

History Notes: Youngest MPs in WA  
November 2016. Updated 30 August 2023.



## Youngest MPs in WA

### Edwin Wilkie Corboy: 'baby of the House'

The youngest person elected to the Parliament of Western Australia was Edwin Wilkie Corboy (ALP). He was also the youngest Labor member elected to the WA Parliament when he won the seat of Yilgarn on 12 March 1921, aged 24 years. Edwin Wilkie Corboy was born 24 August 1897 in Melbourne, Victoria, the son of Michael Corboy, malster, railway worker and iron worker, and Isobel Amelia Wilson. His family moved to WA when he was young and he was educated at the Perth Boys School. He began his working life as a junior clerk in accounts at the Water Supply Department in 1912. He enlisted with the 1st Australian Imperial Force in 1915 and fought at Gallipoli and France with the 28th and 70th Battalions. He was wounded twice and discharged in 1917, the same year he started work as a clerk with the Lands Department and unsuccessfully contested the seat of Subiaco

in the Western Australian Parliament. He was only aged 22 years when he was elected to the federal seat of Swan in a by-election on 26 October 1918.

The following year he married Hannah Tobin and they had one son. Hannah died in 1942 and he remarried in 1949 to Dora Adelaide Daly (nee Dawes). From 1921 to 1930 he was

the MLA for Yilgarn and from 1930 to 1933 the MLA for Yilgarn–Coolgardie in WA. After 1933 he was a works clerk and in 1936 he worked for the Commonwealth Department of Social Services. During World War II he was in the Intelligence Section, 3rd Australian Corps and the 2nd Australian Imperial Force. After the war he worked as a civil servant again. Corboy died in East Perth on 6 August 1950 and is buried at Karrakatta Cemetery in WA.



*Ted Corboy, M.L.A. who was elected at the last elections in the Yilgarn-Coolgardie electorate*

Photograph courtesy of State Library of WA  
10028B/1775,1836



### Ted Corboy Dies

Edwin Wilkie (Ted) Corboy, one of the most colourful figures in Australian politics, died in Perth yesterday.

Mr. Corboy, then 21, was the youngest member ever to take a seat in the Federal Parliament when he was elected for Swan in 1918. He was defeated the following year.

He was a member of the WA Legislative Assembly from 1921 to 1933

The late Mr. Corboy was wounded twice in World War I, served in the Army in World War II.

*Daily News,*

7 August 1950, p.4

## Jaye Radisich: Youngest woman MP

Jaye Radisich (ALP), aged 24 years, was the youngest woman elected to the Western Australian Parliament in 2001. She is also the youngest Labor woman elected to the Parliament of WA. Jaye Amber Radisich was born on 29 March 1976 in Middle Swan, WA to Jeffrey Radisich, public servant and his wife, Dorothy Radisich. She was educated at Herne Hill, Mt Lawley and Coolbinia primary schools, as well as Mt Lawley Senior High School. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and a law degree from the University of Western Australia. Her first jobs included cashier at Bedford Market Gardens and Coles Fossey. Radisich joined the Australian Labor Party in 1998. In 2001 she was a research officer for Ted Cunningham MLA, a cosmetics consultant, law student and clerk. In the same year she was elected to the safe Liberal seat of Swan Hills. From May 2004 to January 2005 she was Acting Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and from April 2007 to September 2008 she was Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Energy, Resources, Industry and Enterprise. She was a member of several parliamentary committees from 2001 to 2007. After parliament Radisich was CEO for the Council of Small Business of Australia. She was a state finalist for the Young Achievement Australia: Achiever of the Year and a semi-finalist in the Zonta's Young Women in Public Affairs award in 1992. Tragically she died of cancer aged 35 years in 2012.

