

# THE SAAPUNKI UFO

## Results of investigations

### *Ahti Karavieri*

In an article in the March/April 1971 issue of *FSR*, Elis Grahn gave us his translation of newspaper reports about a glowing object near the ground which left behind it a circle of green ice in the snow. Now he has translated the report made by our contributor who is Chairman of the Northern Finland UFO Investigation Association (formerly the Oulu UFO group) after intensive investigations. It includes much additional information about the Saapunki case to that given in the newspaper accounts, so it is presented here in full.

ON the morning of January 3, 1971, a UFO was seen in the village of Saapunki in Kuusamo, leaving behind melted snow with particles in it, samples of which were taken for investigation very soon after the incident.\*

On the Sunday morning, January 3, between 5.58 and 6.15 a.m., a bright light phenomenon was seen in the village of Saapunki in Kuusamo. The first eye-witnesses noticed the phenomenon, at about 6.00 a.m., above Pitkäperä of Lake Saapunki. One witness said the time was "a couple of minutes to six," while another said it was "almost at six o'clock sharp."

The phenomenon was seen as a bright ball of light moving slowly along the length of the lake in a westerly direction. The ball of light moved at a level of only about 8 metres from the ice, and it could be seen against the trees on the slope of the opposite bank. The first observations were made in the eastern part of the lake at about 6.00 a.m., and the phenomenon is then said to have moved at about walking speed, the watchers being at the side of the lake at a distance of 300 metres to 1 kilometre. In spite of what was almost a 7 beaufort storm from the south-west, the phenomenon moved with a steady speed, slanting against the wind, keeping the same altitude.

The eye-witnesses state that the light from the phenomenon was strong enough to illuminate the slopes of the nearby hills so that trees and buildings were clearly seen in detail, even on a slope  $1\frac{1}{2}$  km. away. The area was otherwise quite dark at the time and in the storm so much snow was falling that the lights of houses 300 metres away were not visible.

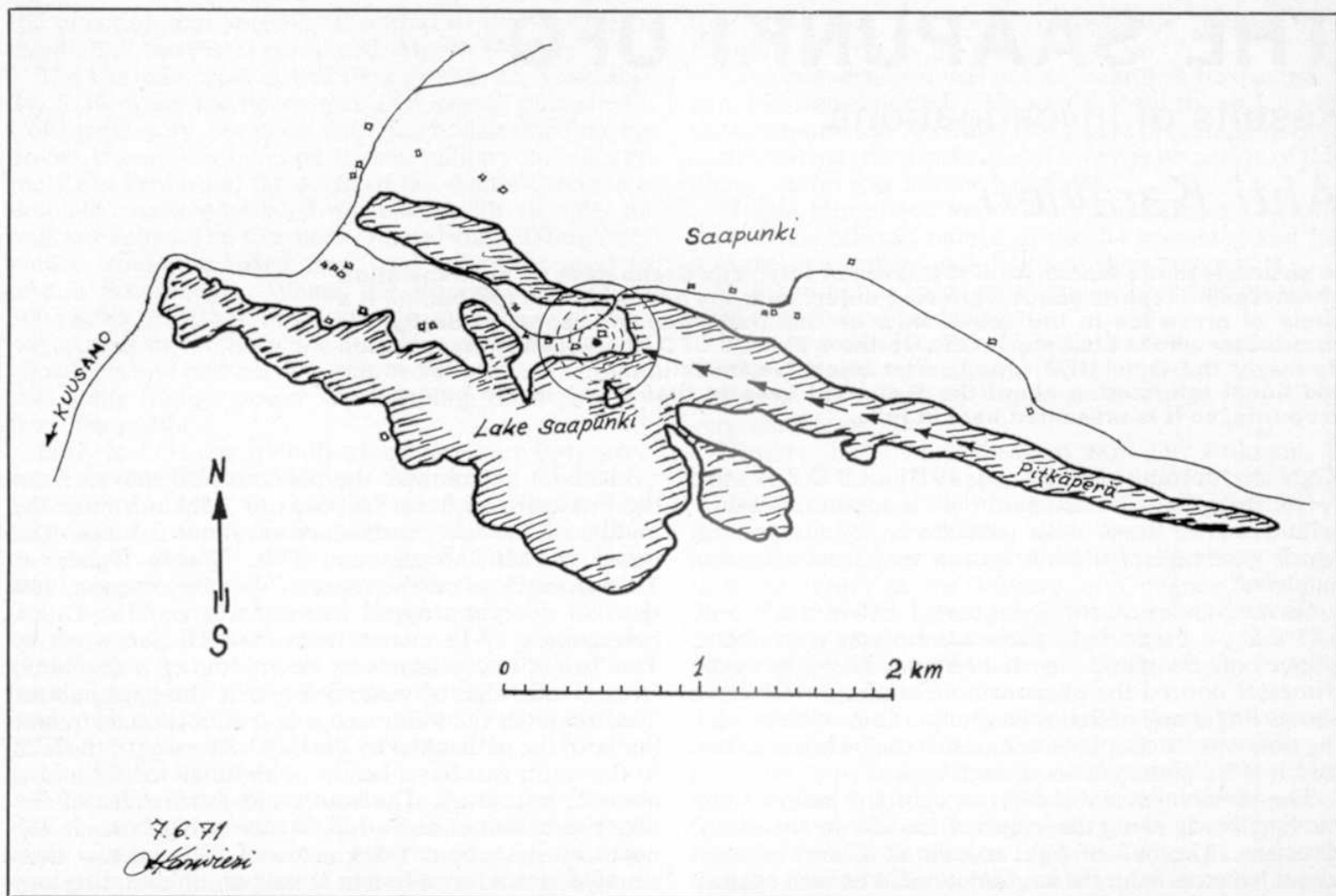
The first observers were not able to tell the exact size of the ball of light since it was impossible to look straight at it because of its great intensity. There was no sound to be heard, but the snowstorm was so forceful it blotted out all weak sounds. One of the first observations in connection with the phenomenon was the darkening of the electric lights as it was passing. One of the observers, J.B., said the electric lights went dark just as he was watching the strange light. Many people in the village got a look at the phenomenon at the very beginning as they had just awoken to do their morning tasks.

