

# The Comets' Tale

*The Official  
Newsletter of the*



**April 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: **7:00 PM**,  
Thursday, 19 April, at the  
Oak View Community Center



**Coming  
Up!**

**Fri-Sun, 20, 21, 22**

**April**

Comets Float Fly at Lake  
Casitas

Friday is Comets only

**Saturday, 19 May**

Comets Electric, Small  
Gas Fun Fly and Lunch  
at Lake Casitas

First Sunday of each  
Month

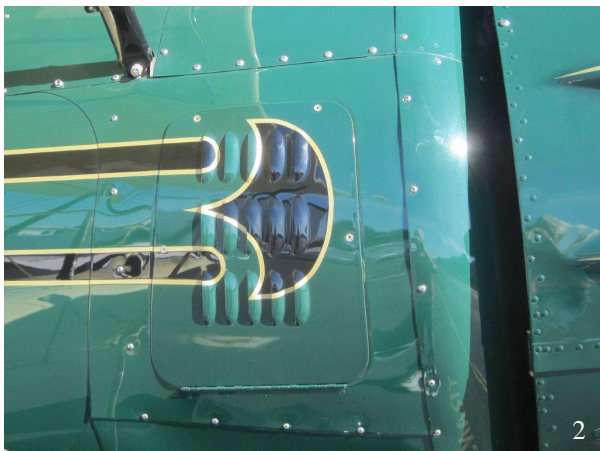
Open House at Santa  
Paula Airport

## **Root's Rambling**

This month I have a couple of examples of making model airplane parts from scratch. I have been building a six foot span 1/5 scale Waco YMF-5. TJ Moran gave me an old Pica kit he got from a friend in the Santa Barbara model club.

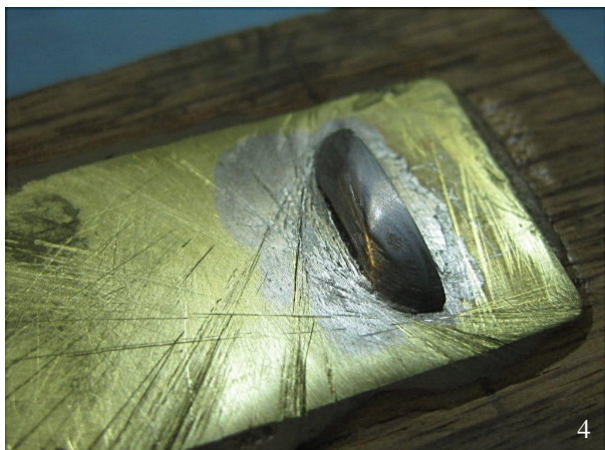
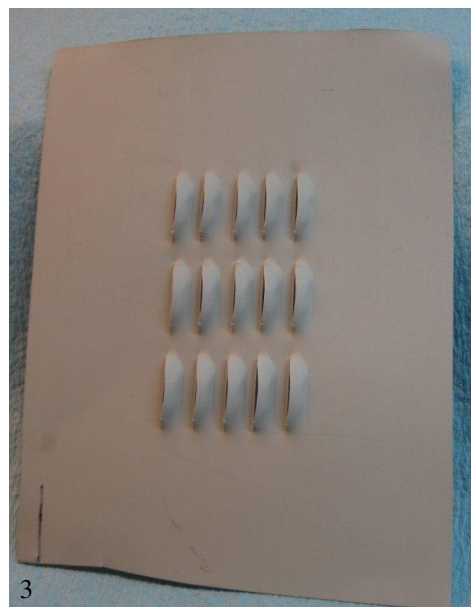
It is a very nice kit although I have replaced a lot of lite ply parts with balsa to save weight. I have been looking for a full scale paint scheme that might appeal to me. There are too many yellow, red, black, and white airplanes so I was looking for something different. The Santa Paula airport Open House held the first Sunday of every month seemed like a good place to start. Last month I found the Waco in picture 1. The owner had flown in from Long Beach. I took lots of pictures which isn't a good thing. Now I have all kinds of detail which should be included.



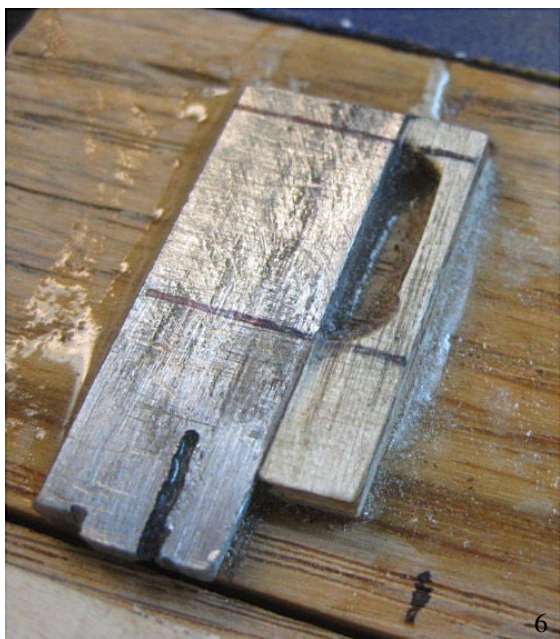
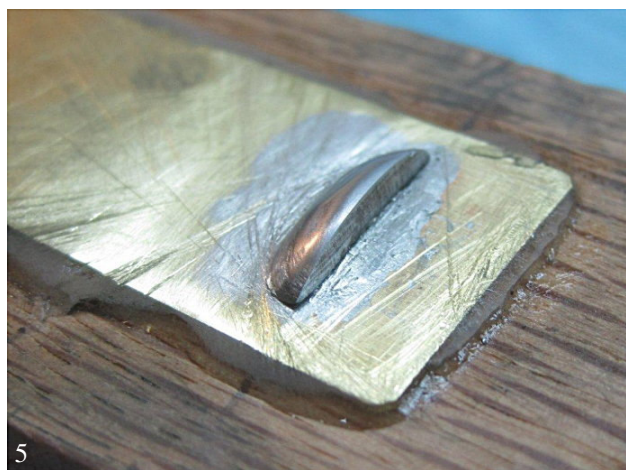


