

Tayana 37

A class that owes much to an energetic owners' group

by Karen Larson

THE TAYANA OWNERS' GROUP (TOG) is a diverse, energetic, and passionate group of sailors of Tayana, CT, and Vancouver sailboats and motorsailers. For more than 10 years, Bill and Rockie Truxall have been the default leaders of this loyal clan due to their joint role as publishers of the member publication, *TOG News*.

Until recently, this 24-page newsletter has appeared quarterly in the mailboxes of up to 500 dues-paying members when many other sailboat owners' group newsletters were struggling to get members, to get news and article contributions from members, and to break even on the printing-and-postage-versus-dues-paid balance sheet.

Long before she became Rockie Truxall, Kathie Rocknee learned to

sail at a YMCA camp in Iowa. Before long she was a camp sailing instructor. Many years went by before she met Bill in church, a church with three Kathys. Nicknames were assigned to keep the identities straight. Kathie Rocknee became Rockie, and so she remains today, although she's also known as Grandma Rockie to a select few.

Bill's course through life led through a 27-year career in the U.S. Navy: aircraft carriers, the battleship *New Jersey*, submarines, and destroyers. He saw service in Vietnam on a destroyer

One of many active Tayana owners, Dayton Eckerson sails *Mistress* on the Chesapeake with his wife, Darlene Como, and their 8-year-old daughter, Maggie. Like Bill and Rockie Truxall's *Seaquestor II*, *Mistress* has been in the Eckerson family from the beginning. She was commissioned by Peter Eckerson in 1979 and outfitted as a floating dental office, serving patients from Rhode Island and New York to the Caribbean.



Chris Knauss

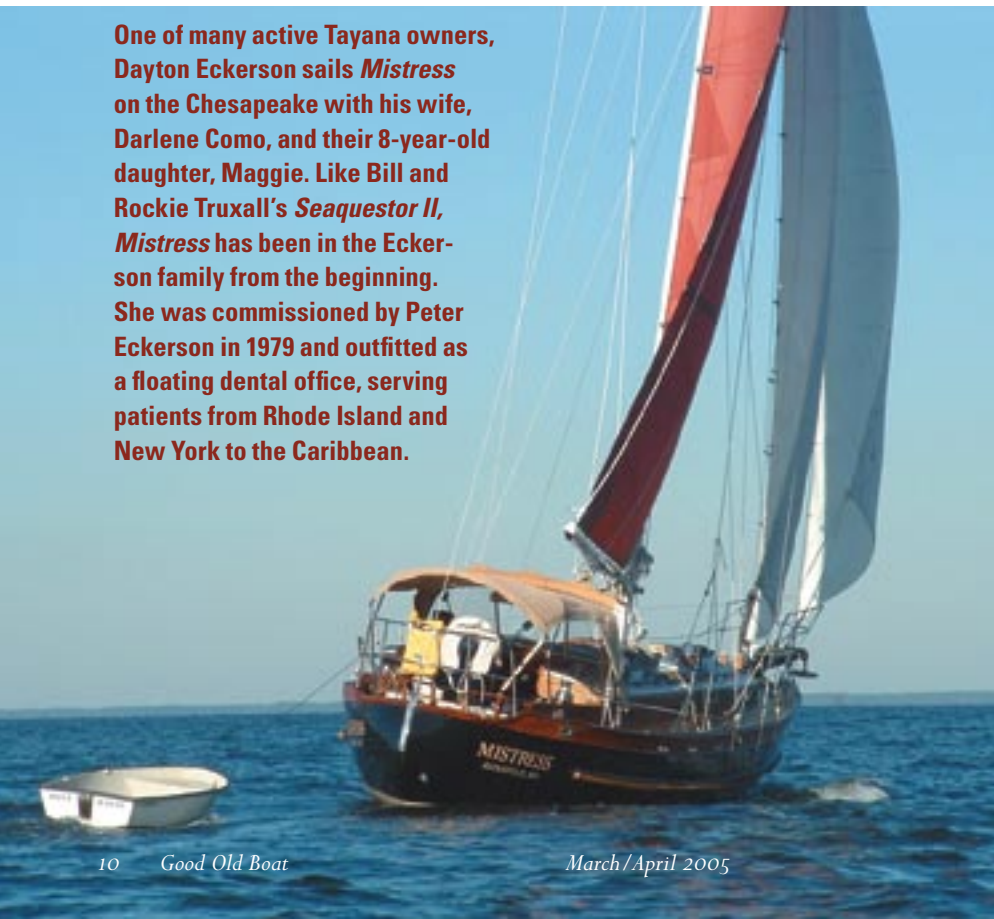
and on a sub. He ended his career as a commander and was captain of the destroyers USS *Robert L. Wilson* and USS *Vesole*.

