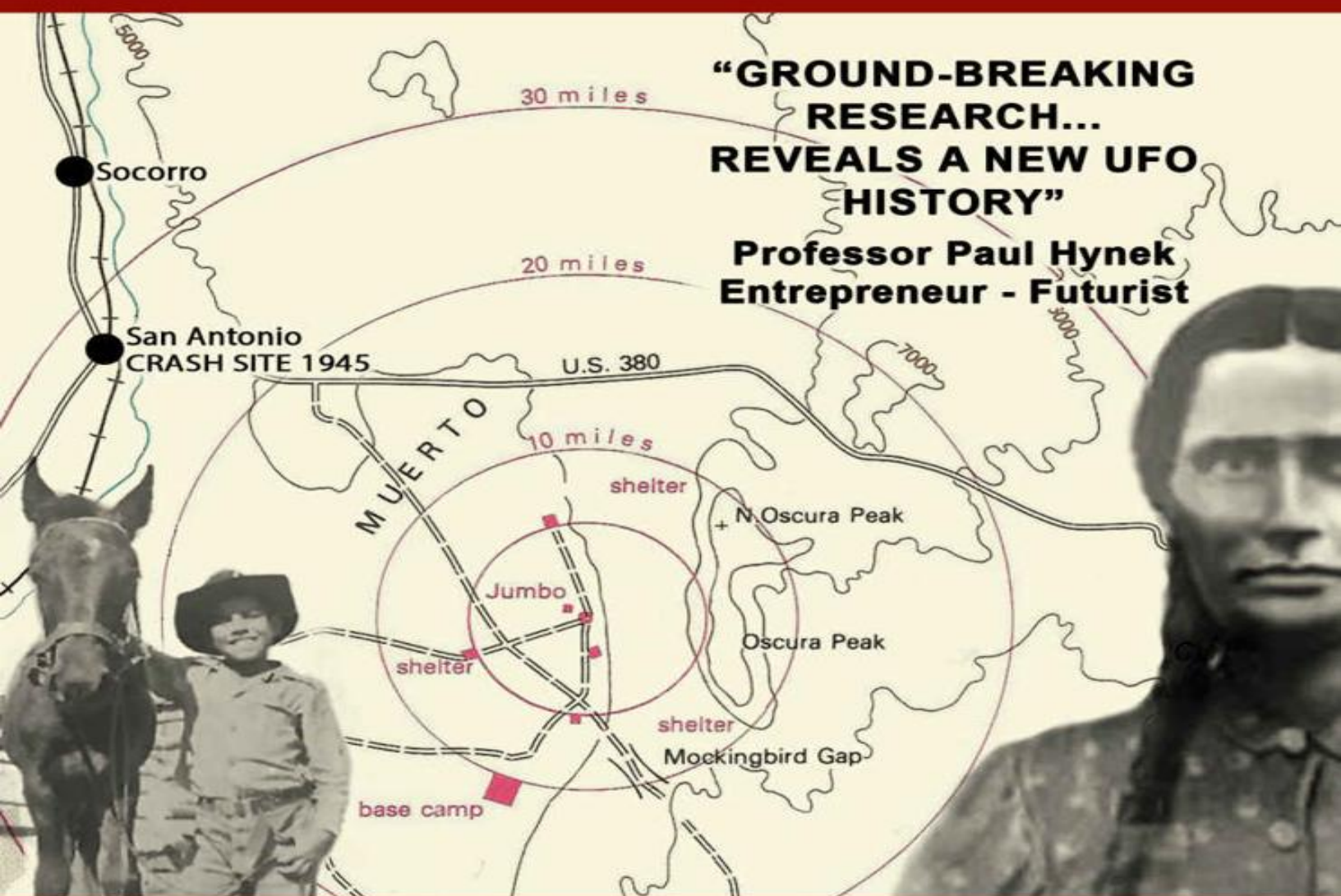


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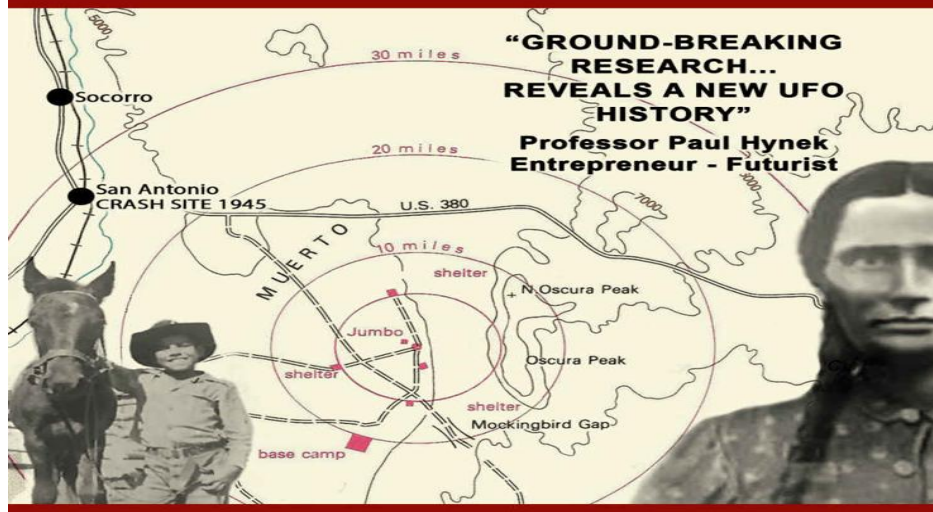
**"GROUND-BREAKING  
RESEARCH...  
REVEALS A NEW UFO  
HISTORY"**

**Professor Paul Hynek  
Entrepreneur - Futurist**

# TRINITY

THE BEST-KEPT SECRET

JACQUES F. VALLÉE  
PAOLA LEOPIZZI HARRIS



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# **TRINITY:**

*The Best-Kept Secret*

Jacques F. VALLÉE

Paola Leopizzi HARRIS

TRINITY: The Best-Kept Secret

by Jacques F. Vallée & Paola Leopizzi Harris Copyright ©2021 by  
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This book is warmly dedicated to the witnesses for their determination and their sharp observations:

Mr. Jose Padilla

Mr. Remigio Baca

Mrs. Sabrina Padilla

and to their families for their willingness to trust us with their testimony.

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# FOREWORD

## ***THE OWL BAR & CAFÉ, OCTOBER 2017***

***San Antonio, New Mexico***

If my friend Ron Brinkley hadn't insisted on buying me a drink at the legendary Owl Bar & Café in San Antonio, New Mexico, I would never have become absorbed in the complex drama of Trinity, and in the forgotten records about the first UFO crash in modern history.

We were driving back after a long, tiring day spent on one of our digging explorations on the Plains of San Augustin (1), as we tried to verify some ancient stories of early UFO crashes in New Mexico, and to retrieve evidence of them that we could actually test in the lab. There were many rumors, dating back to the 1940s, when farmers and ranchers claimed to have picked up strange pieces of metal on their land after seeing a weird object in the sky, often right under the noses of Army grunts who boasted of deep secrets and threatened the locals with jail, or worse, if they ever talked about what they'd found.

Secrecy or not, seventy years had passed, and we had in fact picked up a number of interesting pieces of shredded material, undoubtedly from the crash of *something*. I was in a hurry to take them back to a lab in Silicon Valley, where interested colleagues had made