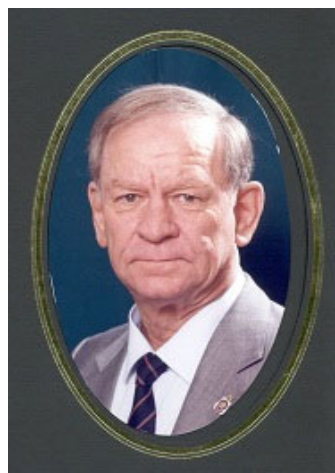


*Jaye Radisich, CEO of Council of Small Business Australia*  
Photograph courtesy of [Blue Mountains Photography](#)

*"I believe in creating a more just and equitable society that will give everyone a chance to achieve their dreams."* Inaugural Speech, Hansard, 3 May 2001

## Youngest Liberal man

William (Bill) Grayden is the youngest Liberal elected to the Parliament of Western Australia. He was 26 years, 7 months and ten days old when he was elected to the seat of Middle Swan on 15 March 1947. He held the seat until 1949. From 1956 to 1993 he was MLA for South Perth. He was the Minister for Labour and Industry from 1974 to 1978 and the Minister for Education from 1980 to 1982.



*William Grayden*  
Photograph courtesy of Parliament of WA

## Youngest Liberal woman and minister

Born in 1975, Donna Faragher is the youngest Liberal woman elected to either House of the Parliament of WA. She was 29 years, 8 months and 10 days when she commenced her term in Parliament. She is also the youngest woman to have been appointed as a government minister in WA. She was appointed the Minister for Environment in 2008.

## Youngest Premier: 'Happy Jack'

John Scaddan (ALP), commonly known as 'Happy Jack' was the youngest Premier of Western Australia. He was born in 1876 in Moonta, South Australia, the son of Richard Scaddan, miner and Jennifer Scaddan, nee Smitheram. He was educated at Woodside Primary School, South Australia and from 13 years at Eaglehawk Primary School in Victoria. Later he worked in the mines, attended the Bendigo School of Mines and gained an engine driver's certificate. He arrived in Western Australia in 1896. He worked on a steam-engine at a goldfields mine and joined the Goldfields Amalgamated Certified Engine-Drivers' Union. In 1900 he married Elizabeth Fawcner in Boulder but she tragically died of Bright's disease in 1902. He remarried in 1904 to Henrietta Edwards and they had a son and daughter. As a Labour member, Scaddan won the seat of Ivanhoe on 24 June 1904 which he held until 3 October 1911. Scaddan was secretary of the Australia Labour Federation (WA) from 1906 to 1911 and he helped organise the building of the Perth Trades Hall. He was Leader of the Opposition from 1910. When Labor won with a landslide at the October 1911 election, Scaddan, aged 35 years, became the youngest Premier ever in WA. He was also treasurer. At the 1916 election he won the seat of Brown Hill-Ivanhoe. Following Scaddan's resignation from the Australian Labor Party, due to a fight over conscription in 1917, he formed the National Labor Party in WA. He represented Albany from 1919 to 1924 and was Minister for Railways, Mines, Industries, Forests and Police. In 1920 he changed membership from the National Party to the Country Party. From 1923 to 1924 he was a member of the Ministerial Country Party and finally a member of the Nationalists. Scaddan managed Westralian Motors in Perth from 1924 to 1927 and then became a stock, farm and estate agent. In 1930 he won the seat of Maylands which he held until 1933. During this time he was Minister for Railways, Mines, Police, Forests and Industry. Scaddan was made a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) in 1923. He was a Methodist Sunday school superintendent, freemason and a keen footballer when he was young. Scaddan suddenly died of a cerebral haemorrhage on 21 November 1934 at Mt Lawley, WA.



*Premier Scaddan, foreground, on Pink Lake, 1915* Photograph courtesy of State Library of WA: 217001PD



## Youngest Minister: David Parker

David Parker (ALP) was the youngest Member of the WA Parliament to be a Minister. He was aged 29 years, nine months and three days when he was appointed Minister for Employment, Planning and Administrative Services on 25 February 1983. He was elected as the Member for Fremantle on 23 February 1980 and was selected as Deputy Opposition Whip and then Shadow Minister for Works and Water Resources the same year. In 1988 he became Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Resources Development and the Arts. He held the seat of Fremantle until his resignation in 1990.



