

CONCORDE G-BOAC

April 2020

Putting lockdown time to good use I came across my **Concorde Flight Certificate** from 1992 plus my photograph of the flight deck. I was working on an American project for the **Evo Group** (of Evo-stik fame) and was booked to fly out there when, a couple of days before, I was phoned by BA and asked if I would like a free upgrade on Concorde to Washington. Being sensitive to others' views I obtained my boss's permission before accepting.

On boarding, and being familiar with wide-bodied planes, my first impression was claustrophobic but this soon left me when I found that my seat was in the front row and on the aisle with only one seat outside me. This was occupied by a lady doctor who worked for **Glaxo Smith Kline** and she proved a most interesting travelling companion. I recall that she had only one initial in front of her surname and it happened to be the same as her husband's which meant they gained some advantage from combining their Air Miles accounts. The seats were leather, very comfortable and the lunch excellent.



Concorde Flight Certificate

Taxiing, I thought the ride lumpy and I felt unsure of the strength of those spindly undercarriages but when we got to V1 that all disappeared and my anxiety was solely that the tail of the craft might scrape along the ground. The rate of climb was astonishing. I would have had no idea of our speed had it not been for the illuminated sign on the bulkhead in front of me. We were not permitted to go supersonic until out over the Atlantic but it was not long before Mach 1 was exceeded.

I didn't know it at the time but I was actually on board '**Alpha Charlie**' the flagship of the Concorde fleet and only the second to be built, having been delivered to British Airways on 13th February 1976. Initially she was used by the manufacturers, BAC, to obtain the Certificate of airworthiness and for proving duties around the world. By the time she was refurbished for passenger service she had completed 141 flights. On 1st.

September 1975 **G-BOAC** became the first aircraft to make four Atlantic crossings in one day and on 19th December 1985 she travelled at 1,488 mph, the highest recorded ground speed for a commercial airliner.

G-BOAC's retirement flight was from Heathrow to Manchester on 31st. October 2003 where she is now preserved on public view in a purpose-built hanger. During 27 years in service she had flown 22,260 hours and made 6,761 supersonic flights

Anthony Cobbold

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G-BOAC in flight



Flightdeck