

# MACH 2

Concorde magazine



News from Filton

*Alpha Fox has  
a new home*

Concorde and  
the Vulcan

*A shared history*



Issue 8  
February 2017

# INTRODUCTION

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*In this issue we focus on the great news about Concorde G-BOAF (Alpha Fox). After 14 years standing on the airfield at Filton, this week she was moved into a purpose-built hangar where she will be displayed as part of the new Aerospace Bristol heritage centre, which commemorates more than a century of aeronautical and technological developments at Filton.*

*We are also delighted to include a piece from the Vulcan to the Sky group, in which Ian Homer looks at the surprisingly close historical connection between Concorde and the Vulcan – two icons of British aviation.*

*In addition we include an article from regular contributor Christopher Orlebar, in which he describes the somewhat unusual beginning of Concorde's long association with Manchester airport.*

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Cover image: Concorde G-BOAF comes in to land on her final flight to Filton.

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# CONCORDE: AN APPRECIATION

*"Once you have tasted flight, you will forever walk the Earth with your eyes turned skyward, for there you have been, and there you will always long to return." – Leonardo da Vinci*

If you were to insert, after the first comma of the quote above, "[in Concorde]", that would accurately sum up the feeling and emotional devotion that Concorde engendered.

Some 2.5 million passengers enjoyed this experience during Concorde's 27 years in service, with many people becoming frequent flyers. It became almost an exclusive 'club', with the flight crew making friends with the clientele, and vice-versa. In addition, Con-

corde won the hearts of airshow spectators and even casual onlookers; all over the world, heads turned and hearts lifted to see this glorious bird in flight.

## **Power and beauty**

Concorde G-BOAF overflies Filton airfield at 2,000 ft before coming in to land for the very last time on 26 November 2003.

*Photo: Adrian Pingstone / Wikimedia Commons*



*"Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth,  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds ..."*

*High Flight, John Gillespie Magee, Jr.*





## First visit to Manchester

*Christopher Orlebar, former Concorde pilot with British Airways*

*Concorde was a frequent visitor to Manchester – and in recognition of this association, G-BOAC is now on display there. Christopher Orlebar recalls the first ever landing by a Concorde at this airport, right at the start of Concorde services.*

On 23 December 1976, after 11 months in commercial service, Concorde – returning to Heathrow (LHR) from Bahrain – visited Manchester for, what I believe, was the first time.

This was not a pre-planned official visit with pomp and ceremony, but a diversion. Looking in my log book, I had noted this was “due to delays and fog at LHR”. At low

speed Concorde used quantities of fuel; ten times as much per mile on final approach than at the latter end of the supersonic cruise. Entering the hold at 210 knots would have allowed us about 5 minutes holding before having to make an approach to Heathrow or diverting to Gatwick. Both airfields were close to limits in terms of visibility. Following a ‘go around’ we would

have been forced to commit to land on the next attempt, declaring an emergency due to the low fuel state.

Instead we diverted at altitude to a fog-free Manchester. There the mayor and his entourage expressed a desire to visit Concorde with a ceremonial greeting. Whilst the captain was involved with that, he asked me to calculate whether any passengers had to be moved to cor-

| Date.       | AIRCRAFT. |           |          | Holder's Operating Capacity. | Journey or Nature of Flight. |             |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
|             | Type.     | Markings. | Captain. |                              | From                         | To          |
| 3 Dec 1976  | Concorde  | GBOAD     | Calvert  | P <sub>2</sub>               | Fairford                     | London.     |
| 6 Dec 1976  | "         | "         | "        | P <sub>1(s)</sub>            | Fairford                     | local       |
| 8 Dec 1976  | "         | GBOAB     | Moley    | P <sub>2</sub>               | London                       | Bahrain     |
| 9 Dec 1976  | "         | GBOAB     | "        | P <sub>1(s)</sub>            | Bahrain                      | London.     |
| 14 Dec 1976 | "         | GBOAD     | Meadows  | P <sub>1(s)</sub>            | London                       | Washington. |
| 15 Dec 1976 | "         | GBOAD     | "        | P <sub>2</sub>               | Washington                   | London.     |
| 22 Dec 1976 | "         | GBOAA     | Todd     | P <sub>1(s)</sub>            | London                       | Bahrain.    |
| 23 Dec 1976 | "         | "         | "        | P <sub>2</sub>               | Bahrain                      | Manchester  |
| 23 Dec 1976 | "         | "         | "        | P <sub>2</sub>               | Manchester.                  | London.     |
| 1 Jan 1977  | "         | GBOAC     | Calvert  | P <sub>2</sub>               | London                       | Washington. |
| 2 Jan 1977  | "         | "         | "        | P <sub>1(s)</sub>            | Washington.                  | London.     |
| 6 Jan 1977  | "         | GBOAD     | Allen.   | P <sub>1(s)</sub>            | London                       | Washington. |