*The press doorstep  
Deputy Premier David  
Parker, 1990.*

Photograph courtesy  
of State Library of WA:  
135282PD

*“Australia, and Western Australia in particular, has never had either a true political democracy or a very effective parliamentary system.”* Inaugural Speech, Hansard, 13 August 1980

### Youngest man MLC

At 28 years, two months and 29 days, Vincent Catania (Nationals) is the youngest person to be elected to the WA Legislative Council in 2005. He was the MLC for the Mining and Pastoral Region from 25 May 2005 to 12 August 2008. From 9 March 2013 until retiring on 9 August 2022, he was the MLA North West Central. At 31 years, he is the youngest member to have been elected to both houses.

### Youngest woman MLC

Louise Pratt (ALP) is the youngest woman member elected to the Legislative Council. On 22 May 2001 Pratt commenced her term for the East Metropolitan Region. She was aged 29 years, one month and four days. She resigned her seat in 2007. In 1996 she contested the seat of Alfred Cove. Pratt was elected to the Australian Senate in 2007 but was defeated in 2014. She was re-elected in 2016.

### Youngest National

Brendon Grylls is the youngest National Party member elected to the Parliament of Western Australia. He was elected to the seat of Merredin (later abolished) in 2001, aged 28 years, five months and nineteen days. In 2008 he was elected for the Central Wheatbelt and in 2013 for the Pilbara. He has twice been the Leader of the Parliamentary National Party of Australia.

## Members under 30 years old when first elected to the Parliament of Western Australia

| No | Name                         | Party   | Elected | Years | Months | Days |
|----|------------------------------|---------|---------|-------|--------|------|
| 1  | CORBOY, Edwin Wilkie         | ALP     | 1921    | 24    | 6      | 16   |
| 2  | RADISICH, Jaye Amber         | ALP     | 2001    | 24    | 10     | 11   |
| 3  | GARDINER, Joseph Peter       | ALP     | 1911    | 25    | 4      | 27   |
| 4  | MORAN, Charles John          | Min     | 1894    | 25    | 7      | 19   |
| 5  | GRAYDEN, David               | Ind Lib | 1950    | 25    | 10     | 0    |
| 6  | HEITMANN, Edward Ernest      | ALP     | 1904    | 26    | 0      | 21   |
| 7  | BURKE, Terence Joseph        | ALP     | 1968    | 26    | 1      | 22   |
| 8  | WILSON, Albert James         | ALP     | 1904    | 26    | 3      | 15   |
| 9  | EWING, Norman Kirkwood       | Ind     | 1897    | 26    | 4      | 8    |
| 10 | O'LOGHLEN, Peter Laurence    | ALP     | 1908    | 26    | 4      | 18   |
| 11 | BURKE, Brian Thomas          | ALP     | 1973    | 26    | 5      | 3    |
| 12 | GRAYDEN, William Leonard     | Lib     | 1947    | 26    | 7      | 10   |
| 13 | TROY, Michael Francis        | ALP     | 1904    | 26    | 8      | 11   |
| 14 | PARKER, David Charles        | ALP     | 1980    | 26    | 9      | 0    |
| 15 | CONOLLY, John Richard Arthur | Ind Min | 1897    | 26    | 9      | 15   |
| 16 | STONEHOUSE, Aaron            | Lib Dem | 2017    | 26    | 9      | 22   |
| 17 | EVANS, Thomas Daniel         | ALP     | 1956    | 26    | 11     | 20   |
| 18 | COOK, Wyndham Truran         | ALP     | 1970    | 27    | 2      | 17   |
| 19 | NEWTON, John Verdun          | ALP     | 1943    | 27    | 7      | 8    |
| 20 | BATH, Thomas Henry           | ALP     | 1902    | 27    | 7      | 24   |
| 21 | READ, Keith John             | ALP     | 1989    | 27    | 9      | 2    |
| 22 | SCADDAN, John                | ALP     | 1904    | 27    | 10     | 20   |
| 23 | CATANIA, Vincent Alexander   | ALP     | 2005    | 28    | 0      | 3    |
| 24 | GRYLLS, Brendon John         | NPA     | 2001    | 28    | 0      | 19   |
| 25 | BARNETT, Michael             | ALP     | 1974    | 28    | 2      | 6    |
| 26 | JACOB, Albert Paul           | Lib     | 2008    | 28    | 5      | 21   |
| 27 | COVERLY, Aubrey Augustus M   | ALP     | 1924    | 28    | 6      | 7    |
| 28 | HEGNEY, James                | ALP     | 1930    | 28    | 6      | 16   |
| 29 | BRYCE, Malcolm John          | ALP     | 1971    | 28    | 7      | 3    |
| 30 | MARSHALL, Magenta Rose       | ALP     | 2023    | 28    | 7      | 15   |

