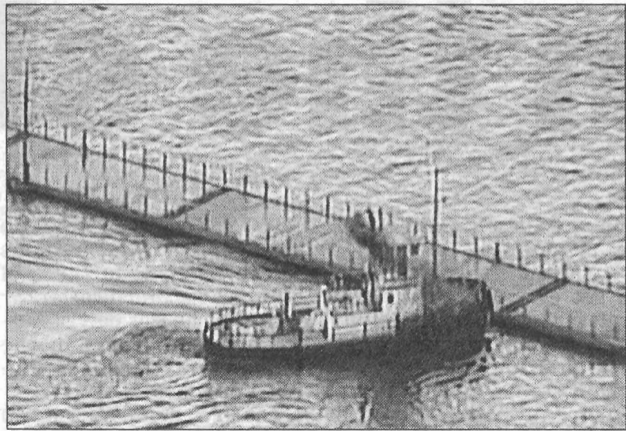




Great job: Peter Fenton (left) and Doug Hislop yesterday. Picture: ANNETTE DEW.

Tug boat master saves city bridge



Feat: the *Mavis* guides the boardwalk. Picture: NINE NEWS.

A TUG boat master who averted disaster by steering a 300-tonne chunk of floating debris clear of Brisbane's major bridge says he did "what you gotta do".

But Doug Hislop saved lives, Premier Anna Bligh said, dubbing his *Mavis* "the little tug that could".

And Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd proposed awarding him an Order of Australia.

"What a feat of seamanship," Mr Rudd said.

A 150m section of boardwalk tore loose from the bank at inner-city New Farm early yesterday and

QUICK THINKING

**Jodie Munro O'Brien
and Gabrielle Dunlevy**

sailed down the Brisbane River at 10-12 knots.

The Gateway Bridges — massive spans with the airport on one side and the port on the other — were closed three times, over fears the boardwalk would crash into the supports.

Mr Hislop, who called into his depot about 4am, heard of the threat on the radio. He and colleague Peter Fenton ventured out into the raging river in the tug.

"We straightened it up and got it through the bridge," he said. "It wasn't much harder than that."

The quiet 65-year-old gave a modest chuckle at being called a hero.

"We weren't trying to be heroes. I just do what you gotta do. It could have done damage," he said.

Mr Fenton, 66, of Whiteside, was just as modest: "It's just our jobs. It's just what we do."

Harbourmaster Capt Richard Johnson said the pilots guided the boardwalk safely past chemical and fuel wharves and an oil pipeline.