Upon retirement from the Navy, he bought a Tanzer 28. The Tanzer served well, but Bill says, "It's really just a weekend boat."

Wanted a plane

Of his sailing passion, Bill says, "I really wanted to buy an airplane, but a sailboat is less expensive to run." That comment puts a new light on the old saw about a boat being nothing more than a hole in the water into which one pours money. An airplane, by extension then, would be a black hole that sucks money. To pay for his sailing habit, Bill worked as a consulting engineer (as many other retired military personnel do in the Washington, D.C., beltway) until his second retirement in 1995.

Bill and a mutual sailing friend, who owned a Cheoy Lee 33, began looking for their next boats. They both settled on the Bob Perry-designed Tayana 37 as the boat for them. "It was, at the





Bill and Rockie Truxall, below, were the Tayana Owners' Group newsletter editors for more than a decade. *Seaquestor II*, at left, is docked at their home in Reedville, Virginia.



time, considered to be the high end of what a couple could manage together," Bill says. The time was 1985. "You could get a Tayana 37," Bill recalls with a smile, "for \$39,995...sailaway FOB Taiwan." And some new owners *did* take ownership of their boats in Taiwan, saving an additional \$5,000 charge for shipping and \$5,000 more for insurance.

The interiors of the Tayanas were infinitely customizable. You'll scarcely see two the same. With the help of another Tayana 37 owner who was an architect, the Truxalls got their plans together and got their boat into production. They deliberated for 18 months on their interior layout. By the time they placed their order, the local dealer was in litigation with another dealer, and their boat was not delivered until 1988.

Seaquestor II was shipped to Baltimore Harbor. Bill remembers the day well. Moving from a Tanzer 28 to a Tayana 37, his perspective of this new, heftier, and much longer boat was that it was going to be huge. He expected to see his new boat the moment he arrived on the pier. In truth, he couldn't find her. *Seaquestor* was lost among the offloaded cargo of the delivering ship.

Beautiful interior

Now 15 years later, Bill says with fondness, "You can't buy a U.S. boat with a more beautiful interior," and Rockie nods in agreement. The two haven't done a great number of modifications to their good old boat, as so many boatowners do. They're the first owners, after all, and they got her the way they wanted her to begin with.

They've kept *Seaquestor* shipshape and pristine, although their plans for bluewater passages have faded a bit. Now they enjoy sailing the Chesapeake

and attending owners' rendezvous. When Bill retired from his engineering career, they moved to a waterfront home in Reedville, Virginia, where *Seaquestor* is docked a few footsteps from the door.

Bringing their baby home from a Maryland marina may have been a mistake. "When your boat is somewhere else, you make a point of packing and going to the boat," Rockie points out. "When it's in your backyard, it seems almost everything else comes before the boat."

"There was much to be resolved in the early days. While the Taiwanese were expert craftsmen, they were not necessarily sailors."

The largest "everything else" that comes before their boat is that the Truxalls now spend their summers in Iowa supervising Rockie's family farms. She sails a 12-foot dinghy there on Spirit Lake. The Shell Lake dinghy is easily rigged and sailed by one. It brings back fond memories of teaching sailing to campers. In fact, Rockie is teaching sailing again during her summers there.

How did a couple of Chesapeake Bay sailors become the guardians of the *TOG News* and the entire owners' group? The founder of the newsletter was Norm Demain who was in touch with 20 or so fellow Tayana owners willing to share tips and frustrations. He started a small newsletter in order to better pass the information along.

Much to resolve

"Norm would write to the factory," Bill says. "He'd tell them, 'You've got to resolve this,' and they would. There was much to be resolved in the early days. While the Taiwanese were expert craftsmen, they were not necessarily sailors."

