

The Sydney Opera House



The Sydney Opera House has come to be a symbol of Australia, even though it was not completed until 1973. It is considered to be one of the greatest architectural structures in the world. It has a very unique design with the roof suggestive of a ship at full sail. It was designed by the renowned architect, Jørn Utzon, after winning a competition initiated by the government of Australia in the late 1950's. His design was said to be impossible with the engineering capabilities at that time, so he had to rework some of the structure causing the building of the Opera House to be delayed until 1961. Due to expenses and engineering difficulties, the project was almost abandoned several times., but it was eventually completed in 1973.

Here are some facts about the Sydney Opera House:

- Was designed by Danish architect Jørn Utzon.
- Was opened by Queen Elizabeth II on October 20, 1973.
- Presented, as its first performance, The Australian Opera's production of *War and Peace* by Prokofiev.
- Cost \$AU 102,000,000 to build.
- Conducts 3,000 events each year.
- Provides guided tours to 200,000 people each year.
- Has an annual audience of 2 million for its performances.
- Includes 1,000 rooms.
- Is 185 meters long and 120 meters wide.
- Has 2,194 pre-cast concrete sections as its roof.
- Has roof sections weighing up to 15 tons.
- Has roof sections held together by 350 kilometers of tensioned steel cable.
- Has over 1 million tiles on the roof.
- Uses 6,225 square meters of glass and 645 kilometers of electric cable.

(Facts and figures source <http://www.anzac.com/aust/nsw/soh.htm>.)