

# UFO Photographed over Okinawa

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Our contributor is Chairman of Modern Space Flight Association\* and the following report is taken from this Japanese group's *UFO Newsletter* of September 27, October 5 and October 11, 1972.

AROUND the time that a TWA pilot and two crew members sighted a UFO over the Western Pacific off Okinawa at approximately 8.00 p.m. Japanese Time (11.00 a.m. G.M.T.) on September 22, 1972, two photographs were allegedly taken by a senior high school student in Okinawa. This was reported by two of Japan's five leading newspapers, the *Yomiuri Shinbun* and the *Mainichi Shinbun* on September 27, 1972.

The student who took the photographs is Mr. Masahiro Asanuma (aged 21), 4th Grade Correspondence Course student of Oruku Prefecture Senior High School, and who lives at 91-2, Yorimiya, Naha City, Okinawa. They were taken when he was attending the Summer School Camp of the Correspondence Course held at the Young People's Field Centre at Uji, Nago City, in the central part of Okinawa Island, together with forty schoolmates and their teacher, Mr. Yoshio Takaesu†, who also witnessed the object.

At about 8.30 p.m., according to the *Mainichi*, a bright object, brighter than the moon, moved from west to east in the north-western sky. The object made its appearance in the night sky at about 50° altitude in the form of a yellowish-white belt of light. At the time, the witnesses were admiring the full moon, as it was the Day of the Harvest Moon (the Japanese enjoy the full moon once a year on this day—one of the outstanding events in the life of the Japanese people in general). The object flew slowly from the western coast of Heneji to the east in the direction of Kunigami.

Although the moonlight was very bright and the sky was rather light, the object was "fluorescent-coloured, like the moonlight," according to Mr. Asanuma. "An aeroplane is burning! No, it's a flying saucer!" the students cried. Having heard such cries, he aimed his camera (a Cannon 35 mm. QL, with 50 mm. lens, iris 1.9, using Fuji film, monocro SS) and released the shutter four times. He took the first two photographs of the object with flash, but they were failures. Then he set the shutter at B, and took the next two photographs with the iris open and pressed the shutter for about 5-6 seconds each. These two were the photographs which caused the sensation. The object finally disappeared into the cloud about two minutes later.

There are scores of other witnesses of the same, or a similar object, at about the same time in various parts of Okinawa, such as Daitojima, Koza City, Kunigami-Mura, Ogimimura and Naha City, etc. But as to whether this was the same object which was observed by the pilot and crew members of the TWA flight (and also of the KLM flight) we cannot give you a definite answer because the speed was reported as being different. Furthermore, we have already received one newspaper clipping from a member in Okinawa (from the *Okinawa Times*) which reported other sightings

of the same object on the same night by some other residents in various parts of Okinawa. However, these reports show that the object flew approximately from north to south, leaving a wide trail, and not from west to east as described by Mr. Asanuma. What does this mean? Was there a misunderstanding of the direction on the part of the student?

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There was another photograph taken during the early morning of the next day, September 23, in Osaka City. This was reported in the *Nippon Keizai Shinbun* of September 28 as follows: "On September 27, when the UFO photographed over Okinawa became a topic



Masahiro Asanuma's first photograph



Asanuma's second photograph: eyewitnesses described the object's swift direction changes, but there also appears to be a degree of hand-shake

in the street, a photographer living in Osaka visited us and submitted a photo saying that a strange object had showed up on his photo too . . ." He is Tatsuro Okazaki (aged 41), who lives in Takeyama Building, Tsurigane-cho, Hijashi-ku, Osaka, where he has a small camera shop. I visited him on September 29 and heard how it was taken.