plans to run them through the latest testing equipment. I knew the old stories, some of which I had verified, about such items getting lost or stolen, so I felt I was on a mission to secure our data once and for all.

I had a plane to catch, back to San Francisco, and I was a bit nervous. Yet I had known Ron long enough to trust his instinct. It wasn't the first time we had chased elusive witnesses, climbed up and down western hillsides around sites where local people spoke of unidentified lights and scary encounters, and dug up interesting material. Both of us were dusty and tired from the long drive, exposure to the thin air and to the sun at that altitude, so he had little difficulty convincing me that a cup of hot coffee and a piece of apple pie, or a beer with salted almonds, would be a nice break on the way back to the airport in Albuquerque.

I also knew that he must have had something else to tell me; or to teach me.

Over the years I have learned to love the special atmosphere of New Mexico. I had traveled there with Dr. Hynek, back in the 1970s, to work at Corralitos Observatory. I had returned occasionally for meetings of scientists at Los Alamos and other places with a keen, albeit discreet, professional interest in UFOs. But this latest trip had been the most beautiful, an exciting survey of the High Desert, culminating in the recovery of long-buried material samples at a place local researchers had suspected from their own observations, contacts and confidences from trusted neighbors, to be the actual site of a very weird crash.

Ron, the local boy, was proud of his New Mexico ancestry. His family had owned thousands of acres there, raising Longhorns on large ranches, well before White Sands became a huge military base, long before the American West became a modern place with big cities, universities and

factories and airports, and lost some of its unique beauty. Yet the mystery remained.