\* A British analysis of a sample of the water was conducted and the report published in *FSR* for July/August 1971.

In about 15 minutes the phenomenon moved from the Pitkäperä of Lake Saapunki to Tuhkaniemi at the middle of the lake, a distance of about 2.5 km. The house of Mr. Mauno and Mrs. Martta Talala at Tuhkaniemi was on the route of the phenomenon, and the ball of light stopped in the garden of the Talala house some 17-19 metres from their kitchen window. The Talala house stands in the middle of a few birch trees at the edge of some fields near the bank, about 8 metres from the water's edge and almost on a straight line with the path taken by the UFO. The side of the lake to the south-east has a height of about 60 metres and is about 2 km. away. The south and north sides of the lake rise to form hills; a hill 60 metres high rises in the north and is about 1.5 km. away. The lake is thus situated in this formation in an east-south-east direction which was also the direction taken by the UFO. The eye-witnesses were on different sides of the lake, so that observations were made simultaneously from many different directions. As the houses are built on the slopes, many of the observers looked at the phenomenon from higher positions.

The latter part of the happening took place just beside the house of the Talalas. The phenomenon arrived there at about 6.15 a.m. The Talalas were having their morning coffee in front of their kitchen window, when the phenomenon appeared right in front of the window, only 17 metres away, behind some berry bushes in the garden. There was nothing unusual in being up this early as the lady of the house had to do her morning tasks in the cowshed at this time. Mrs. Martta Talala was already fully dressed, but Mr. Mauno Talala was only half dressed, sitting and drinking his morning coffee, when surprised, they both pointed out the blinding light to each other as it appeared outside. A bit frightened, Mauno Talala hurried to get dressed in order to have a look at whatever that strange light might be.

It was quite impossible to look at the light. They could only give it quick side glances. Except for the white brightness they could see no colours. Mauno Talala estimates the size of the light to have been 10 metres in diameter, measured against the garden fence. Looking to the side, he was able to see a small island 300 metres away as clear as in broad daylight—the light was shining through the dense snowstorm. There was



no sound, the light did not seem to move, nor was there any other sensation in any form. While Talala was getting dressed, however, the light disappeared.

At the moment the phenomenon disappeared the electric light went out for a short while. The phenomenon made the inside of their kitchen so bright that there was no effect from the electric lamp from the ceiling. The phenomenon remained at the spot about one minute and the electricity was gone for about the same length of time after it had disappeared. After it had vanished, Mrs. Martta Talala was the first out of the house to have a look, but there was nothing to be seen in the darkness and the storm was blowing strongly. There was a temperature of about  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and the wind was filled with snow. The sky was covered with clouds, but most of the snow carried by the wind was from the snow-covered ground and was not actually caused by the clouds.

The Talalas had no thought that there might be any effects from the phenomenon to begin with. They were just very surprised by the strange incident. As the day got brighter at about 8.00 to 8.30 a.m., Talala's son, Timo, returned after having gone out, and asked his father what the marks were that had appeared in the snow. He had noticed a spot of green ice which was not covered with snow due to its hard surface.

