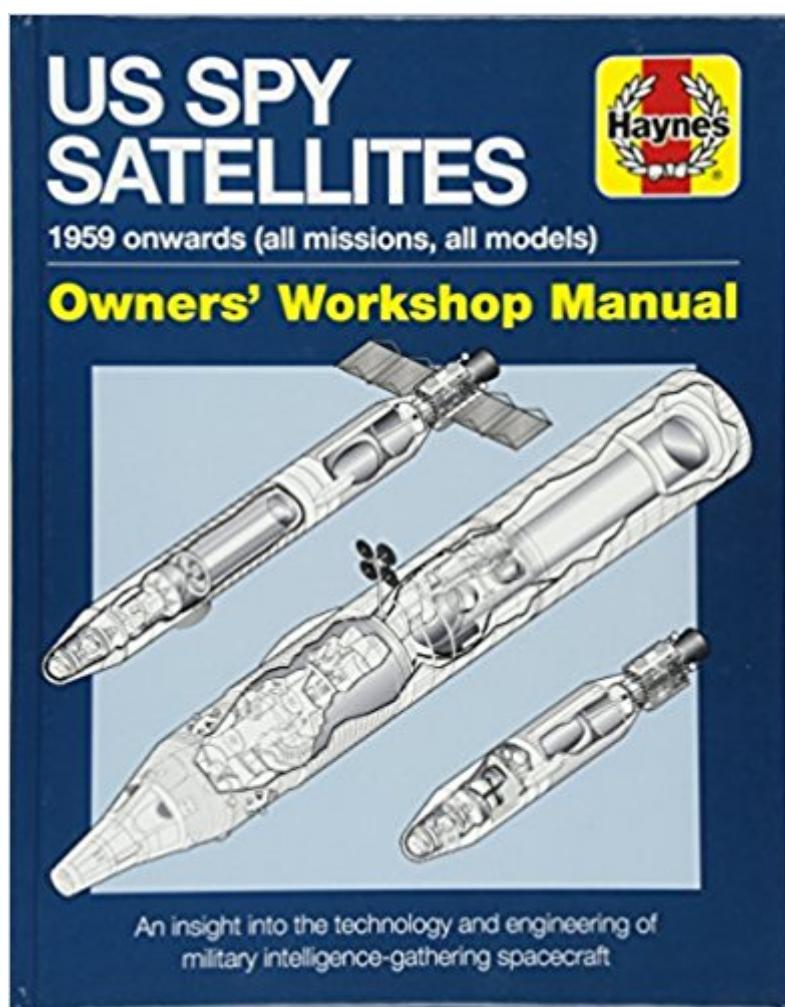


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Spy Satellite Manual (Owners' Workshop Manual)



Synopsis

In 1954, three years before the launch of Sputnik 1, the world's first satellite, top-secret discussions were held in the United States to plan the development of military spy satellites, designed to obtain detailed photography of the Soviet Union's military strength, and its potential for waging nuclear war. This book takes a detailed look at the programmes which resulted from the clandestine decision in the US to build highly secret spy satellites in parallel with civilian space plans, revealing for the first time previously classified details of the design and layout of photographic reconnaissance (spy) satellites including the Manned Orbiting Laboratory (MOL), America's planned military space station. The author has obtained declassified material, lifting the veil of secrecy covering exactly what spy satellites are, how they operate, what their limitations are and what they look like. This book focuses on the development of the spy satellites themselves and on the political arena in which their successes, and failures, were played out, providing a fascinating insight into a secretive world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dr. David Baker worked with NASA on the Gemini, Apollo and Shuttle programmes between 1965 and 1990. He has written more than 80 books on spaceflight technology and is the author of the Haynes NASA Space Shuttle Manual, International Space Station Manual, NASA Mars

Rovers Manual, Apollo 13 Manual, Soyuz Manual, Rocket Manual and forthcoming Hubble Space Telescope Manual. He lives in East Sussex.