## Members under 30 years old when first elected to the Parliament of Western Australia continued

| No | Name                        | Party | Elected | Years | Months | Days |
|----|-----------------------------|-------|---------|-------|--------|------|
| 31 | PRATT, Louise Clare         | ALP   | 2001    | 28    | 9      | 23   |
| 32 | McGINN, Kyle Owen           | ALP   | 2017    | 28    | 10     | 28   |
| 33 | THOMAS, Albert Ernest       | Ind   | 1901    | 29    | 1      | 14   |
| 34 | McGOWAN, Mark               | ALP   | 1996    | 29    | 5      | 1    |
| 35 | McLEOD, George              | ALP   | 1914    | 29    | 7      | 3    |
| 36 | FARAGHER, Donna Evelyn Mary | Lib   | 2005    | 29    | 5      | 14   |
| 37 | JAMIESON, Colin John        | ALP   | 1953    | 29    | 8      | 19   |
| 38 | HOLMAN, John Barkell        | ALP   | 1901    | 29    | 9      | 14   |
| 39 | QUINLAN, Timothy Francis    | Min   | 1890    | 29    | 9      | 22   |
| 40 | RAPHAEL, Howard Stirling    | ALP   | 1930    | 29    | 9      | 30   |
| 41 | SULC, Paul                  | ALP   | 1996    | 29    | 10     | 23   |
| 42 | CARR, Jeffrey Phillip       | ALP   | 1974    | 29    | 11     | 1    |
| 43 | NEEDHAM, Edward             | ALP   | 1904    | 29    | -      | -    |

## Abbreviations

|         |                             |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| ALP     | Australian Labor Party      |
| CP      | Country Party               |
| Ind     | Independent                 |
| Lib     | Liberal                     |
| Lib Dem | Liberal Democrat            |
| NPA     | National Party of Australia |

## Sources

Biographical Register of Members of the Parliament of Western Australia, Parliament of Western Australia, <http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/library/MPHistoricalData>, accessed online 7 August 2017 and 7 December 2022.

D Black, ed, *The Western Australian Parliamentary Handbook*, Parliament of Western Australia, Perth, WA, 2014.

D Black and G Bolton, eds, *Biographical Register of Members of the Parliament of Western Australia: volume two 1930-2010*, Western Australian Parliamentary History Project, Perth, WA, 2011.

*History and procedure of Parliamentary government*, The Parliament, Perth, 1980.

*Parliamentary debates, Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly*, Government Printer, Perth WA, 1890-1952.

JR Robertson, 'Scaddan, John (1876–1934)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/scaddan-john-8348/text14651>, published first in hardcopy 1988, accessed online 28 September 2016.

"Ted Corboy Dies" *The Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950)* 7 August 1950: 4 (FINAL). Web. 14 Sep 2016