What is this item?
This is a 1968 travel sketchbook of Peter Hall, the architect who took on the job to finish the construction of the Sydney Opera House after the resignation of Jorn Utzon in 1966.

Why is it important?
After Peter Hall (as part of the consortium Hall, Todd and Littlemore) accepted the position of design architect for the Opera House he went on an extensive study tour of Europe, USA and Japan, especially to gather ideas on how to resolve the difficulties of the concert hall seating and acoustic design. Hall took on the job in an incredibly hostile environment – many people in the architectural community were protesting to bring back Utzon and doubted Hall's ability to complete the project. However, Hall was a talented and passionate architect – he won the Sir John Sulman Award in 1965 for his work on the dining hall at Goldstein Hall, University of New South Wales. He had completed a traineeship with the NSW Government Architect’s Office, where many of the best and brightest of the profession learnt their trade. In collaboration with engineers Ove Arup and Partners, Hall resolved a number of complex technical issues with the design of the concert hall and the enclosing glass walls despite an environment of political turbulence and constant scrutiny. This sketchbook shows Hall’s design thinking and attempts to solve many of the problems he grappled with in the process of bringing the Opera House to fruition.

Why is it on your desk?
To prepare for a small display in the Library’s AMAZE gallery from February 5.

How did it get here?
The Library acquired Peter Hall’s archive of sketchbooks, photographs and personal correspondence from his work on the Sydney Opera House project in 2018.