rect the centre of gravity. I looked at the graphs and decided to re-seat some. An announcement was made and movement commenced. The laughter that ensued, when I admitted my error, could be clearly heard on the flight deck.

Two hours later, with the passengers in their original seats, we returned to Heathrow. They had had the pleasure of two take-offs in Concorde for the deficit of taking the same time as a subsonic flight to London.



### Flight records

These pages from Captain Orlebar's log book for that time show the diverted flight, made by Concorde G-BOAA, with Norman Todd as Captain. The diversion is shown by the red outlines. Source: Christopher Orlebar

### Concorde G-BOAA

Alpha Alpha was the first British Concorde to enter commercial service. She is seen here at Heathrow in July 1977, a few months after her inaugural flight to Manchester.

Photo © Jon Proctor / Wikimedia Commons

| 701:40    |         | Concorde hours = 189:00 |         |                   |                 | TOTALS                             |                  | 2649:45 |
|-----------|---------|-------------------------|---------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|------------------|---------|
| 494:40    |         | 1293:30                 | 207:00  | 654:35            | Brought Forward |                                    | 394:50           | 3044:35 |
| Departure | Arrival | FLYING TIMES            |         | INSTRUMENT FLYING |                 | REMARKS                            |                  |         |
|           |         | DAY                     |         | NIGHT             |                 |                                    |                  |         |
|           |         | In Charge.              | Second. | In Charge.        | Second.         |                                    |                  |         |
| 11:35     | 13:10   |                         | 1:00    |                   |                 | delivery flight. 7                 |                  |         |
| 13:15     | 13:10   | :45                     |         |                   |                 | 30's snoots. 1.                    |                  |         |
| 11:05     | 15:05   |                         | 3:30    |                   | 1:30            | 300                                |                  |         |
| 0705      | 11:35   | 4:30                    |         |                   |                 | 301                                |                  |         |
| 13:13     | 17:38   | 4:20                    |         |                   |                 | 578. <i>[Signature]</i>            |                  |         |
| 17:05     | 21:45   |                         | 2:00    |                   | 1:40            | 578.                               |                  |         |
| 1054      | 1504    | 3:10                    |         | 1:00              |                 | 300 <i>W Todd</i>                  |                  |         |
| 0740      | 1205    |                         | 4:25    |                   |                 | 301 <i>div due delays and for</i>  |                  |         |
| 1418      | 1533    |                         | 1:15    |                   |                 | 301 <i>locked at 100 Indrag Mx</i> |                  |         |
| 1434      | 1834    |                         | 4:00    |                   |                 | 579                                |                  |         |
| 17:55     | 21:45   | 1:50                    |         | 2:00              |                 | 578 <i>W</i>                       |                  |         |
| 13:00     | 17:11   | 4:10                    |         |                   |                 | 579. <i>with M 41422</i>           |                  |         |
| 513:25    |         | 1309:40                 | 210:00  | 656:45            | TOTALS          |                                    | Carried Forward. |         |

# Two icons: Vulcan and Concorde

Ian Homer, National Marketing & Event Manager, Vulcan to the Sky

*We are delighted to present here an article from the Vulcan supporters' community, exploring the historical association between the Vulcan and Concorde. Ian Homer of Vulcan to the Sky looks at the connections between the two aircraft types, in their development and personnel, and above all in the use of the Vulcan as the test-bed for Concorde's Olympus engines.*

## Genesis of the Vulcan

This revolutionary delta was the brainchild of Roy Chadwick (who had earlier designed the Avro Lancaster), who initially sketched it out in 1947, and his design team at A. V. Roe in Manchester.