Haynes has been producing a steady stream of (mostly) excellent material this year, without the goofy novelty books which have marred their "workshop manual" series in the past. Dr. David Baker, best known for his classic works "The Rocket" and "The History of Manned Spaceflight," has been using this series to present a slicker, more streamlined study of space hardware."US Spy Satellites" is somewhat of a curious beast. It's a very well-rounded reference work, which does a fine job balancing historical and technical details. All of the major American military reconnaissance satellites (the KH-series, SAMOS, and the aborted Manned Orbital Laboratory) are described in fairly substantial detail, although obviously there's less on more recent programs. Quite a bit of material here would have landed the reader in prison 20 years ago. The chapter on MOL was fascinating, if somewhat of a tease - when are we going to get a full-length book on this program? The photographs and technical diagrams, for the most part, are excellent and well-produced. To give a few examples, there are block diagrams of Agena systems, color cross-sections of each satellite, sketches of unbuilt concepts, diagrams of the optical systems of several satellites, and numerous NRO briefing slides. On the other hand, David Baker's Haynes manuals tend to stray from the established format, and suffer somewhat as a result. Like his others, it's a narrative history intended to be read cover-to-cover. Unlike the other books in the series, there are no detailed technical asides, or side-panels. His earlier works on NASA Mars rovers, and the Apollo 13 missions used these to good effect. What happened to them? I'm not knocking his talents as a space historian or writer; I just wish he'd have a bit of fun with the format, and exploit it to greater extent. This book is rather fascinating in places, but gets kind of dry when the technical specs and organizational details start piling up. I enjoyed this "manual," and discovered quite a bit of new material, but compared to Haynes' recent Saturn V manual, it feels a bit stuffy. Anyone with a serious interest in U.S. "black projects" will find much to love here, although the somewhat dry writing style might be an issue.

A great summary of the early spy satellites. I worked at Itek Optical Systems from 1963 to 1985, so participated in several of the programs described. Interesting that this volume was published by a British company, perhaps because US publishers would be worried about disclosure of still-sensitive data; but the security constraints have mostly been lifted. One error, on page 58 a picture of the main Itek facility is placed in California; in fact it is located in Lexington, MA, and has

long since been sold and subdivided into office condos. The CORONA cameras were developed and built by Itek in a former milk-processing plant in Waltham, MA, starting before the Lexington headquarters were built. Itek has been sold and re-sold several times, first to Litton; then to Hughes; then to Raytheon; finally to Goodrich, which was absorbed into United Technologies. The Itek team was merged with Perkin-Elmer and its remnants moved to the P-E facility in Danbury, CT. I worked on the team that developed the concept for the HEXAGON panoramic cameras, which Itek management declined to carry into full-scale development, so the CIA transitioned the project to Perkin-Elmer. I later was chief of systems engineering on the HEXAGON Mapping Camera, which is covered in detail on pages 141-149. Itek also had a part on the DORIAN program, developing the film transport and an aiming telescope before the MOL was cancelled.

I have been a fan of Dr. Baker's many books and periodical articles since the late 1970s. The book is well-written and contains much new information on this subject, and is invaluable to anyone interested in this subject. It is equally well-illustrated, but does contain a couple of minor errors. There was no such thing as the Lockheed RF-104, and the so-called "Wright Model A" purchased by the U.S. Army Signal Corps in 1909, is more correctly referred to as the; "Military Flyer." The only other thing I would have liked to have seen, is better delineation of the applicable launch vehicles. Particularly, the Atlas-Agenas. There is also much less information on U.S. ELINT reconnaissance satellites, which is hardly surprising, given the highly classified nature of the subject. Nevertheless, despite these nitpicky points, the book is well worth having, and provides a great deal of insight into U.S. satellite reconnaissance. I therefore bestow a five star rating.

BEST TO USE THIS BOOK AS A STARTING POINT FOR SATELLITES AND THEIR POSSIBILITIES. FOR MORE CURRENT INFO ON SATELLITES SEE THE INTERNET . QUANTUM CHINESE SATELLITE CHINESE SPY SATELLITE NEW US WEATHER AND GPS SATELLITES

This book is an excellent work. No complaints at all. Product, packaging, and delivery were all first rate. Thanks very much!

Good addition to my Haynes collection

An enjoyable read. Looks cool on a bookshelf too.

Very interesting book on the US spy satellite program from the early years up to the KH-11 Digital /transition stage.

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