^ ^ ^

“You need to see this place,” Ron said as we were sliding into a booth, past dozens of old pictures on the walls, memorabilia from World War Two, bits of letters and many dollar bills stapled to the plaster, fluttering in the air every time someone swung the door open.

“This is where it all started,” he went on. “Nineteen-forty-five. Forget everything you’ve heard about the Roswell crash: It’s a very significant story, obviously, but it came two years later; there are many conflicting tales about it, but no tangible evidence remains, and nobody was there to watch it fall. As for the Kenneth Arnold’s sighting, which led to the term ‘flying saucer,’ that was also in June 1947... That’s important, but only in terms of what the public was told. Or not told.”

“Yes, but the journalists loved it,” I said. “People could relate to it.”

“The journalists loved it, yes, and the TV people loved it even more,” Ron replied, “but in the process everybody had missed the most significant case. It had quietly taken place here, precisely one month after the first nuclear explosion in history, as if in direct response to it. Nobody spoke about it for many years. It happened just a few miles from this diner. That’s where we’ve got to start.”

The waitress walked over and took our order. The place was quiet. Local customers were drinking at the bar, relaxing after a day’s work. Ron rested his back against the wooden booth and gestured to the open space between us and the other tables.

“Back in 1945, the scientists of Project Manhattan lived around here, in San Antonio, at the critical time for the assembly of the Bomb,” he said as quietly as if he’d spoken about his neighbors in some sleepy little village. “If you were an American scientist yanked out of your university campus by the Army, or a Nobel prize-winning atomic physicist from Europe working hard to defeat Hitler, this was the only half-decent place for a meal.”

I tried in vain to imagine the scene. Some of the photographs were framed; they showed the big propeller airplanes of the time, men in fatigues standing in front of a hangar. The pictures were old and had turned brown. There were cartoons too, and posters encouraging discretion about the war, stern warnings against rumors and gossip. I took it all in. Or rather, it took me. I knew the historical facts. But it seemed useless for me, a Frenchman born in 1939, to reconcile those few pieces of paper, the faded pictures, the crude drawings, with the cataclysms of the Atomic Age, and this funny watering-hole in the tiny town of San Antonio, in the middle of an America desert.

^ ^ ^

I remember the Second World War. How could I not? The French town where I was born was a key lock on the great Oise River and the only direct road from Normandy to Paris. It was seized by the Germans in 1940, and three years later it became a prime target for the British and the Americans in the days leading to the Normandy invasion, because they needed to cut off German reinforcements. Pontoise, as the town was called, was bombed eighteen times in raids of the Royal Air Force and the US Army. Much of it was reduced to smoking ashes.

Our town was liberated on August 30, 1944.

To a five-year-old child, a world war is surprisingly uncomplicated: The first house I remember, rented by my parents, sat on a hill overlooking the river and the two strategic bridges. It was blown up by a direct hit from a stray American bomb in the middle of an inferno. Our second rented house, further away, also sat on a hill from which we could see the valley and even Paris in the distance, on a clear day. By then I was old enough to watch the aerial battles with my parents when we knew there was no viable shelter: Relentlessly, German batteries were firing at the attackers. Planes fell apart, spiraled down in flames. Snipers took aim at the parachuting pilots, helpless in the sky. That was faster and cheaper than taking prisoners. There was nothing there that a five-year-old kid couldn't watch, hear and understand readily; and remember, too, in vivid detail, although I was very fortunate not to see death at close range.

It was combat, but it was “normal” combat, in a classical war, fought with bullets and chemical explosives. I saw what that could do. But neither I nor my parents had any concept of a nuclear war. Even today, there's never been a nuclear explosion in Western Europe.

Now I was thinking of far-away France while eating some apple pie in a quiet diner in New Mexico and my friend Ron was reminding me that we were just a few miles from the Trinity site, the location of the first atomic blast in history.

My mind sank into the scene; it drifted to the horror and the splendid immensity of it.

Ron misunderstood my silence. As if upset that I wasn't paying enough attention, he leaned over the table and insisted: “That old house, ranch-style, dilapidated, the one we passed, across the street, that's where Dr. Robert Oppenheimer stayed at the time (2). He'd come in here, always

with a briefcase full of papers. I've spoken to the old-timers: They greeted him and just called him 'Oppie.' They had no idea what he really did. But they knew enough to leave him alone, and not to ask questions. He would sit in that corner, away from the GIs and the cowboys, sometimes with colleagues who came from Oak Ridge and Chicago, to work on the equations for the bomb. Some had escaped from Italy, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany, all over."

