; rereleased on Polyester Records in 1989)
- The Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre, *Contact Pool* 12" EP (Shock Records, 1990)
- I Spit On Your Gravy, *St Kilda's Still Alright!* CD (reissue on Turkeyneck Records with the *Eat Your Head* compilation tracks and unreleased live material, 2002)

Singles:

- I Spit On Your Gravy, *Let's Go Buy A Pizza* 7" flexi (giveaway with Soft Option magazine, 1984)
- I Spit On Your Gravy, *Piranha/Man's Not A Camel* 7" (Virgin Records, 1987)
- The Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre, *Bourbon Bound/Sorry Orry* 7" (Shock Records, 1991)
- The Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre, *Drink Myself To Life/The Mystery Of The Inca Cave* 7" (Shagpile Records/Shock Records, 1992)
- The Fuck Fucks, *T.I.T.S. (This Is The Show)* 7" (2000)

Cassette-Only Releases:

- The Editions, *Aggression* (Orgasm, 1981)
- The Editions, *Obsession* (Orgasm, 1982)
- The Editions, *Recession* (Orgasm, 1983)
- The Gravybillies *Live at The Esplanade Hotel, St Kilda* (Polyester Records, 1988)

Compilations:

- I Spit on Your Gravy, "Violent Fluff"/"Done to Death" on *Eat Your Head* LP (No Master's Voice, 1984; reissued on CD by Au-Go-Go Records, 1997)
- I Spit on Your Gravy, "Let's Go Buy a Pizza" on *Life Is A Joke Vol 2* LP (Weird System Records, 1986)
- The Band Who Shot Liberty Valance, "Tattslotto Song"/"Rubber Band Rave" on *The Polyester Tape* cassette (Polyster Records, 1986)
- The Band Who Shot Liberty Valance, "You Can't Speak to Me Like That" on *SWAPO Benefit Recorded Live at Melbourne University 3/8/86* LP (Doc Records, 1987)
- The Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre, "Dostoievski (I Wanna Be Clive Robertson's Dick)" on *Lemon 3* cassette (giveaway with the third issue of Lemon fanzine, 1990)
- The Fuck Fucks, "Hey Hey We're The Fuck Fucks"/"Hangin' Round The House"/"Happy" on *Here Come Eleven Nuns (One With A Bucket Of Chips For Me)* CD (Buggertoe Records, 1996)
- Shonkytonk, "Brand New Appliance"/"I Hate Collingwood (But I Love You)" on *Here Come Eleven Nuns (One with A Bucket of Chips for Me)* CD (Buggertoe Records, 1996)
- Squirming Gerbil Death, "Up to My Brim in Rim" on *Here Come Eleven Nuns (One with A Bucket of Chips for Me)* CD (Buggertoe Records, 1996)
- Shonkytonk, "I'm Off Ya!"/"Soldering Iron" on *Weened on A Pickle Soaked in Bile* CD (Buggertoe Records, 1997)
- Squirming Gerbil Death, "Catholic School"/"Peakhour Frottage"/"Squirming Gerbil Death" on *Weened on A Pickle Soaked in Bile* CD (Buggertoe Records, 1997)
- I Spit on Your Gravy, "The Ballad of Scotty Stix Simpson" on *Drunks, Guns and Livestock in The Streets: Live at The Turkeyneck Bar & Grill 1979-2001* CD (Turkeyneck Records, 2001)
- The Gravybillies, "Ballad of Rockin' Gomer" on *Drunks, Guns and Livestock in The Streets: Live at The Turkeyneck Bar & Grill 1979-2001* CD (Turkeyneck Records, 2001)
- The Band Who Shot Liberty Valance, "You Can't Speak to Me Like That" on *Drunks, Guns and Livestock in The Streets: Live at The Turkeyneck Bar & Grill 1979-2001* CD (Turkeyneck Records, 2001)
- They Might Be Negroes, "The Legend of Football Mouth" on *Drunks, Guns and Livestock In The Streets Vol II: The Masked Wrestling Years 1978-2002* CD (Turkeyneck Records, 2003)

Film work:

- *Lesbo-A-Go-Go* dir Andrew Leavold, Brisbane, 2003. B&W/Colour, 52 mins. Appeared as 'Vision from Hell'.
- *Fred Sounds*, dir. Rohan Pugh, 2003
- *Fred's Love*, dir. Rohan Pugh, 2005
- *Sticky Carpet*, dir. Mark Butcher, 2006 (I Spit On Your Gravy live footage)

1979 - The Editions

The Editions were formed in 1979 when drummer Fred Negro was having his hair cut at his flat in St Kilda. A friend had brought guitarist John Durr over to meet Fred to see if he wanted to drum in a band. As soon as the haircut was finished, he put his drums in John's car and away they went to their first rehearsal at John's house in Prahran. John had met singer Roslyn Deer while he was working at a record store in Greville Street, Prahran and she was soon recruited as the vocalist after the original singer failed to show up at rehearsal. With Roslyn's distinctive vocal sound onboard, the band was booked for their first gig by Terry Rogers at the Champion Hotel with the Marching Girls. The gig was so successful that The Editions were re-booked for the following Saturday with The Ears.

Playing regularly at St Kilda's iconic Crystal Ballroom in the early 1980's, The Editions started many band nights at Prahran venues such as the Mt Erica Hotel, the Duke of York Hotel, The Anglers Club, and Matthew's Hall – appearing with other Punk and alternative bands. Fred Negro, who was also a graphic artist and cartoonist, did all of the artwork for the band handbills under the title 'Living Dead Grafix'. His illustrations and cartooning style became an integral part of The Editions imaging and merchandising. Fred Negro became infamous early in the band's history for trashing his drum kit at the end of each set and spitting over the singer's head into the audience. This was however problematic for some of the other band members!

Originally a Prahran band, by February 1981 all of The Editions band members had decamped to 17 Acland Street St Kilda, which was a double storey Victorian Terrace opposite the infamously seedy Diplomat Hotel. The Editions were infamous for their graffiti in and around Prahran, with their famous line being 'Editions Eat Babies' spray painted on the Chapel Street railway bridge. This remained intact for many years despite the bridge itself being re-painted.

The Editions did not define themselves by one musical style, running the gamut from Country to Punk with their unique attitude. Apart from performing weekly at pubs and music venues, the band was a popular attraction at house parties, halls and festivals. With the help of Paul Elliott (Polyester Records/Books) three EPs were released on cassette in 1981, 1982 and 1983, respectively titled *Aggression*, *Obsession* and *Recession*, on the band's own label 'Orgasm Records'. The three cassette titles, which all came with an accompanying illustrated songbook, were popular releases and soon sold out.

1983 - I Spit on Your Gravy

I Spit on your Gravy formed in late 1983 after Fred Negro left The Editions. He met Scotty Stix and Pig at a party in Victoria Street, St Kilda. Scotty and Pig said they loved watching Fred play drums in The Editions and they were jamming with another drummer and they asked Fred to come and beat up the drummer and join the band... the drummer played in a cabaret band called The Rickety Rainbow Band. They wanted to call themselves Community Worry or Annoy the Neighbours. Refusing to beat up the drummer, Fred suggested they ask him to leave, which he did, and the trio rehearsed for a while and renamed themselves I spit on your Gravy after the horror film *I Spit on your Grave*. Their fist gig was at The Venue with The Johnnys as part of the 'Gong Show' while their second gig was at the Prince of Wales, Regal Room as a one-off gig with pub rock band Painters and Dockers in 1984.

An all-male band with back-up by the gorgeous 'Spitettes' (Sam and Viv, and Di and Sindy), the girls did the backup vocals and dancing and were just a great addition to the band. Kym the Crazy fire-breathing Clown was another highlight of the band. Fred's antics, aka the 'chicken rooting', started as a 'Gong Show' act called 'Little Wriggly Bits' - a pre-scripted one-man silent play and a twisted comedy act with 'The Butcher of Brighton' reading the narration as if it was a letter written to a sex magazine - all based around a chicken, which Fred ends up having sex with at the end. At the suggestion of Ballroom publican Graeme Richmond, and in order to satisfy the vegetarians in the audience, sometimes Fred would have sex with a watermelon or cantaloupe. This also got quite messy with Fred throwing the remaining food into the audience once he had finished.