The louvers shown in picture 2 are a good example of ridiculous detail. Most Wacos don't have these and I don't know what their function is on this airplane. However, it seems like they are needed if I am going to scale this airplane.

After some head scratching I came up with a solution as shown in picture 3. These louvers were punched in lithoplate. Lithoplate is a very thin tempered aluminum which is used in the printing industry.



To achieve this I filed a punch out of mild steel, soldered it to a brass plate, and glued it to a stiff board as shown in pictures 4 and 5. I made a cutter out of the same material by filing a sharp edge/corner.

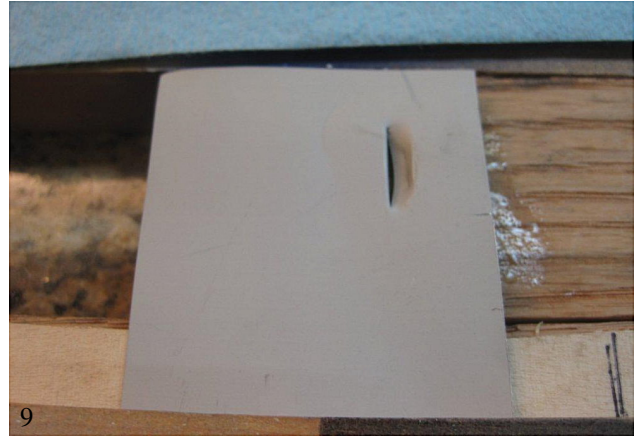


I glued this to another board as shown in picture 6. It can also be seen that I added a piece of plywood with a cut out just big enough for the louver to form. The two boards with the metal parts are hinged at the far end so that the punch and cutter stay aligned with each other. Picture 7 shows the cutting parts near each other.

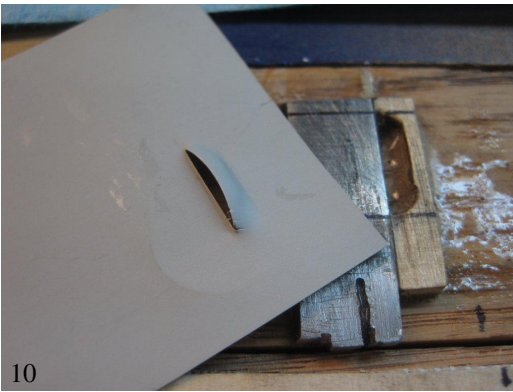




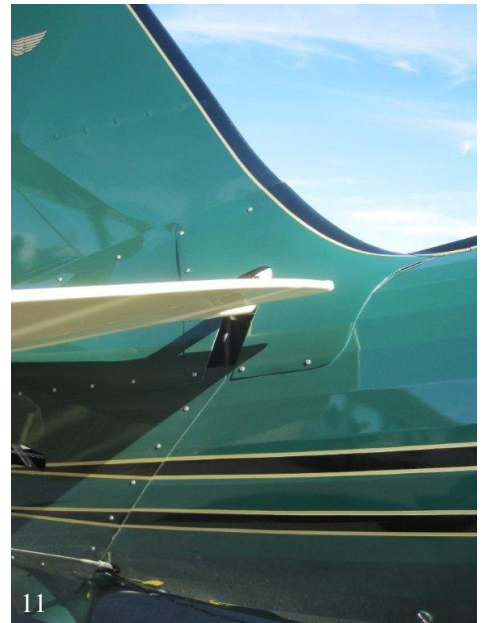
Picture 8 gives an overall view. I found that by dropping the punch from a certain height I could achieve consistent louvers.