Ron concluded, calmly: "This place is legendary. It changed the world."

I trusted Ron, his sense of history, his passion for details about the lives of local people he knew so well. Another reality was slowly painting itself in my mind as I listened to his recounting of the four weeks that changed everything.

He took a drink, leaned forward, all business now: "The first test took place on July 16, 1945. It was a plutonium bomb, hanging from a tower at the place that became known, for future history books, as *Ground Zero*. That's when the military knew they were ready. Three weeks later, on August 5<sup>th</sup>, (August 6<sup>th</sup> in Japan), "Little Boy," a novel but relatively simple uranium bomb, reduced Hiroshima and its inhabitants to fine radioactive dust. And just three days later, on August 8<sup>th</sup>, a plutonium bomb they called "Fat Man" in homage to Winston Churchill pulverized the giant military naval complex and the city of Nagasaki. On August 14, stunned and disheartened, the emperor of Japan, the living Son of Heaven, capitulated without conditions. *And two days later, August 16<sup>th</sup>, the first UFO crash in modern history took place a few miles from here.*"

"The funny thing is, nobody has done any serious research about it. With a few exceptions, the folks who call themselves 'ufologists' have remained fixated on Roswell."

“Why is that?” I asked.

“Because the Army covered up everything very well and the two witnesses of this particular crash were too scared to speak up. The scientific community was kept in the dark, as usual. There were good reasons for that.”

So, I finally realized, that’s why Ron had insisted on grabbing a drink at the Owl Bar & Café. We had worked together long enough for him to know I would take the hint, and explore the trail he’d mapped out for me.

^ ^ ^

As a researcher of ufology, I have been criticized for not taking an active enough interest in contact and “crashed saucer” cases, like Roswell.

The accusation is a valid one.

As a young scientist in Europe, I had read the books of “Professor George Adamski of Mt. Palomar observatory” in French translation with amused interest, relieved by occasional giggles when he spoke of his scientific prowess (he had a small telescope on the slopes of the mountain) and his extrasolar paramours **(3)**. From the admittedly inflated attitude of educated Europeans, it was easy to dismiss such American saucer tales, especially because American scientists were doing the same thing. Another early “contactee” advocate, Frank Scully **(4)**, was more credible but his technical backing quickly evaporated, and again I was left with amused skepticism.

All of us, as it turns out, were wrong about Scully, but that’s another story.

On June 21, 1947 there was an incident at Maury Island in Puget Sound, in the State of Washington, considered the first American crash case

complete with “evidence” and multiple witnesses. It came just before the celebrated sighting by pilot businessman Kenneth Arnold and seemed to support its credibility, yet it only yielded a pile of slag and a lot of welcome publicity for entertaining pulp, but no worthwhile data. My colleagues assure me it was a hoax. I am not so sure. I regret not following up on that one. Today I would still like to get a little piece of that slag, and test it, just in case.

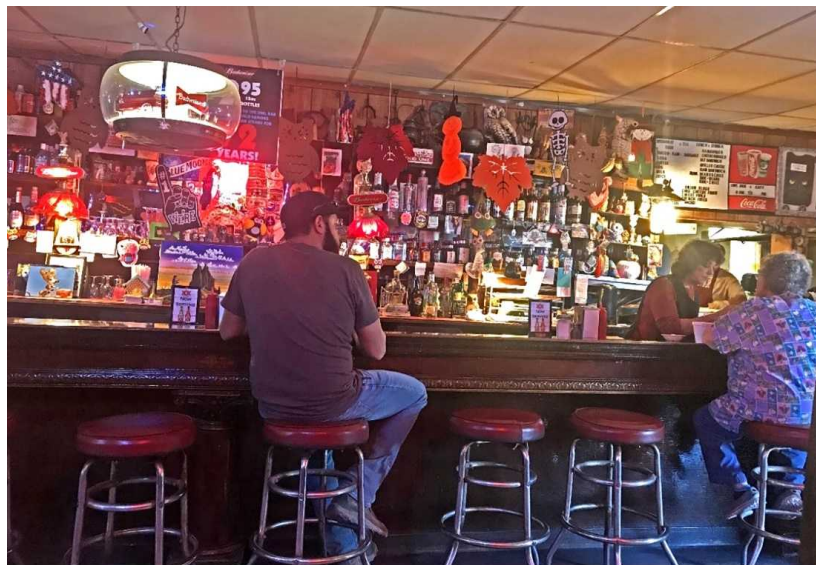


Fig. 1: The scene at the Owl Bar & Café, San Antonio, New Mexico. (Photo: JV)





Fig. 2: My friend, researcher Ron Brinkley, the last time I saw him, October 2017.

