

16 April 2009

# Cooking up bold visions requires a deft touch

**D**EAR Minister (or may I call you Delia?) I have a plan to really put the new, vibrant and sophisticated Darwin on the international map.

With your help, I propose to bring a floating restaurant to Vestey's Beach, to be moored about 300m offshore and roughly halfway between the Ski Club and the Yacht Club, the area where many boats are moored during the Dry.

To this end, and to show my sincerity, I have put a \$500 deposit on an old Sydney Harbour ferry, which the current owners assure me could be moved here under its own power if we just get a good break in the weather for a couple of months.

The restaurant would focus on cuisine appropriate to the wonderful racial mixing pot that is Darwin, that is, predominantly Asian, with a few of the mandatory old favourites like Surf 'n' Turf, frozen barra-mundi and a variety of schnitzels to cater for the expectations of local and international visitors alike.

This would really set it apart from the run-of-the-mill tucker on offer in most other local eating houses.

The restaurant would be called Wok on Water — a nice mix of foodie humour and biblical references.

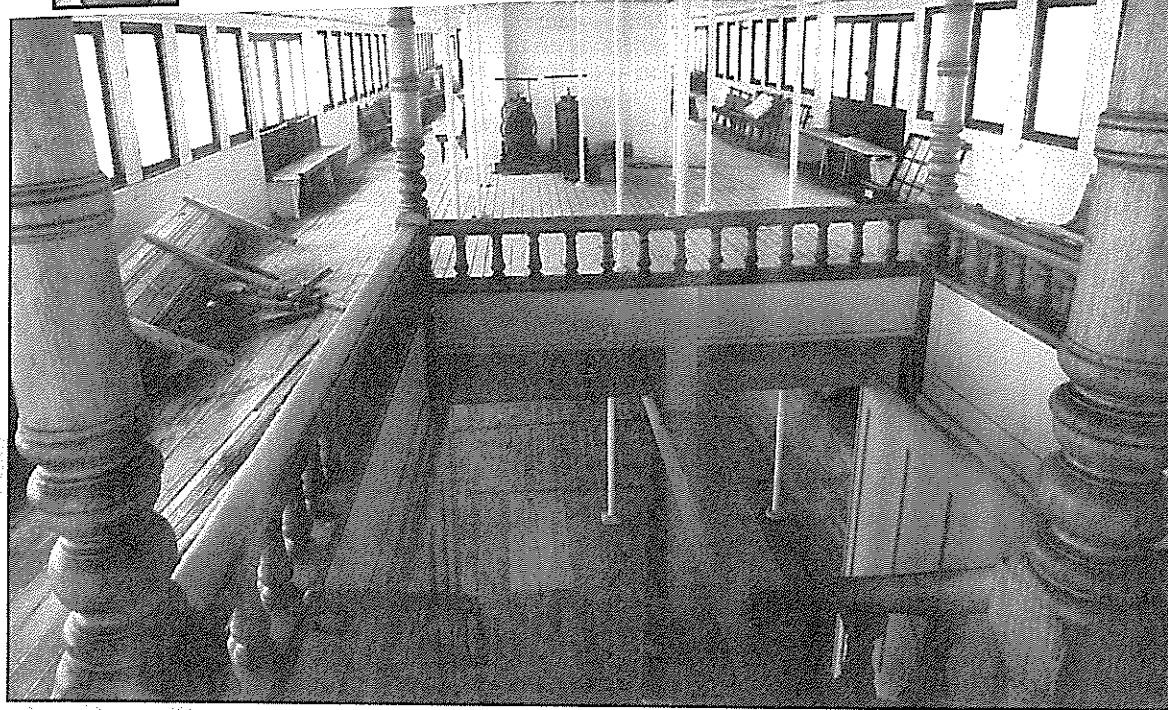
All this would be done at the expense of private investors — in this case, initially myself.

Should you give me a wink and a nod about the concept, however, I would quickly widen this investor base to a consortium.

This could be done after a couple of lunchtime conferences with



## The Good Oil with Barry Doyle



**WOK-UP CALL:** The interior of the old Manly ferry Baragoola, similar to one that could come here

cached-up investors at Schooners, Bogarts and the Honey Pot.

Of course, these bold visions cannot be achieved in isolation and I would look to you, and the Territory Government, for support with some technical, infrastructure and bureaucratic issues.

The first requirement would be the construction of a floating, pontoon-type wharf of approximately 400m in length running from the high-water mark on Vestey's into the bay itself and providing access to the Wok on Water restaurant.

This floating wharf could also be used by boaties to tie up to when loading and unloading or even when they are enjoying the restaurant's

exceptionally fine food, specially prepared by teams of skilled chefs I propose to bring in on 457 visas.

I think you'll agree this type of facility would be a real positive for our already wonderful, tropical lifestyle and something that is totally lacking at present.

The best thing about this development is that it would have virtually no footprint on the land and could also be used to provide a link for small ferry use from the city to Vestey's and the adjacent Museum and Art Gallery of the NT.

By the way, whatever happened to those visionary plans to construct a wharf near the museum?

Which brings me to the best part.

Through extensive research and eBay, I have managed to source an appropriate pontoon wharf system, formerly the property of the US Army Engineering Corps.

I am assured it would come up a treat with a lick of paint and some minor welding work and, as it is currently located in the Philippines, transport costs would be minimal.

Really, Delia, I think you'll agree that this is the type of vision that our city needs.

Dining at Stokes Hill Wharf is losing its appeal — the view of the still-growing Waterfront development and the LNG plant is hardly inspiring. And Inpex to come!

At the Wok on Water, the views

### ? Say WHAT again

"A conservation zone would have the strictest merit tests applied. Our tough environmental standards would be strictly adhered to."

Planning Minister Delia Lawrie explains that all but 4 per cent of Darwin Harbour's mangrove system is a conservation zone — subject to merit tests and standards, of course.

out to sea and back towards land will be truly inspiring.

And sunsets to die for!  
It would help greatly if I could secure the services of those bureaucratic "facilitators" of yours who help developers cut through red tape — such an inspired use of taxpayer money and the mark of a truly forward-looking Government.

I look forward to a mutually satisfying, truly visionary and successful venture to help transform our wonderful city.

Yours, in expectation.