

## At last! Gunning water funds flow

By TOM SEBO

AFTER almost 18 months of lobbying, the NSW Government has finally come through with its share of the funding to secure a clean water supply for the people of Gunning.

Yesterday, Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services Andrew Stoner announced they would contribute up to \$4.3 million for the construction of water treatment facilities at both Gunning and Dalton, together with an off-stream storage, pump station and rising main.

Ever since the December 2010 floods residents have had to drink, wash and bathe in dirty water.

The storm destroyed the natural filtration system, and for the last six months every time they have turned on their taps, mud has flowed out.

Upper Lachlan Shire Council has been lobbying the state government for the last seven months to contribute \$6.2m toward the Gunning Water Supply Scheme having secured a \$7.3m funding pledge from the federal government and allocating \$1.1m of ratepayers' money toward it as well.

However, the federal funding was reliant on a matching contribution from the state – and for a long time a lot of people were questioning whether they would get it.

But with close collaboration between council staff and the Minister's Office they managed to scale back the project and secure the funds.

It will now cost \$10.8m, with the Commonwealth contributing \$5.4m and Council \$1.1m.

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## The spirit of mateship

BRITISH Royal Marines Brigadier Will Taylor warmed the many hardy souls attending Goulburn's Anzac Day service with a stirring speech honouring the bravery and spirit of mateship of our Diggers.

"The Anzacs were, after all, soldiers and there is a common understanding amongst soldiers of every nationality, old and young, serving and retired," he said.

"A recognition of the challenges they faced and it is somehow easier for another soldier to understand than those whose experience of the Battlefield is less immediate and more X-Box or Hollywood.

"People wonder what motivates soldiers to fight and serve. It's not honour or glory but mates! Ask the average soldier or marine what his priorities are and they would say beer, bed and food ..."

Brigadier Taylor, pictured with RSL Sub Branch president Gordon Wade, said the Anzac tradition is "coded into the DNA of this nation and nowhere more than in the values and standards of today's Australian Defence Force."

Anzac Day coverage: P4-5



# Blue banner boys

By LEIGH BOTTRELL

AFTER the retiring Alby Schultz's marathon innings as Federal MP for Hume, the Liberal Party is gearing-up to find his successor in Canberra.

Four well-credentialed candidates – all of them youngish family men – have put themselves forward for the party's Hume pre-selection process on May 12.

Mr Schultz fiercely fought off moves to supplant him from within the Liberal Party, and from outside it – particularly by the Nationals –



## Schultz's successor

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during his quarter century in State and Federal politics.

With Mr Schultz leaving the fray, the Nationals are thought likely to run a high-profile candidate in Hume at next year's scheduled Federal elections.

Whoever the Liberals choose on

May 12 to carry their blue banner in far-flung Hume would thus face a potentially divisive contest between so-called Coalition colleagues.

Labor, with Greens preferences, would in most election years capitalise on such a three-way fight for the seat.

But the Gillard Government is so on the nose everywhere, and starting at devastating electoral losses across the nation, that even finding a "sacrificial lamb" to stand for Labor in Hume could prove problematical.

Such is the near-certainty of the Liberals ending up with a clear majority of their own in Canberra after the elections, that ambitious newcomers in their ranks will need to be of an unusually high calibre to quickly shine in the party room and the House.

Whoever gets the Hume pre-selector's nod on May 12 to replace Alby Schultz as the party's electoral champion, will have passed only the first of many challenges in the real political world.

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