Throughout 1984 the band was banned from several venues for starting food fights and performing sexual savagery on stage. But many other offers rolled in. 1984 was a big year for the band with the New Musical Express (NME) reporting that I Spit on Your Gravy from Australia are the group to watch: "Here at last is a band that combines sick humour with musical enjoyment and isn't scared to take it over the top and beyond." Nigel Rennard of Missing Link Records assisted the band in putting out an EP titled *St Kilda's Alright*. It came out on the 'Man Made Records' label, along with other underground bands No Nonsense, Corpse Grinders and Sacred Cowboys. Over 200 people turned up to a photo session for the EP cover that was shot on the steps of the Espy.

St Kilda's Alright was finally released, but there was a delay in getting the EP pressed by Festival Records due to the censoring of an added track titled 'Suck this Fred Nile'. The EP also came with an illustrated songbook called 'Think for Yourself' which included the 'Thursday Crawl' board game and an anarchist dot to dot. The Vice Squad ended up seizing all of the records from the record shops along with the songbooks. A court case was thus created with the charge being obscenity. The judge listened to the EP on a stolen record player to hear if it was in fact obscene and he said, "It's not obscene it's crap!" and threw it out of court. But the police never gave the records back and consequently the record never got sold.

Paul Elliott came to the band's rescue and re-released the EP on Polyester Records, including the censored track and the songbook, but this time with a red cover (the original cover was white). Many copies were sold, and the band's popularity grew tenfold - they were suddenly the Kings and Queen's of St Kilda. Greville records also include 2 tracks on the 'Eat Your Head' Compilation produced by Phil MacDougall from Reactor Records.

17 & 19 Acland Street, St Kilda was now known as the 'House of the Gravy Sun' with all the band members living next door to each other.

A send-up horror film called *Done to Death,* featuring everyone in St Kilda all dying horribly, was even filmed there. The dwellings became a tad out of control or 'party central' - the Gravy's would rehearse in the lounge room with the window open and people would come over and climb in the front window with a slab of beer and before you a knew it a party was happening.

In 1986 the band played a gig at The Ballroom with Fred deciding to have the 'small penis competition' – "littlest dick in the ballroom, win big prizes". Members of the audience got up on stage and dropped their pants while Fred went around with his ruler measuring. Just at that moment the Liquor License commission walked into the venue on a 'random check' and closed the place down (there was also lots of underage drinking and drug selling going on and overcrowding). After that the band was forced to change their name to everything from: Ian Rilen's Toilet, The Thursday Crawlers, Here Come the Leather Nuns (one with a bucket of chips for me), Stay Neat, I Am Your Head, and Everything You Know Is Wrong.

In 1987 a guy named Leo Martino got the band a record deal through Virgin Records and they went to Richmond Recorders to record an album while Lobby Loyde was at the helm. However, the album didn't come out the way they had hoped so they re-corded it and brought it out as *Froot Loop City*. The band then went on a tour of Australia which went well. Also, in 1987 I Spit on your Gravy made a single called "Piranha / Man's not a Camel" before the album, as part of the Virgin deal. They made a fim clip for it at the Central Club Hotel in Richmond which got played on RAGE a fair bit, but prominent DJ at the time Karl Van Est from Eon FM said that "it will never get played on commercial radio because it mentions the Esplanade Hotel and St Kilda".

After the Australian tour Leo Martino disappeared off the face of the earth with all the money the band made off the gigs. Not being able to pay for anything, they had a 'last ever gig' gig so that they could pay off their debts. That gig went so well that the Prince of Wales hotel offered them the big room upstairs to 'do it properly'. They made enough to pay their bills and subsequently did 37 last gigs. By that time the Vice Squad had become bored with harassing the band, and by the end of 1987, after the 37 last gigs the band finally separated.

Australian musicologist, Ian McFarlane, described their early performances as "shambolic, drunken affairs, replete with on-stage brawls and members barely able to stand upright, let alone play their instruments" Negro was often "dropping his pants in public" and would deliver "other on-stage obscenities.