### Roy Chadwick

Head of the Avro design team, Chadwick devised the delta shape that would become the Vulcan.

*Photo: Avro Heritage*

### Initial designs

Some of these designs bore little resemblance to the aircraft that we have come to know today.

*Source: Avro Heritage*

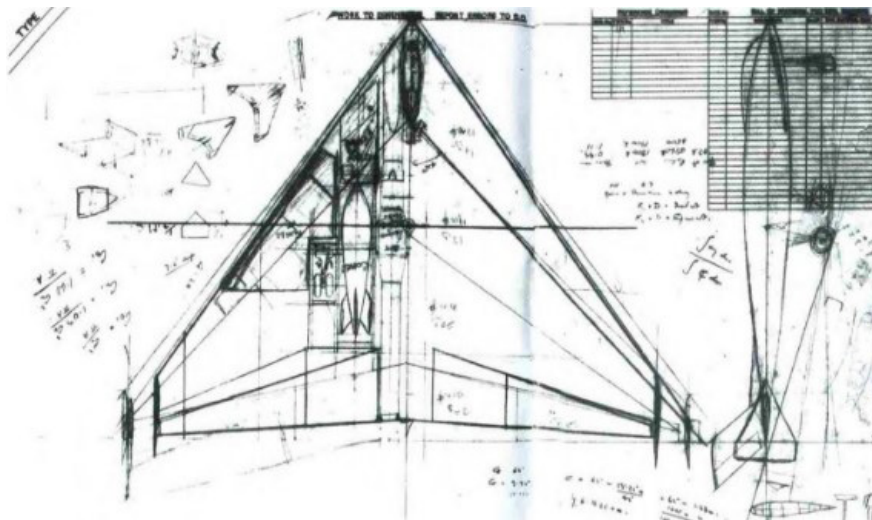
Their work constituted the first thoughts for a radical aircraft needed to meet a new specification for a long-range bomber to carry Britain's developing atomic bomb programme. This specification called for a high altitude, high-speed, strategic bomber capable of delivering a single 10,000 lb (4,536 kg) weapon to a target 1,725 miles (2,780 km) distant. Six companies, including Vickers, Handley Page, and Avro, were invited to tender.

Chadwick's Avro design team started with a conventional layout with swept wings, but by progressive shortening of the fuselage and then removal of the tail-plane, a delta-wing planform emerged. This was a bold step because little was known about delta aerodynamics at the time, and the concept of a 'flying triangle' of these proportions was a daunting prospect. However, by March 1947 Chadwick had made a firm decision to go ahead with this

configuration. By the time the tender (then known as Avro Type 698) was submitted to the Air Ministry in May 1947, the triangle had grown a nose with large engine intakes at the side.

All the designs were passed to the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) at Farnborough for evaluation, and the Advanced Bomber Project Group (ABPG) was set up for this purpose, under the RAE's Head of Aerodynamic Flight section, Morien Morgan – who would later find fame as the 'father' of the Concorde project.

The summer of 1947 saw the tender for the Avro Type 698 in the hands of the Ministry of Supply, but the Avro team suffered a grievous loss with the death of Roy Chadwick, who was killed in the crash of the Tudor 2 prototype at Woodford on August 23rd. It was feared that Chadwick's death might cause the Ministry to lose confidence in the



### Stuart D. Davies

Having survived the accident that had killed Roy Chadwick, Davies took up design leadership of the delta programme.

*Photo: Avro Heritage*





### Stages of development

The first one-third scale delta Avro Type 707, VX784 (above), sits on a pan at Boscombe Down. The centrally placed air intakes are a prominent feature. The intakes were re-positioned on the later version, WD280 (above right), seen here in flight over the Cheshire countryside.

*Photos: Avro Heritage*

### Full-size prototype

With four jet engines buried in the body and wing roots, the Avro Type 698 prototype VX770 more closely resembled the production aircraft.

