



Founded in 1962 AMA Club #154

January 2021



Flying Flea
by M@rk Melvin

A photograph showing several people from behind, standing on a paved path next to a wire fence. In the background, there's a hillside covered in green and yellow vegetation. The scene is bright and sunny.

Table Of Contents

Presidents Message	3
The Flying Flea	5
In The Shop	7
2020 Club Calendar	10
Club Christmas Donation	11
Some Flea Pictures	11
Model of the Month	12



Gilbert Lucero

President

Presidents Message

Gilbert Lucero

KEN MEAD FIELD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Dear SGVRCL Members,

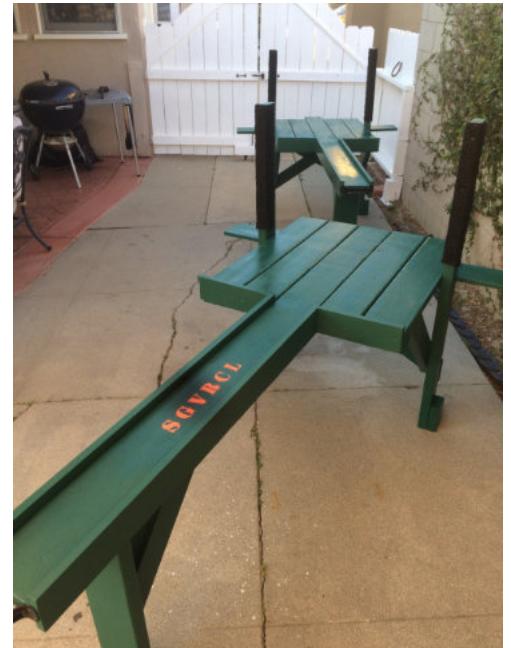
I hope you and your families are well and safe through this Covid 19 pandemic. I am pleased to see people taking precaution's in respecting one another's boundaries by wearing masks and by trying to maintain a safe distance. I also see people sanitizing their hands frequently by using the hand sanitizer our Club has been providing.

Other improvements we have recently made to help increase safety measures at Ken Mead Field are the New Heli pad and walk way, airplane start up stands. We've also completed the striping on the North, and South taxi ways plus the striping for taxi exit area on runway.

I am very proud of the improvements we have made at our flying field. Even more proud of the unselfish Club members that helped make improvements possible. There were a few Club member's that went above and beyond any normal efforts.

I would like to give Mr. Rick Tyree a big thank you for his hard work, time, and his great craftsmanship! Rick scratch built both airplane start-up stands. He took the time to procure all the necessary material. Rick also cut all the wood, assembled both stands, weather proofed wood, and painted the stands Club green. Also note he made one of the stands portable and slightly smaller for our Club races. A lot of time and effort went into making both stands. Please thank Rick the next time you see him at field.

I would also like to give a special thanks to Mr. Paul Timpano for helping Mr. Tyree transport and set up airplane start up stands at flying field. Paul also picked up all the paver's, and sand for Heli pad, and Heli pad walk way. I appreciate Paul for always making himself available whenever the Club needs his services. Mr. Timpano has been a long-time loyal member to our Club.



I would like to thank Mr. John Phan for making himself available and for letting us use his meticulous craftsmanship in laying out the paver's for Heli pad, and Heli pad walk way. He did a beautiful job laying out the paver's in a professional manner. We could have not done the job as well as it came out without him. Thank you John! I would also like to thank Glenn Branch, Victor Ordaz, Mark Grant, Vince Aronica, Gary Westerfield, Steve Lee, Steve Arathuzik, Jerry Unbano, and Mr. Huezos.

I would also like to acknowledge the striping crew. A special thanks to Marty Wittenberg for doing the majority of the striping on runway, and taxi ways. Thank to Glenn Branch, Robert King, Vince Aronica, and Freddy for helping prepare and set up area for striping.

I would like to acknowledge and give a very big gesture of my appreciation to Mr. Glenn Branch for always making himself available for any, and all maintenance projects at our flying field. He travels to Ken Mead Field 3 to 4 times a week. Each round trip is about 80 miles for him. Glenn arrives early each morning to see what needs attention at our flying field. Whether weeds need to be cut, or gofer holes need to be leveled so we don't trip over them. He is constantly blowing down pit area, taxi ways, and even the runway as needed. He is a great example to us all! Glenn, really helped me at end of 2020 when I needed to tend to personal, and family affairs. He stood in my place and took on his responsibilities, and as well as mine. He maintained all necessary club business as well as, keeping park staff and SGVRCL member's well informed of all relevant club related updates, and business. He also took charge of scheduling, and facilitating Zoom club meetings. Please make sure to thank Glenn next time you see him.

