In 1963 the US Naval Communication Station at North West Cape in Western Australia became the first US defense facility to be established on Australian soil in peacetime.

During America’s Cold War struggle against communism, North West Cape’s primary function was to communicate with the US fleet in the Indian and Western Pacific Oceans, especially nuclear missile submarines – the Navy’s most powerful deterrent force. Seen as a vital outpost of US defense throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the whole venture was just as monumental for Australia.

In this important and long-overdue history, Barker and Ondaatje examine the significance of North West Cape for Australia-US relations and Australian politics, but pay special attention to the town of Exmouth that was uniquely created to support the base. Drawing on archival records and oral interviews, A Little America in Western Australia brings to light the experiences of Australian civilians and US Navy personnel in a fascinating and often humorous portrait of life at the Cape.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Anthony Barker is a Senior Honorary Research Fellow in History at the University of Western Australia. He has published ten books covering a range of topics from a study of slavery and the Anglo-American anti-slavery movement to a history of cricket in Western Australia. During his tenure at The University of Western Australia, Anthony Barker was instrumental in introducing United States history into the UWA history curriculum. Since retiring from his formal teaching position, Barker has continued to research and write prolifically, and to supervise PhD students.

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