When I moved to the US with my wife in 1962, we brought with us the first consistent international computer-savvy database of vetted UFO cases to Austin, Texas, where I worked on the first digital map of Mars for NASA and recorded galactic observations at McDonald Observatory while pursuing the statistical study of the UFO phenomenon: After eliminating such known sources of errors as the planet Venus and the occasional swamp gas, definite patterns emerged, in space and time. This led us to correspond with Dr. Hynek, the Air Force's scientific consultant on Project Blue Book (5). In 1964 I joined him at Northwestern University to work on a doctorate and pursue this research. Crashed saucers were not on the agenda, but Allen had read all those reports. He showed me why there was something wrong with every story. Either witnesses were missing, testimony was dubious or second hand, or vital evidence simply could not be found, no matter how hard you looked: there was nothing for a scientist to take to the lab, and secrecy wasn't the only reason, or even the main one.

Some stories about a "special weather balloon" or a cluster of high-altitude *radiosondes*, or test dummies with parachutes, were offered as

“explanations.” Everybody got confused.

Back at Wright-Patterson Base in Ohio, which I visited with him in 1964 on a special, two-day clearance, we were shown a metal cabinet with many carefully-labeled pieces of strange rocks and ordinary twisted metal that the American public had sent to the Air force as...that long-tortured, misused, misplaced word again: *Evidence!*

Even after researcher Stanton Friedman and others seriously investigated and publicized the Roswell case of early July 1947, with its welcome flurry of testimony, field research yielded nothing more than proof of blatant, continued, boring official lies.

*Evidence of official lying about UFOs is not evidence of the reality of UFOs.*

Deceptive official posturing at the service of bureaucratic tranquility is nothing new, even in the form of lies to Congress, under oath, in uniform, your right hand on the Holy Bible. The few scientists who doggedly followed the reports, interviewed witnesses and compiled serious files could only look at each other, shake their heads, and ask: “*If you were smart enough to come here from Alpha Centauri, why would you crash on that guy’s farm?*”

I still don’t have a good answer to that one. But what if you didn’t come from Alpha Centauri at all? What if your spacecraft *was designed to crash*? What if it was a gift? Or a signal? Or a warning? The hopeful inception of a strategic conversation? What if it wasn’t a “spacecraft” in our current, primitive sense of the word? What if you didn’t care if the occupants died? Nobody had seriously considered those alternatives.

^ ^ ^

Once I was established in the US, with a PhD in artificial intelligence and a job in real science, I did make renewed efforts to probe some of the stories. Maintaining a critical, even skeptical bias, I began a collection of artifacts that has expanded to some twenty-five items, mostly (but not always) of metallic composition, from four continents. But such a collection, like the one at “Wright-Pat”, doesn’t prove anything by itself. So I sought out the early believers and even the cultists. I met with George Hunt Williamson, one of Adamski’s supporters, who left me puzzled. He had signed the affidavit stating he was a witness to a “Contact” Adamski claimed in November 1952, but he admitted to me he’d not *actually* seen an Alien, or even a saucer. I went to the site, in the Mojave Desert, to understand the lay of the land: Maybe he had glimpsed a silhouette, and some sort of light in the sky. (6) I came back empty-handed.

As my research in computer science took me to Stanford University and to SRI, I contributed to the development of social networking on the early Arpanet and the later Internet as one scientist among our group of Principal investigators for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). That work brought me into contact with government teams that had their own files—and considerable yet discreet interest—regarding the UFO problem at the highest level. Those contacts expanded when my colleagues and I developed a series of venture capital funds to invest in medicine and high-tech, an activity that continues today. Alongside this professional activity, I continued to research the history and structure of the UFO phenomenon.

During most of that period, government data about recovered craft and purported Alien bodies was highly classified, so I tried to find corroborative evidence elsewhere. In Chicago, I’d spoken to Ray Palmer, a remarkable man, the genial editor of *Amazing Stories* and of the early

pulp magazine *Flying Saucers*, who had launched the first reports and financed Kenneth Arnold's later investigations. He could only repeat stories I'd read a dozen times. They all began in the summer of 1947.