He wanted to take a photograph showing the successive positions of the moon in the sky during the whole night for the enlightenment of his 9-year-old son, Shin-ichi, but in order to do so, it was necessary to take four frames. He fixed his camera, a Fujica 701 with 28 mm. wide-angle lens, on top of his building, and made successive exposures from about 10.00 p.m. to 5.00 a.m. He selected the night of the Harvest Moon. Exposures were made by opening the cap in front of the lens by hand, approximately once every 30 minutes, for 1-3 seconds each, depending on the brightness of the moon at the time, with iris 5.6 and shutter left open. Sometimes he made 2-3 successive exposures at a time, so that 2 or 3 images of the moon were caught closely positioned with each other. In the photograph in question, six images of the moon are shown diagonally in the left-hand corner of the picture (two exposures at the first time, one exposure at the second time, and three exposures at the third time), about 30 minutes apart from each other. When the four photographs were pasted up together in a fan arrangement, this resulted in one big frame showing the movement of the moon that night.

In the top right corner of the resulting large frame, an enigmatic trail of something is caught by the lens. It is described in the newspaper as a "tail of light just drawn by a fine brush, with a starry point". In fact, there is also discernible a second, faint knot in the lower tail and a faint side arm to the right.

As to the nature of this strange image, the newspaper comments: "At first it was hinted that it was the planet Venus, but as the planet Venus could not be in the western sky in the morning, this speculation was cast away at once. Mr. Fumio Toda of the Astronomy Department of Osaka Municipal Electrical Science Museum denies the possibility of its being a star, saying 'It is too low to be Capera (0.1 magnitude).' As it was just after the sighting of a strange flying object in Okinawa, people said that it too may have been a flying saucer, but all the specialists were against that idea. Professor Shigeji Fujinami of Kyoto College of Arts and Textiles, who is an expert on astronomical photography, says: 'It may have been a trail of a meteor, or the phenomenon of aerial electric discharge. But if it was not, then it may have been a mischief of the camera.'"

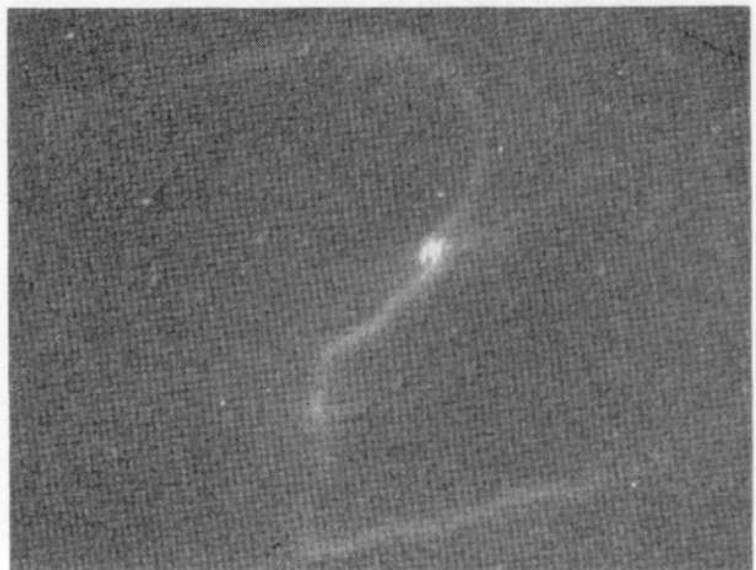
I do not think it was a "mischief" of the lens, and prefer the former hypothesis, i.e. that of "trail of a meteor" but can a meteor progress in such a complicated way? Could the wind disfigure the trail? . . . That is a point to check.

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† This pronunciation may be wrong. Although we use the same Chinese characters here in Japan proper and in Okinawa, the pronunciations in Okinawa are rather strange and we cannot know them without checking them directly.



Tatsuro Okazaki's composite photograph



Enlarged detail from Okazaki's photograph

# A French landing in 1944

F. Lagarde

This article has been prepared from a translation, by Gordon Creighton, of a report, with commentary, that was published in *Lumières dans la Nuit* No. 118 (June 1972).\*

THE statement of the eyewitness, Madame Madeleine Arnoux, is as follows:

"These happenings date back to the summer of 1944. I was 13 years old then, and I used to go on my bicycle every week to a farm several kilometres from my home in order to get some provisions. Leaving Toulon-sur-Arroux (71) (Michelin map No. 69, sheet No. 17) I was riding along the pleasant road RD 42, which is lined with woods, towards the village known as Le Verger.

