

A Conflict of Wings

Also known in the USA as "Fuss Over Feathers".



- Director: John Eldridge
- AMG Rating: ★★
- Genre: Comedy
- Main Cast: John Gregson, Muriel Pavlow, Kieron Moore, Niall MacGinnis
- Release Year: 1953
- Country: UK
- Run Time: 84 minutes

Plot

The British *Conflict of Wings* was also released as *Fuss over Feathers*: Both titles are applicable, but only the second title captures the mood of the proceedings. The story takes place in a Norfolk-country village, where the populace is up in arms over the announcement that the RAF plans to build a target range. It seems that the village is the site for a bird sanctuary that was allegedly established 400 years earlier by King Henry VIII. Faced with an intractable government and an equally unsympathetic bureaucracy, the villagers decide to resolve matters in their own inimitable way. Commendably, the RAF is not cast as the villain of the piece: both sides are well represented in the argument, though audience sympathy understandably leans in the direction of the bird-huggers. *Conflict Over Wings* was adapted by Don Sharp from his own novel. ~ Hal Erickson, All Movie Guide

Cast

- John Gregson - *Bill Morris*
- Muriel Pavlow - *Sally*
- Kieron Moore - *Squadron Leader Parsons*
- Niall MacGinnis - *Harry Tilney*

Harry Fowler - *Buster*; Howard Connell - *Flight Officer, Control*; Barbara Hicks - *Mrs. Thompson*; Charles Lloyd Pack - *Bookie*; Guy Middleton - *Adjutant*; Bartlett Mullins - *Soapy*; Russell Napier - *Wing Cmdr. Rogers*; Frederick Piper - *Joe Bates*; Edwin Richfield - *Smother Brooks*; Harold

Siddons - *Range Officer*; Humphrey Lestocq; William Mervyn; Campbell Singer - *Campbell*; Peter Swanwick; Guy Verney; Margaret Withers; George Woodbridge; Hugh Moxey; Tony Doonan

Some may call it a "soppy" film (not me, I think it's rather wonderful), but being filmed in Eastman colour in 1954 it oozes atmosphere - there's even a lovely colour shot of a B1 - if anyone knows what they are

Now to my point - being in colour this film holds great historical interest in that it shows Vampire and Meteors (amongst others) in RAF service in the early fifties. VERY nice - but does anyone know where it was filmed ?

Dan Winterland thought he knew, as the 'Island of Children' in the film was somewhere he knew. But it was made before he was born.

One thing to note in the movie is the sheer number of servicemen you see on that base!

The film was mainly shot on location around Hickling Broad, Ludham and Wells. It also features The Pleasure Boat Inn at Hickling and there is some lovely Broadland scenery shot in Eastman colour.

The airfield used was RAF Langham on the north Norfolk coast. The 'Island of Children' is supposed to be Scolt Head Island, but a lot of the filming was done at Blakeny Point, a few miles to the East. I think the fighters came from the Day Fighter Leader's School which I gather was at RAF West Raynham at the time.

Langham is now a Bernard Matthews turkey farm, but one of the taxiways was being used as a light aircraft strip when I once landed there in 1989 - according to my logbook. There used to be a maintenance place specialising in De Havilland types. I've no idea if it's still there. There's a very rare dome shaped building surviving at Langham which was used as a training facility for Air Gunners.

A chap I used to be in a flying group with was an extra in the film as a child. He was living in Langham village at the time

Ludham was one of the film locations for the 1954 movie. Filming took place in the village centre and shows many buildings and features (like the Bakers Arms pub and the very narrow main road through the village) which are no longer there.