Please thank all these special Club members next time you see them at our Field.

Gilbert Lucero, President
San Gabriel Radio Control League
Whittier Narrows Recreational Park
Ken Mead Field





Mark Melvin

Curator of
The Flea!

The Flying Flea

"It Flies!"

Here's the link to the Flying Flea video edited by Wayne Thomas. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l74pYdd7fzc>

The story goes like this..

I came across this plane's plans in an old Radio Control Modeler magazine in the early 1980's I loved the uniqueness of its design and started thinking of how to build one. I told everyone in the club about it and always said, next year I'll do it. It kinda became a joke and I was asked about it often. I never gave up hope and finally in the early 1990's construction started on it. It was too complex for me alone so I got help from others, such as Ken who built the beautiful wings (a shame to cover them), Ed Hattrip to build the motor mount, and myself built the body. Tom Crowley helped paint the beast at the end.

Finally finished, only a few days before leaving for the 1990 Las Vegas QSA event, we gathered at the field for a test flight. That's where the video listed above starts. It ended poorly, with a bashed in nose.

Tom had me bring the plane over to his house to repair it and we worked on it over 12 hours into the wee hours of the night to return it to flight readiness. We added 2 pounds of lead to the nose to help with the balance, which we thought was a problem on the initial test flight.

A second test flight was attempted on the next day. The plane sustained additional light damage, and again Tom and I worked on it into the wee hours of the morning, adding yet one more pound of lead into the nose.

The next day everyone from the club left for Vegas to participate in a RC Marathon event, and I stayed home to finish the repairs.

I arrived in Vegas after the others and the next flight attempt was made on Friday. After a momentary lift off from the ground Ken sat it down, not feeling good about it at the time.

Because there were so many planes on the flight line waiting to fly we only got one try at a flight on Friday. Saturday was going to be our only other attempt because Sunday is typically used for heading home.

So we pushed the plane out to the flight line, fired up the engine and started our take-off roll. Unbelievably the Flea rose up off the desert floor, its wings eagerly lifting the balsa and spruce wood contraption, the engine growling as it pulled the plane forward. The crowd behind us could be heard cheering and whistling, having witnessed the fact that, The Flea Finally Flew.

Over the following years the plane sustained minor damage from hard

landings, requiring repairs. It seems the balance of the aircraft changed slightly from the repairs and a bad flight characteristic of the full size Flying Flea appeared in future flights. It would suddenly tuck down or nose down with no warning into an inverted attitude, and the only recovery possible would be to roll out of it--if you had enough altitude. I remember one flight at the field when it did one of these tuck maneuvers on me and when I recovered out of it the plane dipped behind one of the big trees to the south along the stream. The plane re-appeared from behind the tree and I gingerly guided it back towards me for an uneventful landing. The plane has since then flown at the Castle AFB Flying Event many years ago. I'm afraid the next flight will be the last flight and I'd hate to lose it after 30 years.

Here's the Flea at the 2005 Castle AFB Fly-In. It was fun to watch people walk past much more beautiful aircraft and head straight to my Flea to find out what it was. "Oh it's so cute," was the usual comment.

Also as I watch the video at the first link, I see many old friends who are not with us today.

Tom Crowley
Ed Hatrip
Larry Moriarty
Yoshio Shida
Bill O'Belmito
Paul Irish (voice in video at QSAA event)

Here's another link to watch. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzBwGIKjegs&t=5978s>

It's a video taken in the first few years at the QSAA Fly-In in the early 1980's. At the Showboat Hotel on Thursday Ken and Frank Motley went table to table in the static display hall and recorded the planes on display. On Friday the footage shifts to the dry lake bed for flying..

The QSAA event was huge. Hundreds of motor homes, hundreds of vendors, thousands of cars, 200 giant scale RC aircraft. But towards the early 1990's there were many bad years in a row of bad weather, either rain or heavy wind, and it was over.

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Robert King

Newsletter/Webmaster

In The Shop

Robert King

Hello Everybody!

Hope this finds you all well. I'm enjoying the lockdown so much I wish I could do it every day! Oh wait...

A lot going on keeping myself busy. Besides I can only "Netflix and chill" for so long. They ran out of aviation movies!

Finally got my UFO balsa kit, ugly stick short kit, and a quikv7 balsa kit for pylon racing. Since pylon racing is pretty much not happening for a while that one has been put on the back burner. Started on the ugly stick and got most of the fuselage built. Was waiting on some fuel tanks and parts to arrive to finish it. It is just basic parts that came with it. So got started on the UFO.



