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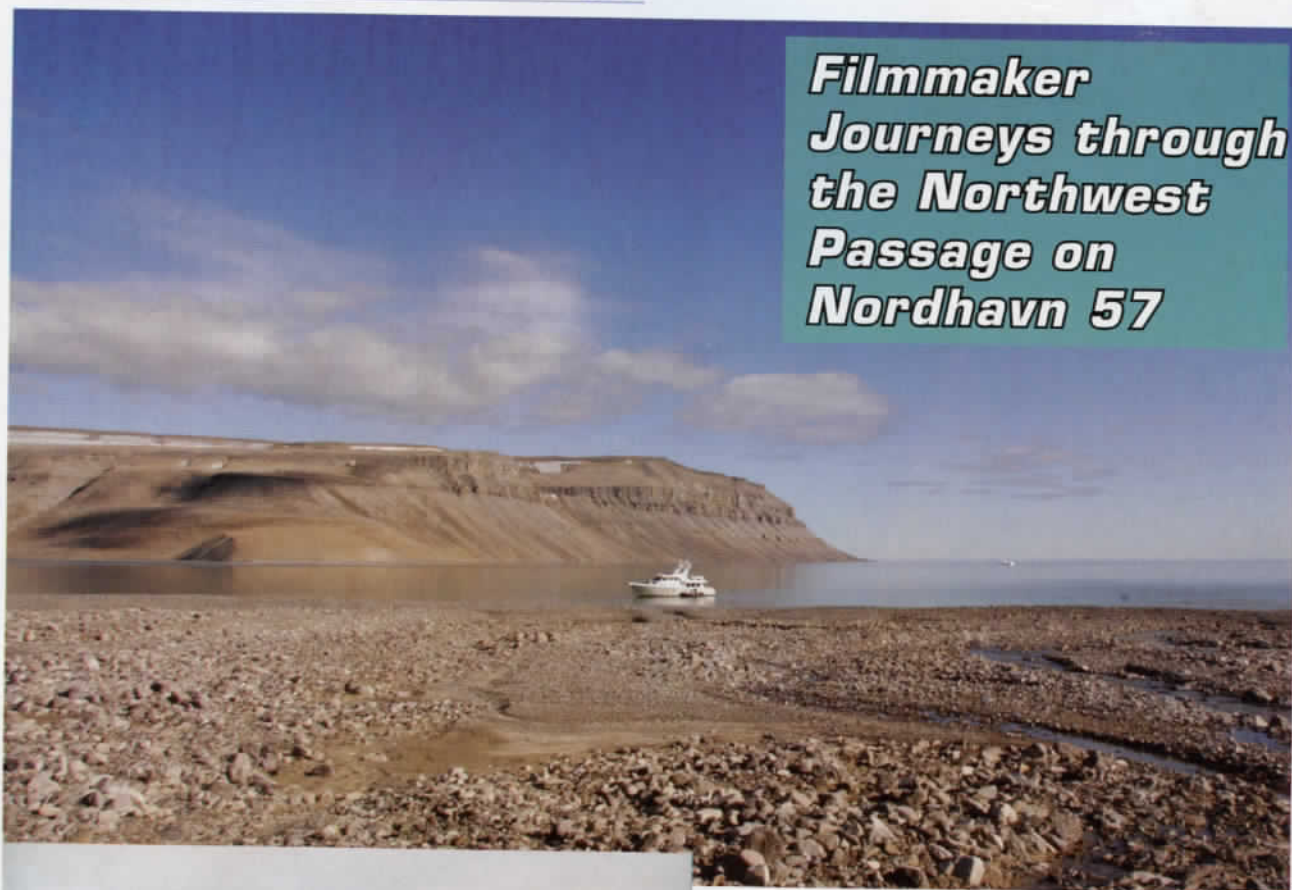
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**Filmmaker
Journeys through
the Northwest
Passage on
Nordhavn 57**



Photos courtesy Hole in the Wall Productions



Arctic Adventure

E mmy-award winning filmmaker Sprague Theobald recently completed an 8,500-mile, five-month journey through the Northwest Passage in order to film his next documentary. The trip was Theobald's second Arctic venture in two years, and this time he returned with 250 hours of stunning high-definition video footage including underwater shots, surreal landscapes, active glaciers, wildlife and historical landmarks such as grave sites from the doomed Franklin Expedition of 1845. Theobald and his crew chose an east-to-west route from Newport, R.I., to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Upernivik, Greenland, where they entered Lancaster Sound, navigated down Peel Sound to King William Island, and proceeded out through the Bering Sea through the Aleutians, arriving in Seattle at the end of October.

Theobald says that the aim of the trip was to "not only travel to and through The Passage and document it, but to meet the denizens of the area, find out about their lives above the Arctic Circle, and learn how recent climatic changes have affected them." The retreating ice in the Northwest Passage is opening the strait to international shipping and offering unprecedented access to natural resources in the region. Theobald wanted to uncover inhabitants' feelings about what may become of their cur-





rent lifestyle if and when shipping and exploration make themselves known.

The trip was not without its perils. After a relatively smooth start, the ship was hit hard by an ice floe that trapped *Bagan*, a Nordhavn 57, for days. The crew feared that they would have to abandon both their ship and mission. Bravery, experienced nautical maneuvering, and a dash of good luck freed them from the ice and landed them safely on the other side of Canada's Northwest Passage.

Bagan followed the route of the Franklin Expedition to convey through moving images how such a large expedition might simply vanish. To this day, the waters Franklin explored are for the most part uncharted, so transiting them presented obvious dangers, even though the crew had the technology and electronics to guide them. Theobald concedes that "with the forward-looking sonar we refit *Bagan* with, we could see 200 feet ahead of us and make a navigational decision before calamity. Franklin and his men had none of this. They were truly brave and heroic explorers."

The crew on *Bagan* saw the Russian Federation and the U.S. at the same time, came within 900 miles of the North Pole, visited Greenland and Alaska in the same summer on the same boat, and dodged icebergs in two major oceans. They went as far north as 75N, traveled one-third of the way around the world, cruised through eight different time zones and sailed in three oceans.

Sprague kept a daily blog during his voyage, complete with photos, video clips and an interactive map showing each leg of the trip. Visit www.NorthwestPassageFilm.com.

