

"He had nothing to gain and everything to lose by telling his story. His account is one of the premier cases in the world. The bravery of his decision to reveal the abduction has stood the test of time with no recounting."

Budd Hopkins,
UFO Investigator

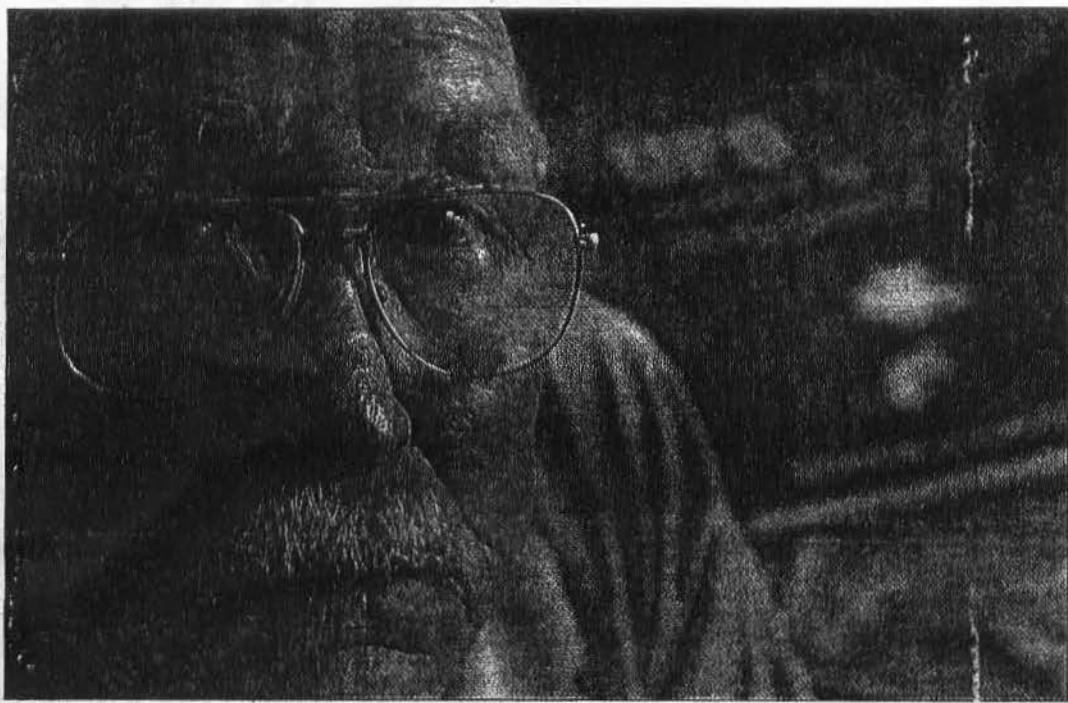
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Anniversary of odyssey



DINAH ROGERS/THE SUN HERALD

Hickson in 1982. His book has been reissued.



JOHN FITZGUGH/THE SUN HERALD

Charles Hickson claims he and Calvin R. Parker Jr. were abducted on Oct. 11, 1973, by three robot-looking creatures coming from a spacecraft on the shore of the Pascagoula River. Hickson's account of the story is told in the book 'UFO Contact at Pascagoula.'



MIKE RAMSEY/THE SUN HERALD/1977

Hickson stands at the site along the Pascagoula River where he claims he was abducted by a UFO. This picture was taken in 1977 when he was being interviewed by a film crew.

30 years later, 2 men stand by their UFO story

By GARY HOLLAND
THE SUN HERALD

PASCAGOULA — Shipbuilders Charles E. Hickson and Calvin R. Parker Jr. hoped to hook some trout or redfish when they went fishing on the Pascagoula River near the U.S. 90 drawbridge 30 years ago this week.

What they said they found instead has had this county and country talking for three decades.

In interviews last week, Hickson, 72, and Parker, 49,

UFO incident created frenzy, A-3

re-emphasized their account of three robot-looking creatures coming from a spacecraft, referred to as an unidentified flying object, and taking them onboard and examining them.

"This night would change our lives forever," Hickson said.

He was right.

The night was Thursday, Oct. 11, 1973. Parker, then 19, lived with the Hickson family in Gautier and worked with Hickson at F.B. Walker Shipyard. Late in the evening, after getting off work, they fished a few spots between the grain elevator and drawbridge, and were at a dilapidated pier at the old Shaupeter Shipyard when it happened about 9:30 p.m.

"A zipping sound was all I heard," Hickson wrote in his memoirs. "Some type craft approached: no engine noise, just a pulsating blue light, about 2 feet off the ground."

He said the craft was about 30 feet long, 10 feet high, and shaped like a football but blunt at one end with a dome-like structure on top.

"An opening appeared in the end that was toward us and three things appeared through the opening. I shook from fear as Calvin screamed," Hickson wrote in his book, "UFO Contact at Pascagoula."

Three five-foot, robotlike creatures covered with rough, looking material, not skin,

glided out and floated above the ground, he said.

Hickson said two of the creatures caught him by the arms and floated him into the spaceship, and a third got Parker.

"Inside, the light was almost blinding but for some strange reason I couldn't close my eyes," Hickson said. "Something that resembled a big eye seemed to come out from the wall, and stopped about 6 inches from my face. The eye lingered there and then moved over my entire body."

He said he felt no pain but could not move during the scanning. "Then we glided through the opening to the place they had taken me."

He saw Parker standing outside with his arms outstretched almost in shock.

"There was more terror on Calvin's face than I have seen on anyone," Hickson said. "Many times I had seen men in shock in Korea, where he received five Battle Stars during 20 months service in that war."

"I started to crawl toward him, but I heard the zipping sound again and I saw the blue flashing lights and almost instantly the craft was gone."

'Shouldn't we tell someone?'

Parker remembered being carried to the door of the craft. "Everything was real bright and I passed out," he said.

After their release, Parker asked: "Charlie, shouldn't we tell someone? At least tell the military authorities."

"I'm going to be the laughing stock of the country, but I'll tell what I seen and what happened," Hickson said.

They contacted Keesler Air Force Base and were told to call the sheriff. At the sheriff's office they were questioned into the morning hours and secretly taped in what they thought was a private conversation that led law enforcement officers to lend credibility to their encounter.

In following months they would be interviewed by UFO experts and the military and undergo questioning while under hypnosis. Hickson passed a polygraph test.

"I have no doubt there are inhabited worlds out there in space," he said Thursday in an interview. He said he has received telepathic vibes since his encounter but would not go into detail until he fully understands what they mean. Earlier he has said he received communications telepathically from space: "We mean no one any harm. There is no need for fear. We will communicate again."

One point that hasn't been brought out, Hickson said last week, is "that under deep hypnosis I recalled seeing a window while I was in the spacecraft and there were some beings behind the window and they looked like us." He said robots were possibly used outside the craft because the beings from another planet didn't want to be exposed to earth's atmosphere.

He feels a visit from a distant planet is possible because of advanced mental powers allowing mind-over-matter space travel.

Hickson said he believes God created all of the universe. "Everything is possible with God. This experience strengthened my belief in God."

No aftereffects

Hickson and his wife live in Gautier with regular visits by five children, 10 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

"That incident was the first