They all went to look at the spot, but took no further interest in the matter. The melted spot was formed in an interesting way. It had an all over length of about 6 metres and a width of more than 3 metres, but the ice-

covered area was approximately  $2 \times 3.5$  metres, almost pear-shaped. The spot looked green, darker in the middle, the colour becoming paler towards the edges. The snow cover, about 40 cms. thick, had melted on the spot to a depth of about 20 cms., i.e. not all the way to the ground. In the middle of the spot there was a round area about 1.5 sq. metres in size, in which stood needles of ice, thick as fingers, and empty inside like thin-walled tubes. On top of each tube there was a ball-shaped formation the size of a finger-tip and according to the children looked much like a candy that they collected for their games. No one admitted to having eaten any of the "candies" and there is no known case of anybody getting ill.

Not until the day after, when on business at the village church 10 km. away, did Mauno Talala mention the matter of the phenomenon to Mr. Kyllönen, the editor of the local newspaper, *Koillissanomat*. He visited the spot on the Monday, and photographed and interviewed the nearest eye-witnesses. This article went out to the world in *Koillissanomat* on Tuesday, January 5. Word of the incident, however, had spread much faster as already on Monday people were looking at the spot and taking samples all afternoon.

The UFO researchers in Oulu were told on the Tuesday, and got on their way to investigate the case by Wednesday, January 6. An investigation team of five men took the first samples. They also made radiation measurements on the spot, but could detect no deviation from the normal background radiation (four days had

already passed since the incident). More check samples from the surroundings were taken on January 17, and vegetation samples taken later during the winter.

Apart from Martta and Mauno Talala, there were interviews, which were both written and taped, of Mr. Kaarlo Häyhä, Mrs. Anna and Mr. Kalle Saapunki, and Mr. Eetu Pätsi. In all of the witnesses' stories, the duration of the phenomenon, the course it took and the description of its brightness were identical. An old couple living as neighbours of the Talalas stated they had noticed a small spot of light ascending from the place where the object had alighted; others had only seen it disappear at the Talala house.

The samples taken from the melted area were first taken for examination to an industrial laboratory in the town of Oulu. A special effort was made to find out if there was any remnant of a process of combustion. The summary of the result of this examination runs as follows:

"The sampled water is melted snow and ice, almost clean, with a small amount of sediment in it, evidently of vegetable matter. There is no evidence of any connection between the composition of the sample and the heat phenomenon that caused the melting of the snow."

To ascertain the composition of the surrounding snow check samples were examined:

Sample No.	Cubic cm.	Sedi-ment mg.	Colour	pH	$\alpha 20^\circ$ ( $\mu\text{S}$ )	(conduc-tivity)
1a	ca. 200	ca. 55	Blue-grey	4.8	240	
1b	85	58	Blue-grey	7.2	95	
2	181	0.1	Clear	6.1	7.4	
3	208	33.7	Clear	5.9	6.8	
5	184	0.8	Clear	5.6	9.0	

The samples Nos. 1a and 1b were taken from the darkest part of the landing site, but 1b was examined not less than four weeks after, causing the differences in pH and conductivity values.

Sample No. 3 was taken from the dirty snow beside the door steps of the house.

Samples Nos. 2, 4 and 5 were taken from different spots 15 metres from the landing place.

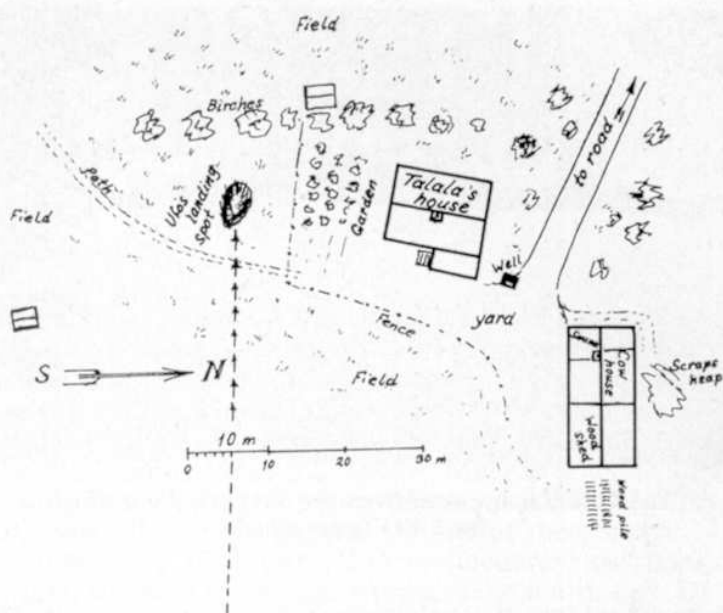
At the industrial laboratory of R. one sample from the middle of the landing spot was examined, after having been kept in a refrigerator for one month before the examination. This was done by using the classical inorganic method. The result:

1. Solid material in melted ice 58/85 ml. water.
2. Solid remainder of annealing 1 mg.
3. The analyses of this remainder (AAS):

$\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ 26%	$\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ 21%	$\text{CaO}$ 21%	$\text{MgO}$ 6%
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4. Melted ice filtered:

pH	$\alpha 20^\circ$ ( $\mu\text{S}$ )	P (mg/l)	E-Coli (Bacterium)	Mn (mg/l)	Fe (mg/l)	Na (mg/l)	K (mg/l)
7.2	95	0.7	None	0.1	0.3	11	8



Some of the investigators at the University of Oulu took an X-ray spectrograph analysis of Sample No. 1 which showed inorganic particles as follows: Traces Ca, K, Si, Fe, Cl, Ti, the last mentioned being a bit less than half a promille(?) of the inorganic sediment.

