

western Australia, where a different word was used with the same meaning.) The population of the new settlement steadily grew and reached 3000 in 1950. A post office, a hospital, churches, pools, and several shops were opened. The town soon boasted a movie theater and telephone exchange, and even ice cream became available.



Fig. 17.6. Radar at Central Bore near Mt. Elba at Woomera. This Stanford Research Institute-built radar and the optical site in the foreground were established in 1964–1965 for the *Dazzle* program studying plasma trails in the wakes of reentering bodies. Communications, tracking, and instrumentation sites spanned a huge territory claimed by the Woomera test range and its remote impact areas. Photo courtesy of Defense Science and Technology Organization, Department of Defense, Australia.

Building the Woomera missile test range was not without controversy. Pacifists and communists tried to interfere with the construction, as their counterparts invariably did with defense initiatives in other countries of the free world, thus serving willingly or unwittingly as a Soviet fifth column. The security problems were further exacerbated by the tight American restrictions in 1948–1949 on providing classified information to Australia. The reasons for this “embargo” included the seemingly blind policies of the Australian left-wing Labor Party government to the menace of communism in Asia and an “unsatisfactory security situation” inside the government with leaks of classified information to Moscow linked to an uncovered Soviet spy network. The situation improved with time, especially after a new government under Robert Menzies came to power in 1949, and more efficient security procedures were introduced in defense research and development in 1950s.

The first tests at the new range began in 1947 with experiments with bombs, not missiles. The first missile test took place on 22 March 1949, when a British

**M. Gruntman**  
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and Rocketry, AIAA, Reston, Va., 2004 p. 425*

**Security  
“Embargo”**

**First  
Missiles at  
Woomera**

# Blazing the Trail

## The Early History of Spacecraft and Rocketry

**Mike Gruntman**

**AIAA, Reston, Va., 2004**

ISBN 156347705X; 978-1563477058

**505 pages with 340 figures**

**Index: 2750+ entries, including 650 individuals**

This book presents the fascinating story of the events that paved the way to space. It introduces the reader to the history of early rocketry and the subsequent developments which led into the space age. People of various nations and from various lands contributed to the breakthrough to space, and the book takes the reader to far away places on five continents.

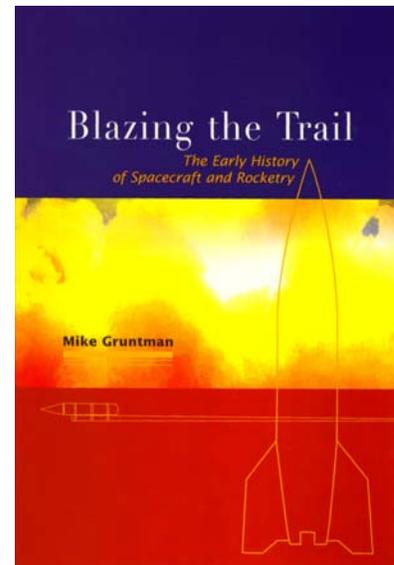
This world-encompassing view of the realization of the space age reflects the author's truly unique personal experience, a life journey from a child growing on the Tyuratam launch base in the 1950s and early 1960s, to an accomplished space physicist and engineer to the founding director of a major U.S. nationally recognized program in space engineering in the heart of the American space industry.

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This book bridges the gap. It is a one-stop source of numerous technical details usually unavailable in popular publications. The details are not overbearing and anyone interested in rocketry and space exploration will navigate through the book without difficulty. The book also includes many quotes to give readers a flavor of how the participants viewed the developments. There are 340 figures and photographs, many appearing for the first time.

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