

# Bamberg County Airport Dedicates Tobul Field in Memory of Longtime Local Businessman Joseph “Joe” Tobul

**Bamberg County Airport** hosted a dedication ceremony on March 22 to officially name the airport’s airfield (runway and maintenance area) Tobul Field in memory of longtime Bamberg County businessman Joseph “Joe” Tobul, and to honor the Tobul family. The airport opened in October of 1982.

Joe Tobul, CEO of Tobul Accumulators, selected the City of Bamberg to locate his plant in 1987 and later constructed a hangar at the airport. Flying a vintage F4U-Corsair called *Korean War Hero*, Tobul died when his aircraft crashed at an airshow on Nov. 10, 2002.

“Ultimately, it was his leadership and his influence through the many years in maintaining airport facilities that contributed to the airport’s success,” said Joey R. Preston, Bamberg County Administrator, who officiated the ceremony. “Joe Tobul and especially his son, Jim, also played a significant role in restoring and preserving several World War II aircraft.”

Several hundred people, including state and local dignitaries,

attended the ceremony.\*

Dr. Prince Brown, chairman of Bamberg County County Council, welcomed everyone.



A monument to Tobul Field, honoring Joseph “Joe” Tobul, was unveiled.

The Tobul family received a signed copy of the resolution dedicating the airfield in honor of the Tobul family, and framed copies of the original construction of the airport and the facility’s current master plan.

Maj. Gen. Van McCarty, Adjutant General, S.C. Military Department, presented Jim Tobul a flight jacket and a Bamberg County Airport challenge coin.

## Bamberg County Airport

Bamberg County Airport, which occupies 94-acres, has 3,603-foot-long, 60-foot-wide asphalt paved runway.



For the dedication ceremony, guests were seated inside a hangar. Dignitaries, including Bamberg County Council, sat on a stage facing the audience inside.

The airport's development has helped the county economic efforts. In fact, use of the airport has increased dramatically in recent years.

Forty aircraft arrived and departed the airport during 2015. Seven hundred aircraft arrived and departed the airport over a 12 month period ending on July 29, 2022.

Since Bamberg County Airport opened 40 years ago:

- Hangars and FBO buildings have been renovated, and new signage has been added.
- A modern lounge for pilots has been added to the airport terminal that features shower facilities, refreshments, a conference room capable of seating 20, video conferencing capabilities, and internet access.
- Thirty-five acres of trees have been removed, and property has been repurposed and leased to ensure agricultural control for the airport's operation.
- A new security monitoring system has been installed, and a new Foreign Object Debris/Runway Safety program has been established.

- A 24-hour Avgas self-service fueling system, has been added that provides the region's least-expensive fuel (guaranteed through AirNav).



**Jim Tobul, son of the late Joe Tobul, speaks after he and his mother, Nancy, unveil the monument dedicated to the late Joe Tobul.**

- Fixed Base Operator with the airport to offer charter services.
- Recently, Bamberg County has reduced the property tax on aircraft from 10.5 percent to 4 percent to help the airport grow, the lowest tax rate for aircraft within 50 miles.

“It’s exciting to see all the improvements and the growing interest in our county airport,” said Spencer Donaldson, chairman of the Bamberg County Council. “Of course, all of this would not be possible without the many decades of investment the Tobul family made in our airport and in our community, providing great employment opportunities for residents at Tobul Accumulators. It’s only fitting that we dedicate our airfield in their honor.”



*\*Among the dignitaries participating in the dedication ceremony were:*

*Dr. Willie Todd, President, Denmark Technical College; James Stephens, executive director, S.C. Aeronautics Commission; Terry Connorton, President, S.C. Aviation Association; Chuck Bundy, manager, Key Accounts & Special Projects, S.C. Department of Commerce; John Gibson, managing member, The Vireo Group; and Maj. Gen. Van McCarty, Adjutant General, S.C. Military Department; Rep. Justin Bamberg, House District 90; and Dr. James Clark, president, S.C. State University.*

*The following Bamberg County council members also participated: Council Chairman Spencer Donaldson; Council Vice Chairman, Dr. Jonathan Goodman II; and Council Members Phil Myers Jr., Sharon Hamond, Larry Haynes, Evert Comer Jr.; and Clint Carter.*



**Standing in front of Jim Tobul's vintage F4U-Corsair are: (left to right) Rob and Elaine Walter; Penelope Stillinger; Sean Tobul; Joanna Register; Jimmy Tobul; Shelley and husband, Jim Tobul; Nancy Tobul, wife of the late Joe Tobul; Julie Quillen and Christina Stillinger.**