*Photo © Rolls-Royce*



new delta, but as they had accepted the proposals one month before, the work continued under Assistant Chief Designer Stuart D. Davies, who had survived the same accident.

The ABPG had recommended that further research be conducted into the delta planform. This work required the construction of aircraft to test the wing at high and low airspeeds and various altitudes up to the specified ceiling of 50,000 ft. Avro therefore built a series of one-third scale Type 707s, the first of which was VX784, completed by August 1949. After testing, it became clear that the central jet intake suffered air starvation from the disruption of flow caused by the canopy, so later models saw the intakes moved to the wing roots, with ducting leading the flow into a rear fuselage centrally mounted single engine. By 1952 the first full-size prototype Avro Type 698 was ready for flight trials. Finally, on the 30th August, Avro's chief test

pilot, Roly Falk, took the aircraft on her maiden flight, which lasted just over 30 minutes. An advanced new aircraft had flown successfully – just 11 years after the maiden flight of Chadwick's Lancaster.

### Vulcan innovations

The development programme on the aircraft type, by now known as the Vulcan, increased with the arrival of a second prototype and the refinement of wing leading edges that saw a kinked design introduced to improve slow-speed handling, just as the aircraft began to enter RAF service in 1957.

Among the notable innovations, Vulcan aircraft were one of the first to utilise powered flying controls that responded to inputs received from a series of mechanical linkages, while anti-lock brakes were another fitment, well ahead of the time.

Vulgans were initially powered by Bristol Olympus 101 engines, the world's first two-spool axial-flow

jet turbine and the forerunner of a family that would be developed to power Concorde.

In 1960, the introduction of the first B Mk. 2 model saw more powerful Olympus 202 engines, an increase in wingspan to allow improved performance at altitude, and other improvements that included a completely re-designed AC electrical system. The first of this type, Vulcan XH558 (see page 9), was delivered on 1st July 1960 to RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire as part of 230OCU, the unit assigned to training pilots on the new aircraft.

### Testing Concorde's engines

Such was the solidity and reliability of the Vulcan platform that several of the earlier models released from active service or flight testing were used in various trials. One such role was performed by Vulcan XA903. First built and delivered with Olympus 101 engines in May 1957, it would be used by A&AEE

### Engine in place

Vulcan B1 XA903 carries out a flight at Farnborough with the Concorde engine installed beneath the body.  
*Photo: Robin A. Walker*

at Boscombe Down and at RAE Farnborough as a Blue Steel (stand-off missile) trials aircraft. As the last RAF Vulcan B1, it was then withdrawn from service and released to Rolls-Royce at Filton in early 1968, where it became the test bed for the Rolls-Royce/Snecma Olympus 593 engine to be used on Concorde.

The engine was installed as one half of a Concorde nacelle, attached underneath the bomb-bay space. The bomb-bay itself was used for additional fuel tanks to supply the 593 engine and for a water tank that was used to supply a spray bar system positioned under the nose. This would spray varying flows of water from hundreds of nozzles, directly at the 593 engine to test the operation of the intake de-icing system.

A vast array of sensors required a huge wiring loom to be fitted, and the rear cabin of XA903 was unique – a large instrument panel that contained over 100 instruments and indicators.

By 1971, final testing on the 593 engine was complete and the aircraft was converted to carry the RB199 engine destined for the Panavia Tornado. In August 1978,

with the latter trials now complete, the aircraft retired to Farnborough for ground training. It was scrapped in 1984. However, the nose section was preserved and is now in private ownership at a location in Scotland.

### De-icing trial

Vulcan XA903 deploys the spray bar system to direct water at the Olympus 593 engine.

*Photo © Rolls-Royce*





## Concorde's companion: XH558

*Although the Vulcan retired from squadron service in 1984, one aircraft remained on charge with the RAF. Vulcan XH558 enjoyed a new life as a popular attraction at air shows, before she was finally retired in 2015 – even appearing with Concorde. Ian Homer looks back at her history.*

Vulcan XH558 began her flying career with the RAF in 1960. After the Vulcans were retired from active duty, as one of the last to receive a full deep service, XH558 was pulled from a fire dump ahead of scrapping at RAF Marham, to replace the previous display aircraft in 1986. If you saw a Vulcan display between 1986 and 1992, it would have been XH558. She even appeared in a stunning double display with Concorde G-BOAB at North Weald air show on 23rd June 1991.

