

# Stone's presidency ends

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● Mr Stone and Mr Howard together in Canberra yesterday.

By HOWARD JONES

SHANE Stone's remarkable career takes another twist today when he wakes up and finds himself no longer federal president of the Liberal Party.

The former Wodonga schoolboy stepped down from the job yesterday after six years and having steered the party to federal election triumphs in 2001 and 2004.

The same period also saw every state controlled by Labor and two defeats for

the Northern Territory Country-Liberal Party, which he once led.

A Darwin-based businessman and former Northern Territory chief minister, Mr Stone, 55, is unlikely to return to politics at territory or federal level.

He rejected the idea of standing for Indi in 2001.

Mr Stone will now be able to devote more time to chairing the APAC Group and to his wife, Josephine, and teenage children Jack and Madeline.

APAC gives strategic advice to big companies such as Multiplex and the Australian Magnesium Corporation.

Mr Stone, a Queen's Counsel, is also a director of Australian Health Care Technology, Menzies Foundation and the Australian Children's Television Corporation.

Prime Minister John Howard led farewell tributes to Mr Stone at the party's federal council in Canberra at the weekend, though some

recalled his leaked memo in 2001.

It criticised the Government as "mean and tricky" over GST.

In Albury-Wodonga, Mr Stone will always be known as the eldest son of two former Wodonga mayors, Pam Stone, now of Albury, and the late Les Stone.

The family lived at Cornishtown from 1951 to 1957 before his father took a teaching post in Wodonga.

Shane Stone, then a young teacher, once stood for

Wodonga council, losing to Les Boyes.

Had he won, his life might have been very different; he might not have studied at University of Melbourne, become a barrister or moved to the Northern Territory, having lived in Alice Springs and Darwin.

Mr Stone entered politics in Darwin in 1990 and was chief minister from 1993 to 1999.

● The new Liberal president and first woman to hold the role is Chris McDiven.