



About the *Take Flight* exhibit

The centerpiece of the *Take Flight* exhibit is a United Airlines Boeing 727 plane. The plane is suspended from the third-floor balcony above the Transportation Gallery. The exhibit was restored and reimagined in 2021.

History

On Sept. 28, 1992 the 727 memorably landed at Meigs Field on a too-short runway that wasn't built for jetliners. A few days later (Oct. 1, 1992) it was loaded onto a barge and towed to Burns International Harbor in Indiana for storage as the Museum prepared its exhibit hall.

The 727 returned in September 1993, and thousands of Chicagoans gathered to watch it move across Lake Shore Drive. Getting the plane into the Museum was an engineering feat itself; it was disassembled, and one of the Museum's ionic columns was removed to make enough room.

The original *Take Flight* exhibit opened in 1994. It closed in October 2020 for renovation and to create an entirely new exhibition. The new *Take Flight* exhibit opened May 13, 2021.

Significance

This is the 17th Boeing 727 ever built. This commercial jet was one of the best-selling airliners of all time, carrying passengers on short trips and cross-country journeys for over 20 years.

Our 727 by the Numbers

- First commercial flight: May 15, 1964
- Last commercial flight: Nov. 14, 1991
- Total miles flown: 28 million
- Total passengers carried: 3 million
- Wingspan: 108 feet
- Top speed: 632 mph