By the end of the 1992 season, another major service was needed. Sadly, with budget cuts, and as she was no longer part of frontline duties, the aircraft was auctioned and retired to an airfield in Leicestershire in 1993, despite many public appeals to save her.

Throughout the 90s, XH558 was in private hands. Volunteers including her ex-RAF crew chief kept the aircraft in superb ground-running condition and she would often charge down the 2-mile runway at Big Thunder days.

**Brand new**  
Vulcan XH558, the first B Mk. 2 model, on her delivery flight in 1960. Note the Ram Air Turbine under the port wing air intake is deployed for testing.

*Photo © Rolls-Royce/BAE*



In 1999, a small team was assembled to talk to the CAA and all the related industry bodies to see if a return to flight would be possible. By 2007 a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £2.7 million and public support raised just under £7 million, which enabled the aircraft to return to the skies again on 18th October.

After flight tests, she made her public debut at an air show after a break of 16 years in July 2008, carrying on to become the undisputed star attraction at air shows every year, all the way through to her final landing in October 2015.

She is now based at the former RAF Finningley, Doncaster Sheffield Airport. The Vulcan to the Sky Trust, who manage her, hope that public support can once again secure the project to deliver an educational centre of excellence based around her. The Trust plan to keep the aircraft in full ground-running condition so future generations can marvel at the engineering inspiration she represents, and to restore and fly other historic early-generation jet aircraft.

*Editor's note: A film of the flight by XH558 and Concorde G-BOAB can be seen on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEaByA7daEI>*



### XH558 appeal

Vulcan XH558 is cared for by the Vulcan to the Sky Trust. To see their work and support their campaign to protect this aircraft, visit their website: <http://www.vulcantothesky.org>

### In her element

Vulcan XH558 during her 'farewell to flight' tour in 2015.

*Photo ©Steve Comber*

# A NEW HOME FOR ALPHA FOX

*This week has seen a significant development in the Concorde world: G-BOAF, the last Concorde ever to fly, has now been moved under cover. She will form the centrepiece of Aerospace Bristol, the new aerospace museum at Filton. Here we report on the move, starting with a press statement from the museum, followed by an eyewitness account from Nigel Ferris.*

**Filton, Bristol, February 7, 2017: The last Concorde ever to fly has safely completed her journey to Aerospace Bristol, a new £19m museum taking off in Filton, to the north of Bristol, this summer.**

The complex move was conducted with the greatest care by engineers from British Airways and Airbus, who managed every facet of Concorde's final journey. The iconic aircraft was towed across Filton runway and up a ramp into the new purpose-built hangar at Aerospace Bristol. The hangar, constructed by Kier, had a wall removed to allow the aircraft to enter the building and, with less than a metre between each wing tip and the building, Concorde was slowly and carefully winched into her exhibition position.

**Final journey**  
Concorde Alpha Fox is towed across the airfield to her new home.  
*Photo courtesy of Aerospace Bristol*

## A new chapter

British Airways' Concorde Alpha Foxtrot – also known as 216 – was the last Concorde to be built and the last to fly. She made her maiden flight on 20 April 1979 and touched down on her last flight to Filton on 26 November 2003. Since that landing, Alpha Foxtrot has stood alongside the Filton runway, cared for continuously by Airbus UK and remaining in remarkable condition. Now inside, she starts a new chapter as the centrepiece of the new Aerospace Bristol museum.

Iain Gray, Chairman of Aerospace Bristol, said: "We couldn't be more delighted to welcome Concorde 216 into her new purpose-built home at Aerospace Bristol. With such enthusiasm for Concorde in this country, and particularly in Bristol where she was







### Coming home

Alpha Fox overflies the Clifton Suspension Bridge before coming in to land at Filton, where she was built (far left); undergoing maintenance by Airbus workers in 2011 (left).

*Photos courtesy of Aerospace Bristol*

the modern day, where they will discover the latest technologies of today's aerospace industry. As a first-class museum with learning at its heart, Aerospace Bristol aims to inspire the next generation of engineers with remarkable stories of ingenious design and engineering innovation.

