

### Coalfire Story Number 13...Pickens County, Al Tornados

No, not the Pickens County High football team, but the tornados in Pickens County. I will start with the one of March 3, 1953 at 1.10pm in the afternoon. I remember is well. There had been reports of earlier tornados in the county, but those did not involve me. This one did. I was looking forward to a date that night. Seventeen years old and driving my brothers fancy red and black Ford car, with its rolled and pleated leather interios, and it's cutoff muffler control hidden under the seat..Well, more on that in another story. Mom and I were home alone, as Dad went to the cellar at the least sign of storm and Mom would not go at all. I elected to stay with Mom this time as sometimes I would go with Dad and other times I would stay with Mom. The skies turned black and it was almost like night. The wind had the trees laying over almost parallel to the ground. We were kind of scare already with the house seemly ready to blow away any minute when we looked out the kithen window, over toward the rail road tracks and could see those big creamery cans being blown from the dairy over near McShan and were probably 500 or so feet in the air. Mom grabbed me and headed to the bed room, laying across the bed with the ceiling opening up and dumping years of dust and stuff on top of us. Mom and praying, out loud, and I had never heard her pray before. I think that was when it hit me that maybe we might not survive this storm. So, I kind of figured this might be it. I guess heard Mom praying as we were spared. Uncle Dee's barn loft was separated from the barn and it flew over Uncle Dee and family as he was loading the family in their car to heard for a storm cellar. It clipped a power line running to Uncle Dee's house creating a huge ball of fire just over Uncle Dee's head. I think that was the day Uncle Dee found Jesus. He went from a rounder to a good Christian man, cleaning up his speech was the most impressive to me at the time. I was used to him cussing a good bit and that all changed. I don't know that I changed, but I do know it made me think about God's power over heaven and earth...Today, if we are having stormy weather during the night I keep a watchful eye on the heavens. I know that is God's call, but still, I keep watch...By the way, you can goggle Tornado Projects Online and it will show you the tornados from 1950 - 2012 that shows their strength, time they hit, injuries or deaths, etc. By the way, the storm of March 3, 1952 was an F-3. Put you brower over Pickens County and click...