"Shortly before arriving at the village, I dismounted to pick some wild berries that I knew I would find there. At that point there is a dirt-road that forks off from the highway and runs away to the right through the woods. It was along this dirt-track that I was walking, slowly, looking for berries as I went. Quite mechanically, I looked up . . .

"A few hundred metres further on, the road climbs a bit and takes a pronounced curve to the right and disappears in the woodland. And it was precisely at that spot that the *thing* was standing, stationary. I recall that it was a very warm day, thundery, and that the sky was pretty overcast.

"Well, then, up there ahead, something was standing beside the trees, and *there were some beings quite near it*. Looking back on it now, I think the machine must have been of about the size of one of our small cars today (Volkswagen class), and it was of a dull metallic grey colour. I don't remember whether I noticed any openings in it. The beings that were beside it must have been less than 1 metre in height, and were dressed in a sort of brown-coloured overalls. They made no motion or gesture in my direction, and I, for my part, was rooted to the spot.

"How long did this mutual observation of each other last? I can't say, but I remember the oppressive atmosphere and the thundery state of the weather, and I remember how I had the feeling that I was unable to move . . . Then suddenly I *was* able to do so. I wanted to get my bike, which was lying a few metres from me. It took just the time needed for me to bend down as I got it, and then, when I looked up again towards the strange apparition, there was nothing there . . . All there was to be seen, at the spot where it had been, was a violent wind blowing the trees about. I didn't think of looking up in the air, where, if I had done, I should no doubt have still been able to see the machine as it was flying away.

"I was terrified and made off at full speed to the farm, where, needless to say, I didn't say a word about it! And nor did I talk about it when I had got back home either, for I felt sure I would be called a liar and a hoaxer. For a long, long time I thought about the weird encounter, and then I forgot about it . . . And it was only when people began to talk about "flying

saucers" that I put two and two together and began to think that without doubt what I had seen was one of these mysterious UFOs.

"After all these years, the picture is still very clear in my memory and I know perfectly well that I wasn't dreaming and that what I saw that day in the woods wasn't anything that is "known". It couldn't have been any vehicle existing at that time—and they were pretty rare on the roads anyway—for I would certainly have identified it as such.

"The scene of the encounter was a lonely place, the road leads into the woods, and the nearest farms are a kilometre or so distant. It was 1944, and the Maquis people of the Resistance were quite plentiful in the area, but it couldn't have been any of them. Nor could it have been German soldiers, and had it been either Maquis or Germans, unquestionably they would have challenged me. So one can only think that I must have been a witness of one of the earliest UFO visits.

"I attach two rough sketches of the place, but in order to be more precise I should have to go back there again."

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We are grateful to Mme. Arnoux for her report. The important facts remain, even if the sketches are made from somewhat imprecise memories. How many of these important events there are that are still unknown to us! And no doubt the responsibility is ours, because *Lumières dans la Nuit* does not circulate widely enough.

Incidentally—although of course Mme. Arnoux does not know this—the delightful Highway D 42 runs right across a *geological fault*, 110 km. long, which is to the west of Toulon-sur-Arroux and consequently quite near to the landing site.

She is no doubt equally unaware of some other very interesting cases from the same area. For example, the sighting over the wood at Chazey, 14 km. to the south of the site of her observation, where the engine of a car cut out and the lights failed (Aimé Michel: *A Propos des Soucoupes Volantes*, p. 214). Then there was the other incident at Montceau-les-Mines (Aimé Michel, *ibidem*, p. 213), 20 km. to the East from her sighting point, where it was the motor of a powered bicycle that cut out. Finally there was the case at Ciry-le-Noble (Aimé Michel, *ibidem*, p. 213), 18 km. to the South East, where the eyewitness was blinded by a saucer. And many other cases there are too that we have published, cases which show that the region in question is one much frequented by UFOs, which fact, together with that of the geological fault there, does much to lend additional credibility to this present report from a solitary and unsupported eyewitness.

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