He smiles and continues, "The first boats were built in 1975. People needed support and information in those days. The builder was so unsophisticated." The story told most frequently concerns the company's decision to move a 90-gallon fuel tank from beneath a saloon settee to beneath the V-berth in order to create more useable storage space in the cabin. A good idea in theory. The problem is that, when full, this iron tank adds an extra 700 pounds to the bow, causing trim problems and hobby-horsing. Many owners have since relocated this awkward tank.

After 12 years, Norm Demain grew tired of the publishing job he'd created for himself. About that time the Truxalls were sitting in the cockpit with John Kraft, another Tayana 37 owner, looking at the *TOG News* which proclaimed in the headline: "This is your last newsletter." There was much discussion that day and at a later rendezvous about who would take over the job. The Truxalls allowed themselves to be persuaded. There were 190 members at the time.

Membership more than doubled to 500 on their watch. But now 12 more years have gone by, and Bill and Rockie still hope to find the next publishers after giving up the job themselves recently. "This is a labor of love," Bill notes. "Two have called to offer their services, but the first question each time was, 'What's your annual profit?'"



There is no annual profit." And so the so-called "volunteers" melted away.

Strong organization

For the good of all, it behooves someone within the group to pick up the mantle of responsibility. In 1982, when Tayanas were relatively new, *Practical Sailor* recognized the value of a strong owners' organization.


The reviewer said, "The Tayana 37 is both typical and atypical of Taiwanese boats. She is typical in the problems that existed due to the builder's inexperience with seagoing yachts, typical with communication and language problems, typical in having deal-

ers who varied widely in both ability and their desire to help their customers after the sale.

"She is atypical in that many of these problems have been solved over six years of production, in that a good owners' association and the domination of one dealer... have resulted in real improvements in the boat. Anyone considering a Tayana 37 should join the owners' association and read all the back newsletters before buying the boat. If your dealer either fails to mention the owners' association or denigrates it, find another dealer."

Another review, by British sailor David Phillips, stated even more emphati-

cally: "One of the offshoots and great strengths of the T-37 is the existence of a thriving owners' association. Formed in 1979, it has faithfully recorded owners' views, voyages, problems, and the alleviation of those problems. It has campaigned on behalf of owners and has been instrumental in achieving gradual improvement in the boat and its gear... This group must surely rank as one of the most effective owners' groups dedicated to the products of a single company."


Since active owners' associations, ongoing publicity, reviews, and documentation increase the value of any sailboat, the incentive to maintain the group is strong. The question about who will take over the leadership role for the next 12 years remains. Bill and Rockie Truxall have done a dynamite job on behalf of Tayana owners everywhere. 

CT 37 becomes the Tayana 37

DESIGNED TO COMPETE WITH THE POPULAR WESTSAIL 32, THE TAYANA 37 BEGAN LIFE as the CT 37. In the early 1970s, after Bob Perry designed the CT 54, he was asked to design a 37-foot Colin Archer-type double-ender. The builder was to be the firm of Ta Chaio Brothers in Taiwan, builders of CT yachts.

To their regret, no doubt, the Ta Chaio yard eventually decided that the new 37-foot design would not become a commercial success, so they gave the building rights to another, less well-known (but somehow related) yard called Ta Yang. Ta Yang built the boat first as a CT 37 in the mid-1970s and as a Tayana 37 by the late 1970s. "Ta Yang" is said to mean "big ocean" in Chinese. The "a" on the end gives it a possessive sense similar to belonging in or being of the big ocean.

Indeed, these boats have crossed many oceans and can be found in anchorages around the world. Reviewers comment favorably on the boat's sailing characteristics. John Kretschmer noted in *Sailing* in 1997, "While it is quite a stretch to call the 37's hull shape progressive, especially by today's standards, in many important ways it was quite different from the Westsail. Perry cut away the forefoot of the Tayana 37's long keel and included a shapely constellation rudder. The boat was proportionally lighter with a more moderate displacement and leaner bilges. These features, combined with a good-sized rig and a generous 861-square-foot sail area, translated into a rather nice sailing boat with surprising performance, especially upwind."

Add to that the boat's overall beauty on deck and belowdecks, and she's a winner everywhere she sails. 