Micro-analyses were also conducted in order to determine the form of Titanium in the sample. Titanium was shown to be equally divided throughout the sample, evidently as part of a synthesis. Samples of the ground under the landing site were also examined with X-ray spectrograph and micro-analyses. This testing showed that the Titanium had not risen from the ground up to the melted part as there was no sign of Titanium in the frozen vegetable matter at ground level underneath the site. The water part of the sample was examined chemically. It showed Titanium to be about 10 p.p.m.

The colour of the spot to begin with was green, turning by and by to dark blue-grey. By examining the change in the pH it could be concluded that the colour was no ordinary vegetable matter, but something of complex composition of which Titanium could form the basic atoms. A few biologists made an examination of the filtered sediment of the melted sample from the site in order to ascertain the origin of the vegetable matter. This showed that the sediment of different samples was of organic origin up to 92-98% and that the main part of this was formed by vegetable cellular tissue in a far-gone state of decomposition. The cellular decomposition seemed to be caused by some other reason than normal decay.

The first people to see the landing site mentioned a weak smell in connection with it, especially so when melting the samples. The water part of the samples was examined and there was no sign of any E. Coli bacteria which would have proven household refuse to be involved. The melting of the snow and the forming of the ice needles could not be reproduced in the laboratory tests.

The electrical distribution company for the Kuusamo





The Talala house seen from the direction from which the UFO approached

area stated that there were no distribution disturbances at the time in question and therefore no breaks in the distribution. The electricity lines terminate at this area, so there is a possibility that the storm could have caused some local circuit breaks.

In conclusion, one could say that the investigation of the Saapunki UFO phenomenon has shown that it brought some particles to the spot, it created heat by some form of radiation, its brightness was tremendous (it illuminated the surrounding area of 1.5 km. and the light was able to cut through a snowstorm, which normally a strong light cannot do). The phenomenon did not behave like a body of gas but moved against the wind in an oblique direction about 2.5 km. at an altitude of about 8 metres from the ground in a temperature of about  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ . and in a storm of about 7 beauforts from the south-west. It left behind no measurable amount of radiation and there was no way of proving that it had continued its way further from the house yard of the Talala family. To estimate its size was difficult because of its brightness, but the estimations made were in the region of 10 metres in diameter.

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#### Comment by Elis W. Grahn

This case has been widely noted throughout Finland

## PERSONAL COLUMN

**WELSH UFO RESEARCH ASSOCIATION.** Will all FSR readers who live in Wales please get in touch (SAE please) with D. Toombs, 28 Clynmawr St., Abertillery, Mon.

**WOULD LIKE TO CONTACT** a few old friends reading *Flying Saucer Review*: Frederick Tuck, 48 Phyfield Road, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex, England (Tel. 01-952 6817).

**FRENCH STUDENT** (20) seeks English pen friend/correspondent on UFOs. Write M. Claude Sibénil, Kerbescond, Rostrenen 22, France.

**FOR SALE.** "Flying Saucers come from another world" by J. Guiere. Offers D. Toombs, 28 Clynmawr St., Abertillery, Mon.

as well as in Sweden. The samples of the snow and ice of the area were taken by dozens of people, coming from both the north and south of Finland, and from Sweden. Some samples were taken by unknowns behaving in a more or less strange way, not talking to anybody, but just hurrying away after filling up a couple of bottles. Newspapers and magazines published articles on the incident, thereby giving others the courage to tell of UFO sightings about which they had kept silent. The result was a virtual UFO-boom all over Finland. Whether this was caused by an *actual* boom, or was only brought about by publicity in this case is difficult to say.

The Finnish Interplanetarians in Helsinki arranged a discussion and information meeting on April 18, with Mr. Karivieri from the Oulu UFO research group as the main lecturer, saying much the same as in this article. The meeting was attended by more than 2,000 people.

Finnish UFO research as a whole works with close co-operation all over the country, even if the separate



End view of the Talala house. Landing area roped off

units are independent. The problem is how to make it and keep it scientific because of the bizarre nature of the subject. Still, the interest seems to grow and public attitudes have become less harsh, thanks to men like Mr. Karivieri.

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