



## MAYOCRAFT P-26 'TRIBUTE'

Mayocraft, designer and builder of the "P-26 tribute" has successfully completed a rigorous regime of flight testing at Fitchburg Municipal Airport in Massachusetts, with professional test pilot Dave Morss at the controls.

Although not an exact copy, the Mayocraft Sportsman is generally patterned after the P-26 'Peashooter,' of which only two originals survive. "We tried to be faithful not only to the overall appearance of the P-26, but also to

most of the fabrication methods typical of the time of its manufacture" relates Nathan Mayo.

The aircraft's all-metal construction was been carefully formed and shaped by hand tools in many complex compound curves by Mayo in his shop, which is in essence a small aircraft factory with tools, technology and expertise straight out of the mid-1930's. The aircraft has about one-half a million parts, most of which had to be machined and fabricated from raw metal, with a few cleverly adapted from existing aircraft parts. "In many cases we had three jobs to do for each piece. First, we had to devise methods to make the production tool, jig or fixture. Then we had to actually use

those methods to make it. And then in turn, use the tooling or forms to make the final part we needed."

Also confronting Mayo was the task of designing the aircraft. "Because this is not an exact copy, we had to develop several hundred plans on our own for the various parts, structures and subassemblies, as well as address many aerodynamic design issues. For safety and performance's sake we made selected improvements. The main landing gear wheels and brakes are adapted from a Cessna T-50. The engine exhaust is made from a stainless steel alloy specially formulated for aerospace applications. In place of metal we formed fiberglass for a very few non-structural elements. We used a different airfoil shape to the wing that makes the bird a little easier to fly and land than the original"

Flight testing commenced in late autumn 2007 and was completed by mid January 2008 following testing in all major flight modes.

The team can now look forward to some leisurely flying, although for how long is uncertain, as there are already interested parties looking to take it off Mayo's hands.

**Thanks to Nathan Mayo and Alexander Roca**