

Is it a bird? Is it a whale? No, it's an extinct Concorde!

Children's Express reporters witness Concorde's last take off.

How many young people have seen Concorde take off? Maybe a few. How many will get the chance in the future? None.

We went to witness the last flight of Concorde from Heathrow on 26 November. The Concorde was traveling to its final resting place, a museum in Filton, Bristol. As we stood at the barrier our umbrellas went out of control with the wind and rain. It was 11am and as we peered through the wire, a slim white plane began to move. At 11.15, the rain stopped and a streak of blue appeared on the horizon, and at 11.26, we saw Concorde race down the runway and take off into the sky, returning to the place where the flight of the first British prototype took place in April 1969.

As we walked away we wondered how we would describe it to all the young people who will never get the chance to experience it. An elegant swan? Like a bird, but as loud as a whale? A big bird with a pointed beak and a sticky out tail? To them, it will always be like some extinct animal.

We are disappointed that it will never fly again, because you will never feel the vibrations it caused as it took off inside you and all around you again. Without it the world is more normal, and that is not a good thing. We are used to things becoming more and more technologically advanced, like mobile phones, computers and televisions. Its strange for something to just be discontinued in this way.

There will be a temporary exhibition of Concorde at Heathrow next summer. In 2008, there will be a Concorde display at the new Terminal 5. Others have been sent to museums in Manchester, where the exhibition will open next spring, and one in Bristol, which will be open in two or three years time. In France, Concorde was dismantled and auctioned at Christies. Another auction of parts will be taking place on Monday 1 December at Olympia in London.

Although we were the only young people standing by the perimeter fence at Heathrow to watch the take off, the adults around us were just as excited as we were. People driving by stopped on the side of the road to watch, and some had come prepared with stepladders and long-range cameras. Some of them were surprised we were there. But being excited and inspired by Concorde is something that unites people of all ages, just as the development of Concorde originally brought engineers from France and Britain together.

Gordon Roxburgh, founder of the website www.concordesst.com, has been a Concorde enthusiast since he was three years old. He told us he even had Concorde wallpaper! He said: "It is very sad that we will not get to fly on Concorde again. They will be in museums for a long long time." He added: "The website will keep on going to immortalise Concorde for future generations. It will keep the Concorde spirit alive and let people keep up to date with where they are in museums."

A three-year-old who had Concorde wallpaper today might as well have dinosaur paper instead. It is up to the museums to make sure young people don't lose the sense of something amazing. The adults around us have been lucky to experience it first hand and to be in a world where it flew all the time. We saw it too, and we felt the vibration is made in the air, and heard the noise from its engines: we were lucky. We hope there will be another plane like Concorde in the future.

About the team

This story was produced by Jade Burnett, 14, Samantha Chanudet Denny, 11, and Jordan Daley, 9. It was published by the [24 Hour Museum](#).

0 comments

- [Add a comment to this page](#)

Concorde Fabulous Facts

Concorde brought Britain and France together: they started working separately towards a supersonic aircraft in 1956. In 1962 they decided to work together.

Concorde takes off at 250 knots, standard planes at 160 knots.

The first Concorde round the world journey time was: 28 238 miles in 29 hours and 59 minutes.

The fastest flight from London to New York took only 2 hours and 52 minutes, 59 seconds.

When Concorde breaks the sound barrier, passengers feel a slight nudge!