



# 40,000 Horsemen Poster

**Client** National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

**Services** Paper Conservation

## Overview

The classic Australian film 'Forty Thousand Horsemen' was one of the most popular films of its day. Released in 1940, it aided military recruitment and lifted national pride during World War II. Evidence of the film's success can still be seen in the form of posters and other ephemera collected by institutions throughout Australia. In March 2013 ICS was contacted by the [National Film and Sound Archive](#) about one such poster hanging in the Chauvel cinema in Sydney where it had been since the film's release.

## Condition

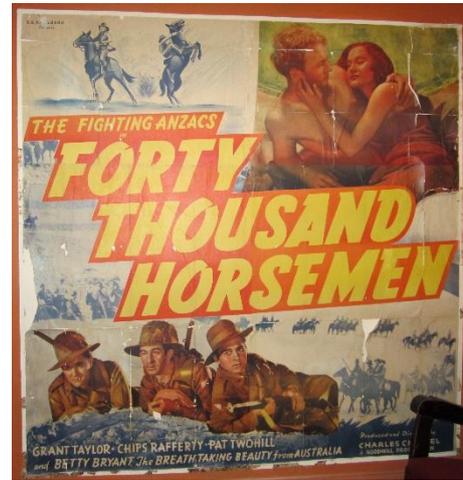
This large, six panelled poster was pasted to a wall located in a space commonly used for events. As a result, it had sustained various tears, losses and stains over the years. Water ingress through the supporting wall had also caused the plaster to expand which resulted in further damage.

## Removal from cinema wall

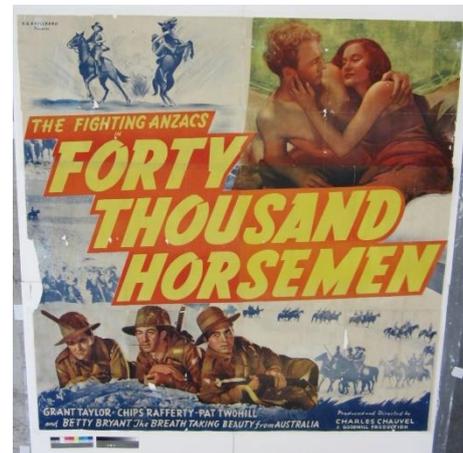
Due to up-coming building works and the deteriorated condition of the poster, it had to be removed from the wall. This was done section by section, using a facing poultice to soften the adhesive and a purpose-built system to support the sections as they were removed from the wall. This treatment took several days and was complicated by the fragility of the paper support and the fact that a range of different adhesives had been used.

## Treatment

Once the six sections of the poster had been safely removed from the wall, they were brought to our laboratories for treatment. First, each section was surfaced cleaned and immersed in an aqueous solution to remove discolouration and adhesive residues. They



*Before treatment*



*After treatment*



*During treatment*

were then strengthened with archival linings, which also helped to repair the tears and join the sections back together. The reassembled poster was then rolled onto a tube and housed in a purpose-built archival box for long-term storage.

#### More information

- Watch this short [You Tube video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNkAd7O1D4) posted by the National Film and Sound Archive (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNkAd7O1D4>)
- Read about the [history of the film](https://www.awm.gov.au/blog/2006/12/21/forty-thousand-horsemen/) on the Australian War Memorial website (Link: <https://www.awm.gov.au/blog/2006/12/21/forty-thousand-horsemen/>)



*During treatment*