

The Comets' Tale

*The Official
Newsletter of the*



March 2012

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The Comets' Tale is the official newsletter and record of the Ventura County Comets, AMA Chartered Club #173 and is published monthly at the Comets' Tale Plaza, somewhere in Ventura.

Editorial contributions are welcome.

**Next Meeting: 7:30 PM,
Thursday, 15 March, at the
Oak View Community Center**

From the Veep

Since George, his wife and dogs are driving across the country, I will try to fill his large shoes by writing up the President's News.

Last month's meeting was attended by the usual 22 plus members. We did see some old faces coming in to pay their dues.

Mention was made about the Condor's Club having a meeting about the possible loss of their field. Our members were urged to attend to give our support.

The April Float Fly is coming up soon. Our usual members have stepped up to do the CD chores, cooking, boat work and of course, Marilyn and Sandy selling the tickets to the raffle.

We need to make sure that we have a good group volunteering to launch and retrieve both Saturday and Sunday. We will be passing around a sign-up sheet at the meeting to get that covered.

I hope to get some updates from George as to how his trip is going and will share those at the meeting. Hope he's avoiding tornados!!!

Later,

V.P. Dale



**Coming
Up!**

Fri-Sun, 20, 21, 22

April

Comets Float Fly at Lake
Casitas

Friday is Comets only

Sunday, 25 March

Electric Fun Fly at
Condors Field in
Camarillo

First Sunday of each
Month

Open House at Santa
Paula Airport

Root's Rambling

Another month of trying to put something together. I hope everyone makes it to the next meeting. Our spring Float Fly is only six weeks away. It's time for planning.

Since I don't have much time to write this (we just got back from our annual family ski trip) I am going to cheat a little by using information from our early 2003 newsletters. I started writing this nonsense in January of 2003. I figure no one will remember what went on that far back.

I have been interested in model airplanes since I was 3 (1940). I started building stick models at age 9 and had successful flying ones two or three years later. I got into free flight competition at about age 14. I have competed in free flight, control line and radio control (including scale, pattern and racing). I built my radio from plans in Model Airplane News in 1953 (age 16).

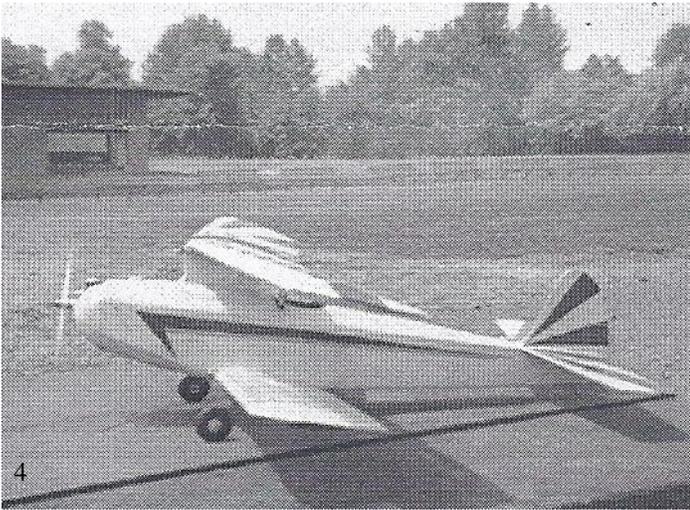
I built the 1/6 scale piper Cub shown in pictures 1 and 2 from a Berkley kit in about 1955. Berkley was a big kit company at that time. The Cub utilized an escapement for the rudder and another for the



two speed motor control. The engine was a K&B .19 or .32. I used both. It was capable of touch and goes but with no elevator I had little success off the water. I had this model for many years and finally sold it in about 1988.

The Live Wire Trainer in picture 3 is from the same era. Note the single channel transmitter in picture 1 and this picture. We had a lot of tubes and batteries in those days. Also note the equipment boxes in picture 3. The big one is similar to today but we don't see as many cigar boxes these days as we did those many years ago.





Picture 4 shows a 1/2A original biplane which I built in 1961. Control was from cascaded escapements (push button once and hold for right, two quick and hold for left, three for up and four for down). It was a favorite model but it succumbed to radio failure relatively quickly.

I got my first proportional radio in 1967 which was similar to what we fly today (with no computer). The radio cost 1/5 as much as the new car I bought that year! I started pylon racing shortly after that and continued until the early 80's. Since then I have stuck to sport models and trying to build scale models approaching (but not matching) the fidelity of some of the top models I see today. I will close with the following Laws of Aviation.

When a flight is proceeding incredibly well, something was forgotten.

— Robert Livingston, Flying the Aeronca

The only time an aircraft has too much fuel on board is when it's on fire.