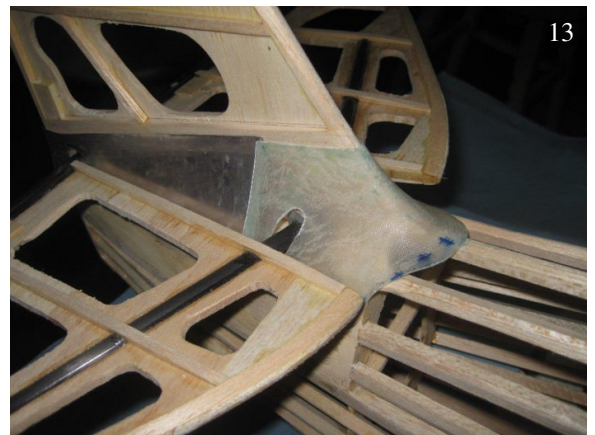
Pictures 9 and 10 show both sides of a single louver. The extra wood parts taped to the work bench in picture 8 were used to align the spacing between multiple louvers.



Another detail which became obvious from my pictures is that the entire horizontal tail moves for trim. This means there is a gap between it and the fuselage as shown in picture 11. I built the



stabilizer with two graphite spars (front and back) and no other structure in the middle. I also decided to form the fairing between the horizontal and vertical tails in the same manner as the full size as shown in pictures 12 and 13. The aft part of the fairing is lithoplate and the front part is made out of fiberglass. The fiberglass was laid up over a clay fairing which I formed in place to match my pictures of the full size. The horizontal has brackets at the center which allow it to be bolted to the fuselage. The tail area is so complicated I plan on covering and painting all the parts before I put them together.



*I hope everyone can come out to the Float Fly this weekend. We never have too much help and it is a lot of fun.*

*Bob Root*

## MINUTES of the FEBRUARY 2012 MEETING

Called to order at 7:29PM by V.P. Dale. We had 2 guests. One is soon to sign up as a member.

Correction to the minutes: We will not have the lock combination in this edition of the newsletter or any edition of the newsletter. The new combo is on the back of your 2012 membership card. You don't have a membership card??? Hmmmm, I am sure you know how to correct that. The locks will be changed April 1st.

Treasurer TJ Moran gave us a report. He reviewed the expenses of AMA club dues and Float Fly fees. Comets membership is at 60.

There was no Safety or Field Marshall in attendance. We will expect a 2-month report from both of them next time.

### Old Business

The FAA bill has moved forward and there was an exemption for modelers.

### New Business

Mark your calendars:

Campsite G-O will be occupied Aug 31st through Sep 3rd. This means the field will be unobtainable – **No flying** those days. There will be campers around the flying field, like we do when we have a Float Fly. We need to think about controlling parking on the runway/taxiways.

April 14th Saturday – Frisbee golf tournament. The field should be open, but there most likely will be golfers around

June 26th Tuesday – Frisbee golf tournament.

May 19th – Electric Fun Fly and small gas, and lunch

The Float Fly is next month. Get the planes ready or come by and help out. We have a few of the regulars signed up for the hard work. George Lanquist will bring his boat to rescue planes. Your favorite brothers will be cooking. John Dugan will be the set-up guy and coordinator with the Lake. Bob Root will be the CD, and Steve Billings will be the Line Boss.

Thanks in advance to these guys.

If you are not flying, come out and help with transmitter impound and launch/recovery. Last time we could have used a few more helpers.

Plane Inspection:

That's right, if you are planning on flying, wipe the plane down and prepare it for the usual inspection. Remind your friends from other clubs. And get there early. We are paying to have a ranger inspect planes for couple in the morning only:

**Friday: 8:00-10:00**

**Saturday: 7:30-10:00**

**Sunday: 7:30-9:30**

**Note this is a limited time free offer. After these times you will have to pay for inspection - \$12.50**

We have a new Swag committee. Club T-shirt and sweatshirts are being ordered. Pricing is still being worked out, but the samples at the meeting looked great. T-shirts will be available for sale at the float fly. Buy one and prove to your cronies that you were there. Marilyn and Sandy are the contacts for these.

**Earlier meeting time next month.**

The April meeting will start earlier, 7:00 and will be quick as the Float Fly kicks off the next morning. Stop by for last minute details and/or to let the club know you will be available to help.

The meeting wrapped up with the usual raffle. And we adjourned at 8:17.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Alastair Brennan*



**MYSTERY PLANE!**

I got a few responses on this one. Dan Elsasser, Bob Root, Berny Hammer and a few others recognized the airplane right away, and the guy holding it, too. OK, it WAS a pretty easy one, especially since this airplane is still available as an ARF kit. If you didn't already know, it's the famous Kwik-Fli Mk. III. Phil Kraft was one of the most important pioneers in digital proportional control which has become so good we all take it for granted now. He designed both the airplane and the radio in this shot. I'm pretty sure that's a K&B or Veco .61 in the nose. Note that there's no muffler on it.

The guy on the left is believed to be Bill Northrop.

Kraft designed the Ugly Stik, which has been copied by dozens of kitmakers.

He got interested in full scale aerobatics and competed in a Pitts, then he designed and built the Super Fli, a very attractive full scale airplane for aerobatic competition. Unfortunately, it was pretty heavy and never did well.

He was a very nice man, very approachable and friendly. I met him at an aerobatic contest at Borrego Springs once. He was flying a Marchetti SF-260 with Steve Brown. He didn't do as well as Steve, but seemed to be having a good time. He died in 2006, and his death was a huge loss.

*Jerry 'kid' Deanda*