

A-BOMB DOME: SILENT WITNESS TO NUCLEAR PAST



The A-Bomb Dome in the centre of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park commemorates the dreadful bombing of 1945 which wiped out the whole city. Miraculously, the Dome survived and will always be a reminder of the painful past.

The Hiroshima Commercial Museum was completed and officially introduced to the public in 1915. The building was designed by Czech architect Jan Letzel and often admired for its bizarre structure. During the following decades, the impressive dome changed names, eventually being called the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall. The building was striking and somehow seemed to preside over the entire area of the commercial and political district of Nakajima.

For that reason, this area, specifically the Aioi Bridge, was chosen as the target of the **first nuclear bombing** in the history of men. The bomb missed its original target slightly, and exploded right above the Dome on August 6, 1945. The blast wiped out the entire area in a moment, yet miraculously enough, most of the structure of the building survived. In fact, it was the only building in the area left standing.

It was scheduled to be demolished; however, it was decided the dome should forever bear witness to the tragic event of the bombing and would be preserved. It is now a peace memorial of immense importance to the Japanese as well as the entire world. **The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996.**

The Park is a very impressive part of the city today. It extends over an area of 120,000 square meters and is impossible to miss. The Peace Memorial Museum is the centre of the park; it tells the history of Hiroshima as well as the details of the events preceding the nuclear bombing and of course, most attention is paid to August 6, 1945. Even though the dome has suffered deterioration over the years, it is still standing to remind everyone of the annihilating force of the nuclear bomb. Many look up to the A-Bomb Dome as to the only known survivor of this force and hope that one day, all nuclear weapons will be eliminated.

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