It's a lasercut kit and very well done. Almost too easy! But....you have to pay attention and fit parts before you glue. It's easy to box yourself out. I'm glad I waited to install the fuel tank. Most wouldn't fit. This is designed for both electric and nitro. I'm doing nitro of course!



Got the vertical stab and rudder done and sheeted. Working on the horizontal stab next.



I finally got my Spot-On with the YS 1.20 finished. Been sitting around so long didn't even think it was going to start. Put it on the plane stand at the field, fueled it up and put the starter to it.....well what do you know the damn thing started right away! Hardly needed any tuning and ran like a champ. Took it back home to take off the cowl and check everything in preparation for the maiden.

Maiden day came. Fixed various problems like the onboard glow starter (which is awesome!) wasn't working, aileron wasn't glued on etc. You know the usual. One thing I tried to make sure was all good was the covering. Whatever kind was used I was constantly shrinking it, taping it, heating it, and using clear nail polish on it. So here comes my take off....engine running great! Gets about 10ft in the air and a big chunk of covering flew off! Ugh! Well flew it for a bit without much issue. Landed a little hot and damaged the wheel pants but fixed and have flown it about 4 times now. Really like it. Put on a larger prop and my last landing was a perfect 10! I judged it myself so trust me!

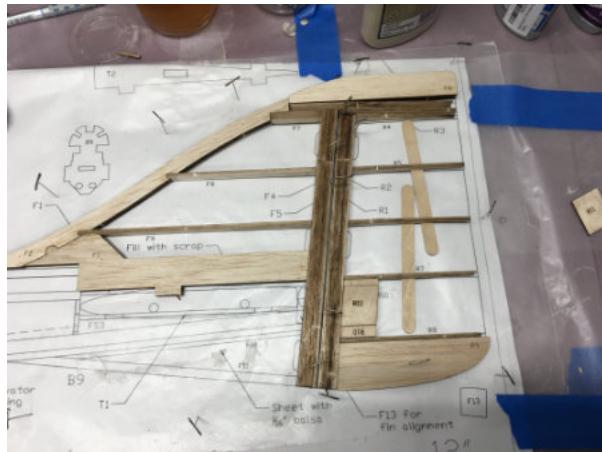
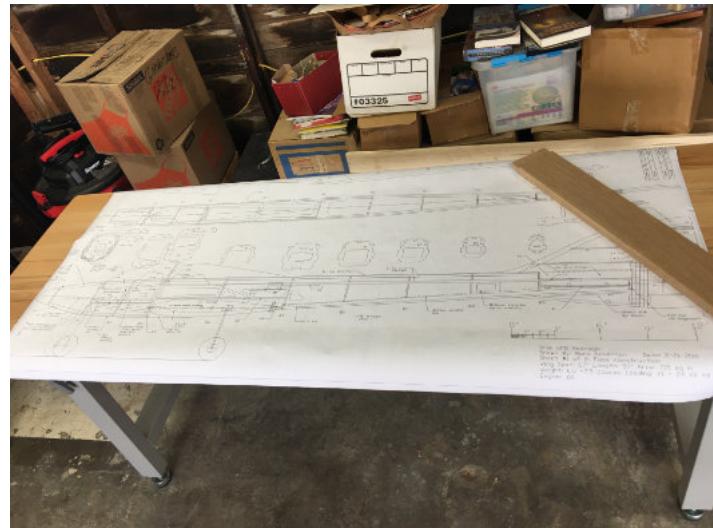
Been an interesting last year. My father Larry passed away in October. Had just saw him a month before and he was climbing ladders working on our cabin up in Washington. Some of you may remember him as he would come to the club meetings or AMA show when he was visiting. I even tricked him once and had Ken teach him how to fly on a buddy box. I would never have been into model airplanes if it wasn't for him. I still remember running through a field trying to hand launch one of his planes that must have weighed a ton. Really a tough one for me. All I can say is hug your loved ones, call them, visit them while you can because tomorrow may not be what you expect. I'm glad I followed my own advice for once.

Well that's about it I hope you are all doing well and if you have ANY articles or even pictures of any projects you are working on PLEASE send them to me and I will put in the newsletter or website. Email to kingconsulting@mac.com.

Until next time.....What's going on in YOUR shop?

