

UFO 'captive' recalls encounter

THORNTON, N.H. (AP) — Betty Hill shows no fear as she walks from a back road in Thornton onto a wide path that leads into the woods, but the first time she remembers being here was different.

"They dragged me, kicking and screaming," she said, speaking of kidnapers who she said blocked the road, took her and husband out of their car and yanked them into the woods to be examined — in a flying saucer.

Twenty-five years ago today, the Hills arrived home in Portsmouth after a drive through the White Mountains puzzled by stains and tears on Betty's dress, scuffs on Barney's shoes, shiny spots on their car, watches that had stopped and no memory of two hours of the trip.

After the void was filled for them through hypnosis, their account of being kidnapped by beings from another solar system made the Hills immediate celebrities. The book, "The Interrupted Journey" tells their story.

"Right here is where they were standing," Hill, 67, said on a recent return to the spot where she says she was captured. "And this is where they took us," she said, heading into the woods.

Until their 1964 hypnosis, the Hills remembered only being followed by a bright object in the night sky as they drove south through New Hampshire from Montreal to Portsmouth. They remembered turning off the main road onto a dirt road and stalling out after being confronted by "strange men" in the road. That's all.

On her return to the area, Hill stood in Franconia Notch, near the famed Old Man Of the Mountain rock profile. She said the flying craft that stalked them in 1961 stopped when it reached a ridge near the profile, then "waited for us to catch up to them, then followed along the contours of the top of the mountains."

She thought it was a UFO; Barney thought it was a plane or satellite and wanted to put the whole thing out of his mind after returning home.

But Betty had nightmares about being captured and Barney's health began failing. When he did not respond to medication, a doctor suspected emotional problems and suggested hypnosis. During one session he mentioned being captured by strange beings. Betty, under separate hypnosis, recounted the same events and the story began to unfold.

The beings, they recounted, approached as Barney tried to restart the car, took them from the car and through the woods to a



Betty Hill stands near the spot where she says she and her husband were abducted 25 years ago today by strange beings in a flying saucer.

glowing object in the forest.

"I was fighting," Hill said. "I'm probably the first person in the world who took a sock at them."

As evidence, she still has the torn and stained dress she wore that night.

Standing in a clearing that she said was the landing spot, she described a thorough, medical-type examination that, when recalled under hypnosis, evoked terror in her and in Barney, who died in 1969.

She said returning was "a weird feeling, something like maybe going back to the spot where you had a car accident or something."

"Somebody suggested that I buy the land and build a restaurant shaped like a UFO," she said. She's not interested.

But the incident did spark her interest in UFOs. She regularly visits a secluded spot near Portsmouth that she calls "her area," where she reports seeing them all the time.

"It's not frightening now," she

said. "I go out there and watch them and they don't make any wreathening gestures at me. If they did, or if one came too close, I'd still leave. But to me, they are astronauts from another solar system."

She said she and Barney tried repeatedly to retrace their 1961 route, but could not find their capture spot until sometime after the hypnosis.

Their psychiatrist had told them, she said, that they would stop searching, but that if the spot existed, they somehow would find it.

A year or so later, they rode through the mountains with relatives searching for a place to camp.

"All of a sudden we got up here and said, 'Oh my God! We recognized the place immediately. We came down here, stopped the car, jumped out and ran up here, up the path,'" she said.

She said that for a while after the hypnosis, she tried to pass off the incident as a bad dream.

"For a while I tried to tell myself it never happened, because there was a lot of pressure. So I'd go to bed and say, 'I'll forget it. It never happened.' But then, after a while, I couldn't do that anymore."

Hill is not fazed by people who don't believe her story.

"I say, 'You're entitled to your opinion, but if it happens to you, you know who to contact.'"

Hill gives lectures on UFOs and her experience. Her main message is, "They are here."

She said people who have never seen a UFO probably don't know what to look for. "I say anytime you see a light in the sky, check it out."

A rainbow appeared over her head as she stood at the capture spot.