

# The Bayport Aerodrome Society

By Bob Mott, Museum Director, Bayport Aerodrome Society

Long Island has long been known as the cradle of aviation history, with many aeronautical firsts occurring here since the Wright Brothers first took to the air in 1903. The Bayport Aerodrome in the Town of Islip has beaten the odds to survive as a throwback to those grass airfields of aviation's golden age.

Originally known as Davis Field it was hacked out of the Long Island Pine Barrens in the years just after WWII by Blue Point house mover and former Civil Air Patrol pilot Curtis Davis. After almost 30 years as a private commercial airport it was fated to go under the developer's axe until it was miraculously saved by a local community of passionate vintage aviation buffs. They were led by John G. Rae, a local Bayport construction contractor, who formed an ad-hoc committee in 1975 that became known as the Bayport Aerodrome Society.



The Bayport Aerodrome Society, in conjunction with officials in the Town of Islip, worked together to save the field. It was purchased by the Town in 1978 with federal, state, and local funds and officially renamed the Bayport Aerodrome in 1980. With the blessing of the Town the BAS raised the funds to have 24 hangars built on the property. By 1990 it housed its member's collection of vintage and classic flying airplanes and restoration projects.

For the last 28 years the Society has also been hosting various events like its annual Neighborhood Appreciation Picnic, pancake breakfasts, vintage car shows, etc., for the public, as well as being a resource for local schools and education groups like the Suffolk Aviation Academy, Boy Scouts, and the Civil Air Patrol. The Society also performs ceremonial fly-overs for local events, funerals, and shows all over Long Island even performing in last year's Jones Beach Air Show alongside the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds.

The Aerodrome is a public use turf airport open year round, where the Society is open to visitors every Sunday from May until November from 10:00am to 4:00pm, weather permitting. For more information see the Society's website at [www.Bayportaerodromesociety.org](http://www.Bayportaerodromesociety.org) and you can also find them on Facebook.



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