Robert King





2020 Club Calendar



SAN GABRIEL VALLEY RADIO CONTROL LEAGUE CALENDAR - 2021

Date	Time	Event	Location	Contact/CD
January				
26th	6:00PM	SGVRCL General Meeting	Zoom Link Below	Gilbert Lucero
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87181731693?pwd=REZWbDRud2hsTE82U3FLYzRWRFVUdz09				
Schedule May Change. Any updates are online at www.sgvrci.org Questions? Email: webmaster@sgvrci.org				

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87181731693?pwd=REZWbDRud2hsTE82U3FLYzRWRFVUdz09>



Club Christmas Donation

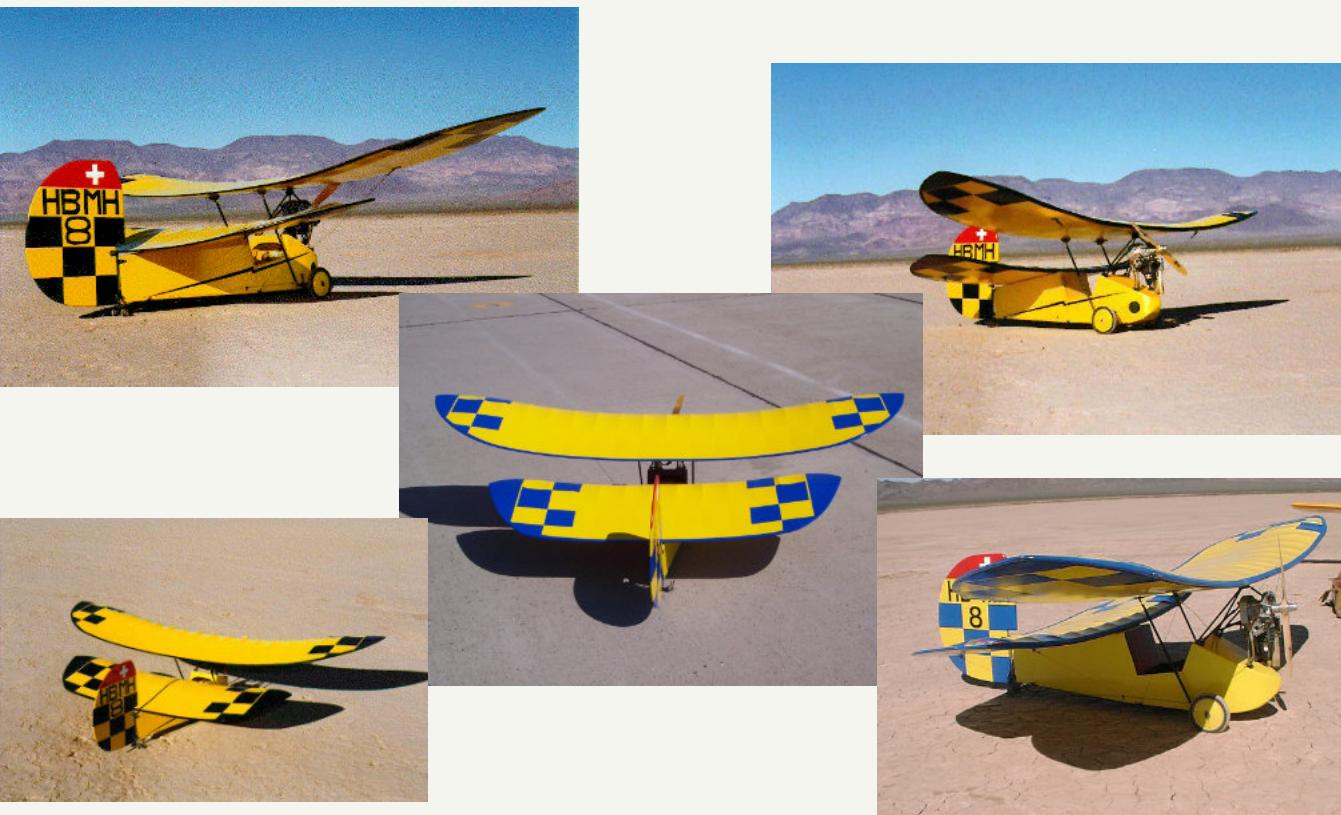


Due to....well you know we couldn't gather for Toys for Kids in December this year. The board decided to raise money for needy families at Newton Middle School in Hacienda Heights. Rick Tyree informed us of this need due to many losing their jobs and not able to work that attend the school he works at.

Thanks to all of you and the club we raised \$1800! A check was made to the school PTA who distributed local grocery gift cards to those who need them. The PTA matched what we raised so the total was \$3600!

Very proud of all of you who came together to make this happen. You all made a difference.

Some Flea Pictures



MODEL OF THE MONTH

*Show off your model you are working on at the
next Zoom Club Meeting!*



