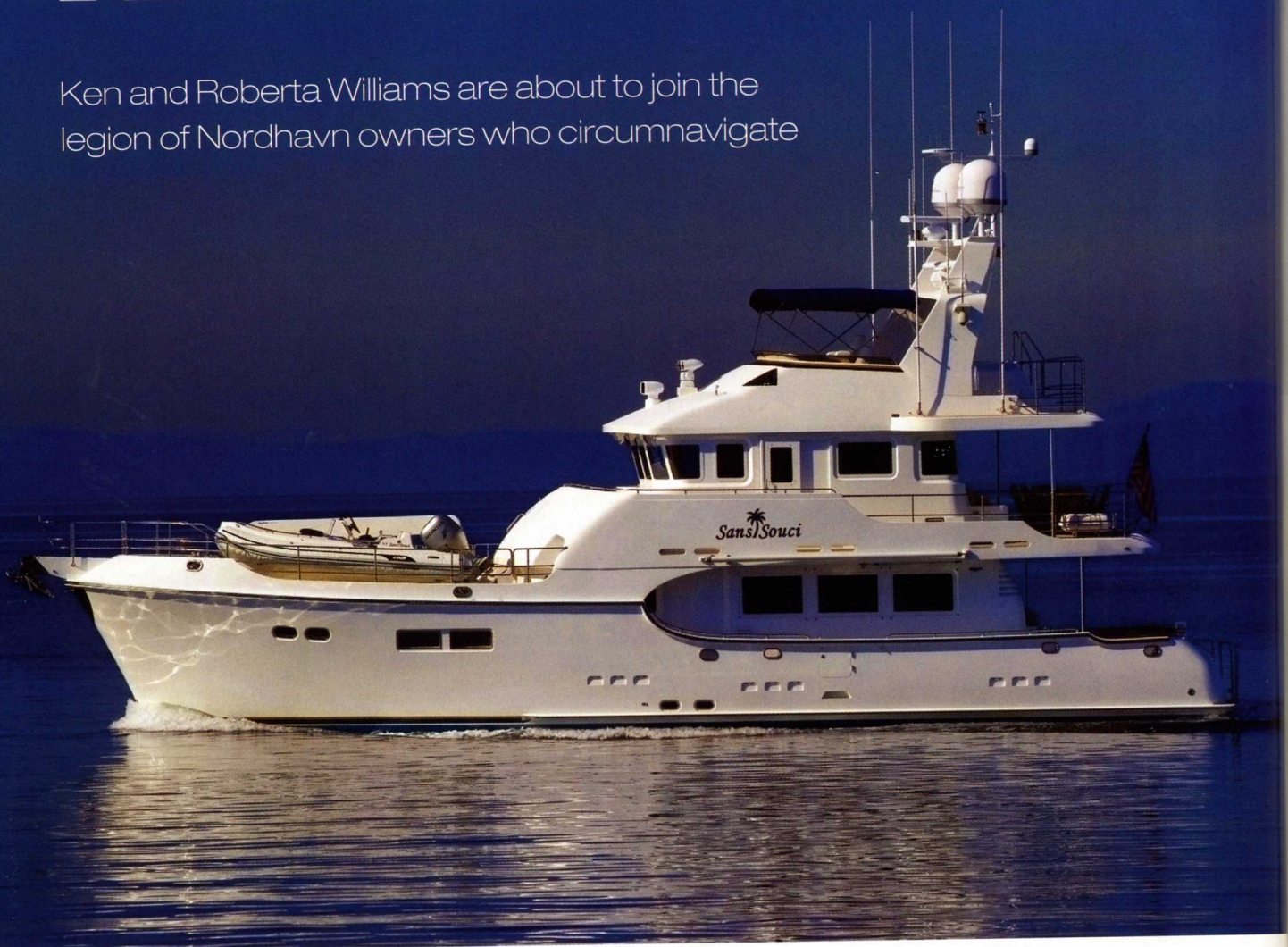


# REAL-LIFE ADVENTURES

Ken and Roberta Williams are about to join the legion of Nordhavn owners who circumnavigate



Some people live the dream, others live in a dream world—Roberta and Ken Williams have done both. Roberta rocked the electronic games world in 1979 with “Mystery House,” the first graphic adventure game ever created for the PC. Tired of text-only games, she invented a whodunit and Ken, a programmer, implemented her black and white graphic designs. A small ad for the game placed in a computer magazine began generating a flood of orders, and with the goal of starting their own company to afford a simple life in the mountains, they formed On-Line Systems, later Sierra On-Line, in Coursegold, California. Their next game, “The Wizard and the Princess,” sold more than 60,000 copies, a substantial number for the early 1980s. Setting industry standards for home computer entertainment became

Roberta’s stock in trade. With her eight-game “King’s Quest” series, their careers in computer games began a rocket-like trajectory. In 1996, they sold their company and began their next real-life adventure, cruising.

“Roberta is a real Indiana Jones sort of girl,” reveals Ken. “I guess her computer adventure stories were a way to travel vicariously. After we sold the company she could start living the adventures. One day she told me she wanted to go around the world in her own boat.”

Ken said he realized that meant a much larger boat than the 44-foot express cruiser they had at the time. “Once we got caught out in some awful weather crossing the Georgia Straight, and when she still wanted to go cruising, I realized

By MARILYN MOWER - PHOTOS BY STEVE CRIDLAND

