

## **Prince of Wales Hotel – AKA The Prince (POW)**

### **Fred Negro – Playing at the Prince**

“The first night was with a band called The Boot Boys who did a Hardcore Punk version of ‘Skippy the Bush Kangaroo’. I think they were all Skinheads. We opened with a faithful rendition of ‘Yummy, Yummy, Yummy, I Got Love in My Tummy’ which we'd do to annoy the fuck out of our punk audience. For some reason not many people came, and it only lasted a few months. 3PBS, the indie radio station, took over the room and we played empty rooms elsewhere.”

**Source: St Kilda Music Walking Tour**

### **Fred Negro - Thursday Crawl**

“From 1984 on every Thursday night there would be three bands on for free in the band room. If a band wasn't any good, we'd wander up to the Ballroom. Inevitably the street would be full of punters walking the other way and the conversation would be something like, "The band is shit. What's on at the Prince?" or vice versa. And "Got 20 cents?" - the pots at the Prince were only \$1 and not much more at the George.”

**Source: St Kilda Music Walking Tour**

### **Fred Negro – Being banned from venues**

“After the ‘small dick competition’ I Spit on Your Gravy could not get a gig in Melbourne. Ross was afraid of losing his license. So, we played the Thursday Crawl under various names including ‘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’, ‘Everything You Know Is Wrong’ and a few more I don't remember. Moronic Vice Squad representatives carefully disguised in ‘Choose Life’ t-shirts and sporting rubber mohawks with the typical copper moustaches were “infiltrating” our audience. We invented the 'spot the undercover Vice Squad member' game. It was popular with the crowd but didn't win us any friends with the Victorian Police Force.”

**Source: St Kilda Music Walking Tour**

### **Fred Negro - A gig that went wrong**

“We were the first band on at the Prince on one of the Thursday crawls (under an alias band name) and we decided to swap instruments because we thought no-one would show up... but 200 people showed up and so we just improvised. I was on guitar, Sausage was on drums, Scotty was on Guitar, Pig was singing, and Dave Dog was on Saxophone, and we sang A! G! because they were the only notes I could play on the guitar. It went swimmingly until KYM the KRAZY KLOWN set the curtains on fire with his fire breathing. I said to the crowd “what the fuck are you doing here? You never see the first band on a Thursday crawl... go back to the piano bar.” Ross (McVean) docked our pay that night...we had to pay for the curtains.”

**Source: Punk Journey**

**Ross McVean – Managing the Prince**

“I went to the Prince as a Manager in 1977, bought it in 1983 and sold it in 1989. Having PBS was good because they had a big following and would easily attract 600-700 people once a month for the ‘Soul Shakedown’ gigs; it was an extra string to our bow.

Graeme Richmond and I got together, and we started the ‘Thursday Crawl’. We both put on free bands, beers were \$1 a pot and it was good for the kids and good for the pubs, they were always well behaved, 99.9% of them... I was there nearly every night of the week; we had bigger bands that didn’t draw as many bands as some of the local bands. The whole pub was a mixture of people – Drag Queens, Punks, Skinheads - we had the downstairs saloon bar and the upstairs band room as well as 50 bedrooms upstairs with gangsters, prostitutes, police officers and businesspeople all living there and there was never any trouble between any of them.

Fred Negro used to do the handbills and put them around – we advertised in Beat, and Inpress - Rob Furst used to come to the pub a fair bit. We had Jazz there as well, but the punk and gay gigs were a huge success. What worked in St Kilda might not work somewhere else.”

**Source: Punk Journey**

**Fred Negro – Doing art for Handbills**

“I’d been doing handbills and posters for Joe Gaultieri who ran The Venue. Ross McVean started me doing the Prince of Wales posters too and he’d suggest something gross for each week’s poster. I guess that’s where the bad taste thing started. He’d suggest something disgusting, and I took it from there. The poster that got me into the most trouble was when Bob Hawke’s kid was caught with drugs. I did a Prince poster of Bob Hawk outside the St Kilda Caf’ trying to sell smack in front of sign that said, “soft drugs” instead of “soft drinks”. St Kilda Caf wanted to sue Ross McVean. The Caf had at this time been drilling holes through their spoons because the junkies who scored there kept stealing them to fix up. Asking for a “burger with the lot” meant something else. One night I asked for one and they wanted to charge me \$50! “Fifty bux for a burger? This ain’t Maxime’s!”

**Source: St Kilda Music Walking Tour**