# Next stop, New Zealand

**Would you navigate some of the world's most hazardous waters in a 46ft boat? MBM catches up with some fearless motorboaters**

REPORT BY STEWART CAMPBELL

*Egret*, a Nordhavn 46, sits in her mooring in Gibraltar, ready for her epic voyage to New Zealand

What to do with your retirement is a question we all one day must face. You could move to Torquay and open a hotel, you could settle down in your country pile with a few thousand good books, or... you could sell all your worldly possessions, buy a boat and steer a course for one of the most treacherous pieces of water on the face of the earth – the South Atlantic around Cape Horn.

Scott and Mary Flanders chose the latter. "We sold everything – houses, cars, the lot. Our cat died a long time ago and our kids are grown," the couple tell me over morning tea on their 46ft Nordhavn. "Everything we own is on this boat, except a few fishing rods we couldn't fit on board."

I meet them in Gibraltar, the launch pad for the epic journey they are about to make halfway round the world. Their ultimate destination is New Zealand. Why there? "I heard it was nice," Scott says simply.

This is the American couple's first attempt at such a mammoth voyage, after buying their boat, ***Egret***, five years ago at the Miami Boat Show. They wasted no time in gaining experience, with cruises up and down the east coast of the US and hops to the Bahamas. The biggest test was the passage 'across the pond' with other Nordhavn owners during the Nordhavn Atlantic Rally in 2004. Throughout 2005 and for a good part of 2006, Scott, 61, and Mary, 56, toured the Mediterranean, going from port to port, all the time planning their once-in-a-lifetime trip round the cape and into the Pacific.

> "The feeling of being underway is incredible"

But even for all their hours on the water, the sheer scale of the task ahead of them is humbling. Two oceans must be crossed, a cape negotiated, and customs officials from over 10 countries kept happy.

The Flanders are ready for it. Packed away in the Nordhavn are more spares than I've ever seen. "We're prepared for anything," Scott tells me. I believe him.

On board are impellers by the bucket load, three tool boxes, complete spare pumps, re-build kits, a huge fire extinguisher ("we don't scrimp on safety"), six batteries, two radars, two constantly running GPSs, five laptops, four anchors, 400 feet of anchor chain, 1100 feet of heavy-duty rope, two inflatable German kayaks, 88lb of propane in four bottles, two RIBs, one catamaran, two outboards, one wing engine, a scythe for cutting Chilean kelp off the anchor chain, 15 fishing rods and a barbecue. And this is only the beginning. Scott shows me drawers stuffed full of an inconceivable amount of gadgets and gizmos.

Afterwards, Mary directs me to the various crooks and crannies on board that house the food. "There are six vacuum-packed chickens under the bed," she tells me.

Throughout the boat are modifications and quirks that tell you these people have thought this through. In the saloon is a gravity-fed diesel stove that will help keep the bitter winter of Tierra Del Fuego from the door. Scott had it installed in Turkey, along with ***Egret's*** paravanes, which run 18ft down. "They'll give us another half knot with the wind behind us," he says.

The front stairs leading down to the front cabin were altered to fit in a washer and dryer, and the second couch in the saloon was sacrificed for a TV compartment and bookshelf.

A crucial piece of retrofitting was the installation of fuel bladders on the fore and aft decks. Fully loaded, the boat carries almost four tonnes of diesel, enough for weeks at sea. The 30-tonne Nordhavn burns about 40 gallons of fuel in 24 hours of continuous cruising.

And the timetable? That's a work in progress. "This boat will go through literally anything. But we don't go out in rough stuff, so the weather is our schedule," Scott says. One part of the journey, however, is

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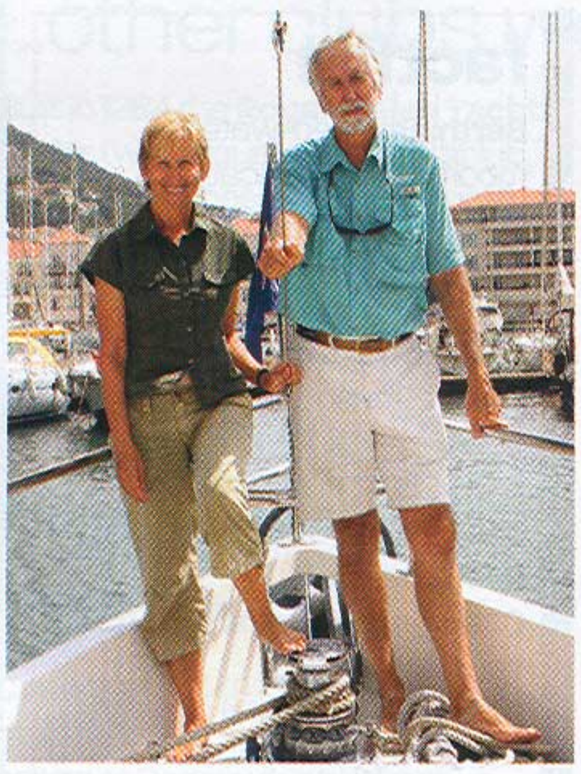

Ready for a challenging retirement: Meet Scott and Mary Flanders

A gravity-fed diesel heater will help keep the chill off on those cold nights

non-negotiable. The couple have to make it to New Zealand by December 2007, to avoid the typhoon season that would make a South Pacific passage any later than that not just uncomfortable, but also incredibly dangerous.

But before they get anywhere near New Zealand, the Flanders have to get to some of the most remote corners of the world, through seas that have sent many bigger boats to the ocean floor, and all in a 46ft boat. MBM will be with them every step of the way. Using our website, www.mbmclub.com, Scott and Mary will tell their remarkable story as it unfolds, through regular reports and photos.

"Everyone gets nervous before making a long passage," Scott tells me. "But if you've done your preparation, provisioned perfectly and everything is in 100% working order, the feeling of being underway is incredible."

*Egret* has been fitted with solar panels