Fundraising for the new museum is not yet complete – with a further £2m required to finalise the project.

designed, built and landed for the final time, it is only fitting that this magnificent aircraft should have a permanent home at Filton. I would like to thank all of our donors for helping to make Aerospace Bristol a reality and look forward to welcoming our first visitors on board this summer."

Mark Stewart, General Manager and HR Director, Airbus, said; "Airbus has been the proud custodian for Alpha Foxtrot since 2003 and has been keen that we could find a permanent location for such a fantastic historical exhibit of Filton engineering skills. After 13 years of caring for the aircraft we are pleased to deliver her to Aerospace Bristol so that people can visit and admire her for years to come."

David Hart, British Airways' Head of Fleet Planning, said: "It is with great pride that we have helped to deliver our iconic Alpha Foxtrot to her new home. This move will allow thousands more people to be inspired by her sleek, innovative design and supersonic statistics."

### A hundred years of history

Starting in the earliest days of flight, when Bristol Boxkite biplanes flew over Brunel's Clifton Suspension Bridge, Aerospace Bristol will transport visitors through more than one hundred years of fascinating aviation history. Visitors will travel through two world wars, exploring the vital role of aircraft in these conflicts, through the drama and technological advances of the space race and on to

The development of Aerospace Bristol to date, and the construction of the new Concorde hangar, has been made possible by the support of Founding Partners BAE Systems, Airbus, Rolls-Royce, South Gloucestershire Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund. In addition, the project has attracted support from Bristol City Council, West of England LEP, and the Libor Fines Fund as well as GKN, Renishaw, and the John James Foundation.

*Text and photos courtesy of Aerospace Bristol.*

For further information on the developments at the museum, please visit the Aerospace Bristol website:  
<http://www.aerospacebristol.org>

### Under cover

Concorde is positioned inside the new purpose-built hangar.

*Photo courtesy of Aerospace Bristol*



## A VOLUNTEER'S VIEW

*Mach 2 Contributing Editor Nigel Ferris will be forming part of the volunteer team showing visitors around Concorde G-BOAF at the new Aerospace Bristol museum. Here he gives an insight into the volunteers' preparations for their new role and their latest visit to the museum site.*

On Friday 20th January, members of the BACT team who title themselves the 'A' team of volunteer tour guides for Alpha Foxtrot at Filton met for a third visit.

Present were Paul Evans, Bob White, Andrew Strange, James Coombe, myself, Judith Martyn, Colin Smith, Oliver Dearden – and Fred Finn and Terry Jervis as special guests. Fred Finn is the Guinness World Record holder for having made the most flights ever (718 in all) as a Concorde passenger – and has a special place in his heart for AF, describing her as his favourite. Terry Jervis, an eminent TV producer and director, came along as a friend of Fred's. He was due to have a meeting with Rolls Royce that day and was interested in every aspect of Concorde at Filton.

### Gathering of the team

The volunteer team and their honoured guest Fred Finn. From left to right: Fred Finn, James Coombe, Nigel Ferris, Judith Martyn, Colin Smith, Paul Evans, Andrew Strange, Bob White, Oliver Dearden.

*Photo: Nigel Ferris*

### Planning the tours

The team met up with Tony Brealey, Volunteer Co-ordinator at the BAC Trust, to discuss the plans for displaying and explaining Concorde to visitors at the new museum housing AF. We submitted plans that we felt were pertinent to the display, including plans for tours – both normal visits and specialist 'Tech tours', whereby visitors would have a longer time with the aircraft, and more detailed technical explanations. They also had a host of other suggestions for the future. These proposals will be put before Lloyd Burnell, Project Director for the museum, and the BACT management.

### Viewing the aircraft

We were again treated to a tour of the Brabazon hangar where all the exhibits due to be transferred to the new buildings are housed – I say 'new', although the only new building is the hangar currently under construction, to be Concorde's home.







### Outside the site

The team and guests had a look at the site, and were also allowed to view the aircraft while she was still in her compound. From left to right: Bob White, Terry Jervis, Colin Smith, Paul Evans, Andrew Strange, James Coombe, Fred Finn, Oliver Dearden.