*If there was a genuine UFO crash in 1945, two years before Roswell, but only four weeks after the first atomic explosion, that was an extraordinary fact.*

For one thing, it meant that practically all the books about UFOs, whose first sentence is always: "The Flying Saucer Era began on June 24, 1947 when businessman Kenneth Arnold saw an unidentified object in the sky..." were plain wrong. Arnold's sighting is reliable and it triggered the media's fascination with the problem, but the 1945 case was more important. It represented a source of key questions one could no longer avoid. The first one being, "Why has everyone missed it?" The second one: "Are some witnesses still around?" The third one: "Why on Earth would they remain silent all those years?" And the fourth one: "Where's the damn Evidence?"

Those are questions that knowledgeable Italian journalist Paola Leopizzi Harris had started to ask before me, and even before Ron. Formally trained in Italy as an educator, and a long-time, trusted research associate and translator for Dr. Hynek, she had been at the site before any other investigator. She is the only researcher who met both witnesses, and recorded their testimony. She wrote to me at the end of July 2018 when she became aware of my interest in the case, and we made arrangements to meet in September when she came to lecture in California.

Paola told me about her frustration to receive no support to analyze the data: "I have worked on it for seven years and the only people to take it seriously are outside the country," she said. "American researchers do

almost no field work, arguing it's expensive and takes too much time! I can bring you a slice of metal from a bracket, retrieved from inside the craft by the nine-year-old boy who took it from a plaque on the wall.”

When I realized how much work she had done, and we spoke about how much more could be accomplished, we joined forces and quickly assembled a small team to re-examine the facts and further research the above four questions. You will see how they turned out to be intertwined, in spite of their extraordinary and occasionally shocking nature, in remarkably rational ways.

We were able to take her initial observations to the next logical level. But that investigation itself opens up even deeper questions.

Our findings are the subject of this book. They challenge the very nature of this field of research and yes, of science. They pose fundamental interrogations not just for a few scientists, but for Humanity itself: its past history; its present and its future.

In the weeks that followed that congenial discussion at the Owl Café, I began assembling the documents that had randomly accumulated in my own files, about related events of the time: folders with names like Alamogordo, Socorro, Los Alamos, San Antonio (the town in New Mexico, not the one in Texas), White Sands, and all the notes I had taken over the years, after meetings with colleagues from NASA Ames, Lawrence Livermore, Oak Ridge and Brookhaven, atomic laboratories I had visited in the course of my scientific work and my computer career; all major research centers where there were active government scientists willing to talk to me, always off the record, about what they had seen, and done.

Other researchers who had explored the Southwestern sites before me graciously contributed their own research documents. Paola compiled vast

repertories of notes, films and tape recordings for us to transcribe and review. They painted a stunning background for a true history of the UFO saga.

The picture that emerged was of a dangerous time, a period of seemingly super-human creativity, of science at the extreme edge of secrecy and danger, of crazy experimentation with elements unheard of in all of history, without any sure guidelines for controlling their release, and indeed, no moral precedent to assess the scale of the destruction that would follow, or the waste in thousands of human lives.

Ron Brinkley's blunt history lesson at the Owl Café, one day in October 2017, led to the research that resulted in this book. The events we are about to describe, along with the step-by-step details of our investigation with its twists and turns, demonstrate the existence of levels of reality science has failed to recognize, even as it unlocked the power of the atom: *somebody was watching*. From that side of reality came material forms we could perceive, decode, and partially understand, yet the phenomena were beyond human technology at the time, and they remain an enigma today.

Who are these emissaries from elsewhere? Once we set aside the deceptive mythologies that have accumulated around the problem—silly tales of Martian bases and political delusions about Nazi bases at the South Pole, speculation about superior races and the obsession of complicated conspiracies by government insiders—we are left with plain evidence for an unknown intelligence.

Why should it come as a surprise that consciousness can take larger forms than our limited brains have imagined? And how can we start designing an appropriate research program capable of interacting with

other manifestations of life in a fantastic universe we've only started to map?

I dearly wish I could share the thrill of the resulting quest and our early conclusions with Ron, but we lost him in August 2018. He was on his bike, at five in the morning, rushing to his job at an airport boutique that sold local Indian art to tourists in Albuquerque. A speeding truck hit him hard, dragged his body and crushed his head, in spite of the helmet he was wearing.

Ronny, we miss you. The research you inspired will continue. But I will never drive across the range again without thinking of what you taught me about the beauty of that land, its people, their history, and the mysteries they remember.