— Sir Charles Kingford Smith, some time before his death in the 1920s

If you can't afford to do something right, then be darn sure you can afford to do it wrong.

— Charlie Nelson

The Cub is the safest airplane in the world; it can just barely kill you.

— Attributed to Max Stanley, Northrop test pilot

A pilot who doesn't have any fear probably isn't flying his plane to its maximum.

— Jon McBride, astronaut

If you're faced with a forced landing, fly the thing as far into the crash as possible.

— Bob Hoover

I am including three cartoons (6,7 & 8) that Jerry Deanda included in the early 2003 newsletters. I hope this cheers up the all the conservative sport pilots out there.



MINUTES of the FEBRUARY 2012 MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 by President George. We had 22 members present; no new members or guests.

There was a quick mention of the meeting (2/21) at the Camarillo University to discuss the Condor's flying club field. Did anyone go? If so give us a run-down of what was said.

The treasurer's report was approved. We have 50 members paid, 2 more that evening. Sign up folks we had almost 90 members last year. So if you are still in the area and want to fly, you know what to do.

Our Park Liaison was absent; however, what we do know is that the road to the field will be closed

Feb. 29 (Wednesday)

March 7 (Wednesday)

September 15 (Saturday)

October 26 (Friday)

Safety officer reported that the club will wait for warmer weather to fix cracks in the runway.

Old business:

This brings us to the on-going runway discussion:

- 1) A club member's contractor friend accessed the runway and offered a couple solutions
- 2) President George wrote the Lake and followed up with a meeting. This ended with the Lake telling the club that the lake will not give us money for repairs. However they (the Lake) did say that they will raise the priority on the access road repair
- 3) Grant writing – We don't qualify
- 4) AMA – There are grants, you have to apply a year in advance and they will grant up to 10%. Work must be completed within a year.

George's plan is to take this to the Comet's board in the future to discuss the options and develop a plan.

We must still be in good graces with the Lake as they are donating an annual pass for the Float Fly raffle - Thanks to them.

Lastly, bring out the fire extinguisher when you fly.

New Business:

An in-process FAA bill exempts aero modeling; stay tuned to see what the FAA will publish.

Prez. George is going on vacation...again. He will be gone for 3-months so the club will have to lean on Vice-Prez. Dale to lead us in his absence.

The Spring Float-Fly will be about 4-5 weeks away (April 21-22) when you read this. Bob Root will be the CD, and John Dugan will arrange the field set-up. Thanks in advance to those two. I am sure the usual suspects will be cooking, checking pilots in and selling tickets. So pitch in if you can or put some flying thing on floats and bring it out. Or just come to watch the fun and eat some BBQ. There are people there to help get a plane in the air or to just bench fly with.

April 1 the locks get changed on the gate. I am sure the new combo will be in the newsletter soon.

May 19th will be the all electric or small gas (>.15) fun-fly.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 just after some people won some raffle prizes.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alastair Brennan



MYSTERY PLANE!

OK, probably not much of a mystery here, but I thought I'd try to find Mystery Planes that are (were?) models and we're starting with an easy one, so Berny Hammer is not eligible for this one. Ken Marsh either. :-)

If you know what this model is, can you also identify the guy holding it? Extra points if you can identify the other man, on the left.

Check out that transmitter... a REAL early open stick Kraft. Can't see clearly enough to tell if this is a gimble stick transmitter or if it has the even earlier "two pots on a bit of extrusion" sticks. They look like open gimbals to me. My first radio was the PCS version of the same thing. Hey, at least it was old by the time I got it... makes me a little younger. Anyway, this thing must have been on 27 mHz, back before the Children's Band guys made the whole band unusable.

Hey Gang, this is kind of vague, but it's encouraging... the latest from AMA about FAA regulations for models:

President signs FAA bill, includes protection for model aviation

Last week, Congress passed the first FAA Reauthorization bill in more than four years. The Bill included a special provision for model aircraft protecting it from FAA regulations.

Signed last night by President Obama, the special provision in the Bill recognizes community-based safety programming as an effective means of managing the modeling activity. The model aircraft section establishes minimum criteria for safe aeromodeling operations and specifically directs the FAA to not enact rules for modeling activity conducted within the safety programming of a nationwide community-based organization.

The culmination of AMA's efforts over the past four years in achieving this recognition and obtaining the legislative safeguard is a great accomplishment for the aeromodeling community. This recognition will help with our continuing efforts with the FAA to improve safety in the national airspace.

Recognition is also due to the tens of thousands of AMA members who went the extra mile by writing their congressional leaders, making phone calls, and supporting the AMA with donations used for this campaign. Continue to monitor www.modelaircraft.org/gov for further details.