



JFK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LUNCHEON

Keynote Speaker

DAVID TAIT

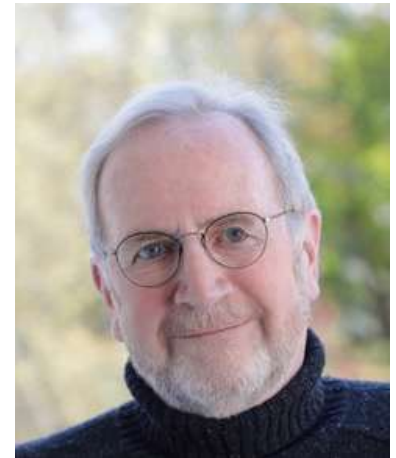
**Co-Founder/Director BermudAir
Co-Founder/EVP Autism Double-Checked**

Thursday, June 25, 2026

2:00pm – 6:00pm

Cradle of Aviation

Charles Lindbergh Blvd, Garden City, NY 11530



Scottish-born David Tait began his aviation career with the Thompson/Britannia group, working in Spain, Greece, the USSR and Cyprus. Tait then moved to Toronto to join Wardair Canada. Within two years the iconic Sir Freddie Laker hired him to help launch Laker Airways' UK-bound charter flights in Canada, and later his 'Skytrain Scheduled Service' from the USA. Laker was forced to shut down in early 1982 – paradoxically largely due to its success – then, in December 1983, Freddie volunteered Tait's name to one Richard Branson as someone who could assist the young British music industry entrepreneur with his “crazy notion” (Freddie's description) of starting a new transatlantic airline. It took a two-hour meeting on Branson's London houseboat for Tait to be sufficiently intrigued to sign on and, as one of the first two employees, co-found what became Virgin Atlantic Airways. Incredibly it took just six months for the 'notion' to become a reality. Starting with a single Boeing 747-200B, from its first flight in June of 1984, as EVP, and executive director, Tait would spend the next 20 years in New York City running the Americas and growing the 'against all odds' startup to a \$3 billion, critically acclaimed, market-leading airline.

After 9-11 Tait left to pursue other interests that would include, co-founding Autism Double-Checked (autismchecked.com) an online training platform for autism awareness in the travel industry. Most recently he co-founded Bermuda-based BermudAir, a boutique carrier that commenced scheduled air services to the USA and Canada in September 2023.

In May 2001, at Buckingham Palace, Queen Elizabeth II awarded Tait an OBE (Officer of the Order of The British Empire) in recognition of his, “Services to British aviation in the USA.”.

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