1984 – The Gravybillies
The Gravybillies started as a busking gig on Sunday at the St Kilda Market to get beer money and ended up becoming a country punk comedy act playing acoustic versions of I Spit on your Gravy songs. The band consisted of Fred Negro and Phil Grizzly (Pog) who apparently was a pretty ordinary guitarist. The band played Sunday nights at the 'Tex Nobody Show' at the Espy, where they played regular gigs for around 10 years.

1984 - The Band Who Shot Liberty Valance
The Band Who Shot Liberty Valance was a rock'n'roll version of The Gravybillies with an added rhythm section courtesy of the band Corpse Grinders – consisting of Phil Bryant and Trevor Pennington – the band then added Terry Fosters on harp. The band infamously played a show at the Ballroom called 'Never Mind the Gravies here's the Grinders' – where they covered the Sex Pistols classic album 'Never Mind the Bollocks'.

The band also toured a lot. Australian musicologist, Ian McFarlane described this group as "lager louts [who] were the ultimate charmless, inner-city party band".

1988 - The Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre
After 5 long years I Spit on your Gravy finally ended and Fred wanted to get full on Punk rock band together. The Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre was therefore an extension of the Gravies music with a drunken hillbilly twist. The band included Fred Negro (vocals), Terry Fosters (Harmonica and guitar), Scotty Stix (Drums), Gary Mansfield (Guitar), and Paul Barnett (Bass).

1994 – Shonkytonk
The night that The Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre played their last gig at the POW, Fred got Shonkytonk together. Another country band, their motto was Country Rock and Proud (CRAP). The band included Fred Negro (Vocals), Dave Moll (Guitar), Shubox (Drums), Fred T Farlowe (Bass), and Jeff the Butcher Weiner (Guitar). Before the first gig Dave had RSI so Peter Lilley filled in and continued to stay with the band for years, however Dave eventually back and played piano until Peter left.

1994 - The Fuck Fucks
The day after Fred got Shonkytonk together, he got this new punk band together called The Fuck Fucks, where he found all the members at the Espy Hotel. The band included Fred Negro (Vocals), Paddy Chong (Bass), Tristan Miller (Guitar), Jeff the Butcher Weiner (Guitar) and Tony Biggs (Drums). Dave Moll joined later (Guitar) along with Kaos (Drums). The Fuck Fucks played a 5-year residency at the POW as well as many Sunday nights at the Espy. The band continues to this day.

1998 - Squirming Gerbil Death
Squirming Gerbil Death lasted 13 gigs and appeared on 2 compilation CDs. The band included Fred Negro (Vocals), Horse Harrington (Guitar and vocals), Wes Harrington (Guitar and vocals), Mick (Bass), Cal McCalpine (Drums), Jason Evans (Keys and vocals) Squirming Gerbil Death were a very wrong band lyrically, singing positive sexual aberrations such as "Up to My Brim In Rim" and "Peakhour Frottage".

2000 - The Twits
The Twits were already going as a band when Fred walked up to them one night at the Espy and told them he was joining - and he stayed with them right until the end. The band included Rob Steel (Vocals), Lush Aston (Bass), Fred Negro (Vocals), Les (Guitar) and Chris (Drums). The band was together for around 10 years, playing around 5 NYE parties at the Espy and 4 Big Day Out events. The band ended because Rob Steel or Steely went back to the UK to live.

2010 - The Eggs / Little Freddie and the Pops
The Eggs were a Twits spin off – a take-off of easy listening lounge music – who bamboozled punk audiences for a long time and included the same members as The Twits.

Little Freddie and the Pops were in turn a spinoff of The Eggs, playing 60s teen pop music. The band included Little Freddie Negroni aka Fred Negro (Vocals), Harry Veranda aka Chris Leary (Drums), Dusty Springclean aka Lush (Guitar), Buddy Frankston aka Les Russel (Guitar) and Tuesday Week aka Bec Anthony (Bass).

2010 - 57 Pages of Pink
With the Fuck Fucks off the road for a year, Fred got together with The Bittersweet Kicks and created 57 Pages of Pink – a filthy punk rock band that lasted a whopping 20 gigs. The band included Fred Negro (Vocals), Charlie Kicks (Piano), Taranto Kicks (Guitar), Johnny Kicks Bass and Donny Love (Drums).

2010 - The Black Molls
The Black Molls are a fun duo playing nearly every night at a St Kilda venue. The band includes Fred Negro (Vocals and horsey) and Dave Moll (Guitar).