*Photo: Nigel Ferris*

This time we were also allowed in the compound holding AF – to be able to re-acquaint ourselves with her (after 6 long years) and to look around, marvel and give her a hug (which I did around the nose undercarriage)! The air stairs had been pulled back, to prevent internal access. Otherwise, the aircraft was looking in good condition. Very emotional; we were not at that time allowed to take any pictures or videos, but it was nice to be close to her again.

We believe that AF is to undergo an intensive programme of cleaning, plus addition of new decals, to bring her up to the standard set by other Concorde around the world – if not the best.

### Historical artefacts

The other exhibition areas are the two World War 1 listed hangars, which will be refurbished accordingly, where the rest of the artefacts will be put on display. These encompass all the achievements made at Filton since the time of the original British and Colonial Aircraft Company, started by Sir George White in 1910. The company, re-named the Bristol

Aeroplane Company and later becoming part of the Bristol Aircraft Corporation, diversified into making trams, rudimentary aircraft, engines (Bristol Aero Engines, later to become Bristol Siddeley, and eventually Rolls Royce), missiles, rockets, helicopters, buses, satellites, and other technological achievements.

Filton still is a very important site for the manufacturer Airbus, designing and building wings for Airbus aircraft, electrical work, undercarriage testing, fuel rigs, etc. Bristol can be regarded as the one of the birthplaces of British aviation, if not the first. Filton was of course also the birthplace of supersonic aviation, with the most design and development being done there (although sections were built elsewhere and assembled at Filton).

The exhibits have been protectively wrapped in polythene in preparation for the move, but are still recognisable by shape, and described in excellent depth and content by Tony and Oliver. It was also interesting to see that there is a Royal Navy Sea Harrier in the hangar (minus Pegasus engine) that we were told would be transported across the field by a Royal Air Force Chinook helicopter.



## CONCORDE WATCH

### Concorde G-BOAF

**Location:** Filton, UK

**Reporter:** Nigel Ferris

**British production aircraft**

**Date:** 7 February 2017

On 26th November 2003, Concorde G-BOAF made the last flight of any Concorde in the world, and after a faultless landing in the hands of Captain Les Brodie, finally came to rest in the turning circle at the end of the runway.

She was then taken into the Brabazon hangar to be de-commissioned, with all her life blood being drained away. Her next move was a few hundred yards to her new compound, where until 2010 she entertained thousands of visitors. Since then, she has stood forlorn and lonely.

Today, the 7th February 2017, she was coupled to a tug and towed away. She turned on the runway towards the west, entered the small taxi-way running alongside, and headed towards her new home, a purpose-built hangar next to the two World War 1 listed hangars. Collectively, these buildings will become the Bristol Aero Collection Trust home for a new museum highlighting the engineering and aerospace achievements of the City of Bristol. Concorde will obviously be the main

#### Final seconds

G-BOAF about to leave the skies and touch down for the last time as she returns to her birthplace.

*Photo: © John Allan (<http://www.geograph.org.uk>)*



attraction, all shiny white and looking like brand new.

#### Watching the move

At 8.00am I positioned myself on the banking, with camera and video, outside the fence on the north side of the airfield (as was), and waited. At 9.15am, the tug started up in a cloud of diesel smoke, and Concorde slowly moved out of her compound. She came very close to us as she moved down the taxi-way, and it was a very emotional moment to see this beautiful aircraft going past. We continued watching until she was out of sight, heading to the hangar.

At last, after many years of braving the elements (but it must be said that Airbus have spent a lot of money, according to their contract with BA, to keep her looked after – including a period of deep maintenance to weatherproof her), she will now remain in a covered, warm, and protected environment for the pleasure of thousands more visitors to marvel at this technological achievement that was years ahead of its time. We look forward to the future, and hope that the exhibition site will become one of the premier visitor attractions in the West.

Nigel's video of the move is available on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Shq9aiyILzc>



#### Passing by

Alpha Fox makes her way past Nigel and the other spectators at walking pace, as she is towed across the airfield to her final home.

*Photo: Nigel Ferris*



