

# STATE ELECTION 2014



Guy Barnett and Mark Shelton celebrating at a Liberal function at Perth yesterday.

Picture: MARK JESSER

## A difficult four years: Hidding

By PATRICK BILLINGS

TASMANIA'S longest current-serving parliamentarian says the last four years were among the hardest of his career.

Lyons MP Rene Hidding marked his 18th year in the job by topping the poll in Tasmania's largest electorate on Saturday.

Mr Hidding said the likely election of fellow Lyons' Liberals Guy Barnett and Mark Shelton made good a pledge he gave to Will Hodgman four years ago.

"He said 'Rene can you do three in Lyons' and I said I'd give it everything I've got and seeing that being delivered last night was a great relief," he said.

"It's fair to say I've been in opposition too long in my

opinion and the anticipation of the task ahead is very strong for me at the moment."

Mr Hidding said his focus for Lyons would be rebuilding forestry in part by dismembering the forestry peace deal, which he labelled a "political construct".

Guy Barnett, a former Tasmanian senator and lobbyist who attracted the second highest vote in Lyons, also circled the economy as a priority.

"A lot of people are hurting, small businesses are hurting, families are hurting, particularly in the timber industry," he said.

"I'm determined to be part of the team to deliver a stronger and more prosperous future."

Mr Barnett credited the Liberals' first majority govern-

ment in 22 years to the strong party discipline in the lead-up to Saturday.

"We were unified as a team in stark contrast to our opponents and we had a plan for growth and jobs," he said.

Incumbent Mark Shelton was attending a relative's wedding when he heard his vote had increased from the 2010 ballot.

"My nieces were running up to me saying 'have you see this update, have you seen this update', I was very pleased when I saw the numbers come to where they are," he said.

"From my point of view it is about regional communities and putting a putting life back into them and giving them hope that all is not lost and we can turn the economy around.