Seaquestor was customized for Bill and Rockie Truxall according to their plans. The U-shaped galley, nav station, and upholstery fabric are in the same great shape they were in 1988 when she was delivered. The grate at the bottom of the companionway catches sand, making it easier to keep the sole clean.

Resources

Tayana Owners' Discussion list
tayana@list.sailnet.net

SailNet FTP site
<<ftp://ftp.sailnet.com/tayana>>

TOG Owners
<<http://www.TOGnews.com>>

John Hovan's Tayana website
<<http://www.tayanaowners.org>>

The Tayana 37ⁱⁿ perspective

by Ted Brewer

Comparing a classic bluewater cruiser with three rivals


THE BOB PERRY-DESIGNED TAYANA 37 HAS LONG BEEN CONSIDERED one of the classic bluewater cruisers in her size range, as have the other three yachts in this comparison. Certainly the Tayana has a lot going for her: husky displacement, generous sail area, a high comfort ratio, very low capsize factor, and reasonable draft, neither too deep nor too shoal. Many cruising sailors will favor her full-keel configuration over that of the moderate fin keel of the Crealock 37 although I, for one, feel that either configuration is quite acceptable for offshore cruising.

My only concerns about the Tayana would be for her modest ballast ratio and her deck-stepped mast. Her good draft helps allay fears about the ballast ratio to some degree, and the deck-stepped mast (though not my preference) is acceptable, provided the tube is adequately strong. A friend of mine, a retired USCG commander, has sailed all over the world in his Tayana 37, and I've never heard a word from him about any problems with either her stability or her rig.

The three double-enders in this comparison have, far and away, the heaviest displacement/length ratios. There is certainly nothing wrong with that for an oceangoing vessel as long as the sail area is commensurate with the displacement. The Hans Christian has a rather low sail area/displacement ratio, though, and, with her long waterline and full keel, would not be at her liveliest in a light breeze. She may not be the best choice for summer sailing on Long Island Sound, but she definitely appears to be eminently suitable for rounding Cape Horn or equally adventurous voyages.

The Crealock 37 appears a bit light on sail area also, when compared to the Tayana and the Island Packet, but her narrower beam, shorter waterline, and moderate fin keel eliminate a great deal of wetted surface so I expect she would perform quite well in our usual summer breezes. Indeed, if it came to an around-the-buoys race, the Crealock may well have a slight edge over her full-keel competition.

The Tayana and Hans Christian have it in spades when it comes to motion comfort, due to their generous displacement. They would be the boats of choice to ride out a gale, but the other two are still in a normal range for yachts of their size and should have no problems encountering the usual ocean swells.

Selecting one of these four yachts over the others will definitely come down to a personal choice. They all have unique advantages: the versatility of the Tayana, the huskiness of the Hans Christian, the performance of the Crealock and, not to be overlooked, the shoal draft of the Island Packet for the kind of coastal gunkhole cruising that so many of us love. It's your choice. 



Tayana 37



Crealock 38



Hans Christian 38T



Island Packet 38

	Tayana 37	Crealock 37	Hans Christian 38T	Island Packet 38
LOD*	36'8"	36'11"	37'11"	38'0" **
LWL	31'10"	27'9"	33'0"	33'0"
Beam	11'6"	10'10"	12'4"	12'8"
Draft	5'8"	5'6"	6'0"	5'0"
Displacement	24,000 lb	16,000 lb	26,500 lb	19,000 lb
Ballast	7,340 lb	6,200 lb	9,800 lb	7,600 lb
Beam/LWL ratio	0.36	0.39	0.374	0.384
Disp./LWL ratio	332.2	334.3	329.2	236.0
Bal./Displ. ratio	30.6%	38.8%	37%	40%
Sail area	864 sq ft	619 sq ft	791 sq ft	735 sq ft
SA/Displ. ratio	16.6	15.6	14.2	16.5
Capsize number	1.6	1.72	1.65	1.9
Comfort ratio	42.8	33.7	41.6	28.7

* LOD is Length on Deck and is used instead of LOA. All these yachts have bowsprits so LOD is more descriptive of the actual hull.
 ** LOA is given as 41 feet in some articles about the boat but appears to include the bowsprit. I've used an LOD of 38 feet for purposes of comparison.