2014 - **The Peptides**
The Peptides formed for the last day of the exhibition 'Punk Journey: St Kilda + Beyond' which took place at BRIGHTSPACE in 2014. The band is made up of original members from several of Melbourne's Post-punk bands from the 70s and 80s and was an instant success with the audience. They can now be seen all over town performing covers of many awesome and fun punk songs from the 70s and beyond. The band includes Fred Negro (Vocals), Rob Wellington (Guitar), Mick Lewis (Guitar), Adam Johnstone (Bass), Carl Manuel (Drums), Angela Howard (Keys and vocals), Megan Bawden (Vocals) and Elizabeth Reale (Vocals and go-go giraffe).

2017 – Hanksaw
Hanksaw are a country music/comedy band who plays regularly around St Kilda. The band included Charlotte Barker (Saw/vocals/coconuts), Fred Negro (Vocals), Vivienne Gay (Vocals), Gordon Stooke (Guitar/vocals) and a shifting stool of talent on guitar featuring Adrian Chenowyth, Carl Polke, Dave Moll and Ben Rogers.

The Greyhound Hotel history:
The Greyhound Hotel opened in 1853 and was given its name due to Greyhound racing being a popular sport in St Kilda in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1938, then owner JW Ryan renovated the building with cement rendered brickwork and tiles, most likely in response to the development of classy upmarket hotels like the Prince of Wales and the George, as well as the erection of new apartment blocks in Blessington Street. Many hotels across Australia were renovated in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s.

The seamy post-war reputation of St Kilda clung particularly to the Greyhound Hotel, given its proximity to the most prominent zone for sex workers. In the 1980s, the 'two chefs' who prominently advertised on the façade of the building that theirs was the greatest pub fare in Melbourne redeemed its reputation! And although its kitchen eventually closed, its popularity as a venue for live music and Drag shows soon gave the Greyhound its legendary status as an iconic pub.

In 1996 Don Duvall (with partners Jan and Joe) took over the Greyhound hotel, having also operated the Esplanade Hotel and the Prince of Wales Hotel for the last 15 years. 'Social Identity' Drag Shows began in Sept 1995, with these humble shows growing into one of the biggest drag nights in Australia.

Live music started at the Greyhound in March 1997 on the new stage in the band room. Fred Negro started playing there with his bands soon after Don took over the pub and began doing the street press ads for the pub as well as the band boards. This is of course where he met Steve Prictor who was a musician and an artist and the two became fast friends.

Steve started 'Kooky Karaoke' with comedian Anthony Morgan, with Fred eventually taking Anthony's place after he basically took over by singing every second song. Fred soon became associated with the Kooky Karaoke nights which ran until the demise of the Greyhound. The Greyhound became Fred's second home as well as his impromptu studio where he would draw the weekly pub strip as well as playing almost every night with various line ups.

In 2004 Robert, Sue, Con and Donna took over the lease and from 1996 to 2007 the pub was operated as a mixed venue, featuring live music, comedy, trivia, Karaoke, country and western Sundays. All were welcome and the pub often had a surreal, friendly and often quirky feel. Locals were the main stay of the pub, while bands brought in a wider clientele.

The lease ran out in April 2007, with Will van der Linden and Karina Harcourt taking the pub over and transitioning it to a solely gay pub – thus the famous rock'n'roll dog mural was painted over, the beer-soaked carpets were ripped up, the walls were freshly painted, and the name changed from The Greyhound to GH - making it more appealing to a younger generation of patrons. However, despite all the gentrification, a multimillion-dollar redevelopment plan to turn the upstairs of the Greyhound Hotel into a sauna was quickly quashed following community outcry.

In early 2016 a demolition order had been granted by the City of Port Phillip to knock down the 160+ year old iconic venue and make way for the construction of an 8-storey apartment tower – to the obvious outcry of many St Kilda locals. Gone but nor forgotten, The Greyhound Hotel was an iconic gateway into St Kilda; when you saw the Greyhound you knew you'd reached St Kilda. Losing her has meant losing an icon and a much-loved character in St Kilda's community. Kooky Karaoke is still going to this day at a St Kilda venue somewhere...