TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON NAHA, OKINAWA RYUKYU ISLANDS



HAND COLORED 11X14 PHOTOGRAPH OF THE TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

THE PHOTO WAS PROBABLY TAKEN IN 1953 OR 1954

REVISED 9 SEPT 2014

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HOW IT STARTED

What follows is the story of the Tea House of the August Moon, the information is from a press release written by Walter Simmons of the Chicago Tribune Press Service.

Naha Okinawa, Sept 18 (date unknown, but probably 1953)

Eiko, owner of the Teahouse....before the war she was the leading geisha on Okinawa.

After the war she was working in the office of Paul Skuse, (husband of Margaret Skuse author of Okinawa and Okinawa Briefs, who worked for the Dependent School system on Okinawa) director of public safety...

In 1951 she married Richard Rose of Portland Oregon an official in the civil government...

Eiko saved her money, borrowed from a bank and open her big teahouse on Dec 20, 1952. She searched for a name more catchy than the <u>Japanese name it still bears</u>, Matsunoshita or Under the Pine Tree.

Brig. Gen. James Lewis, (USA, CG, Ryukyu Command (RYCOM), 18 Dec. 1952 - 2 Jan. 1953.) civil government chief, had been reading Sneider's book. When Eiko asked him for suggestions he said: Why don't you call it the Tea House of the August Moon.

This appears to be how the Tea House of the August Moon came to be, although there are other versions.

The original Broadway play by John Patrick, based on Vern Sneiders 1951 book, opened at the Martin Beck Theater on 15 Oct, 1953 and closed on 24 Mar 1956. The movie version starring Marlon Brando as Sakini, opened in Dec. 1956.

MEET THE OWNER OF AUGUST MOON TEAHOUSE Chicago Tribune Press Service, by Walter Simbons

Naha, Okinawa, Sept 15 --- Come along for an evening in the Teahouse of the August Moon--the place made famous by Vern Sneider's successful novel and play.

From the outside in the dark, it looks like another Japanese geisha house, big and rambling, artistically built. From inside come sounds of laughter, the beating of drums and music of the samisen, a kind of oriental guitar.

BEST KNOWN OKINAWAN

After leaving your shoes at the door, you are ushered into a matted room with a low table in the middle. Your legs creak dangerously as you sit on the floor. This is always good for a broad spile from the kimonood maid, who promptly serves tea.

Here comes Miss August Moon herself --- Eiko, owner of the Teahouse and the best known Okinawan of them all. She has a broad, pleasant face of uncertain age and strong white teeth without gold caps. She introduces herself smilingly, sits down and starts fanning you. The night is hot.

It takes a lot of coaxing to get Eiko to talk about herself, but it's worth it. Some parts she leaves out. She doesn't say, for instance, that before the war she was the leading goisha on Okinawa. Being a goisha takes great skill and training, comparable to ballet in a western nation.

When the Japanese remnants on Okinawa were destroyed in June, 1945, Eiko and other civilians were in a cave with the Japanese commanding general. As he put on his ceremonial robe to commit hera-kiri, he told Eiko:

"I have to do this, but you don't. Surrender to the Americans. What we told you about them mistreating women is a lie."

WORKS IN OFFICE OF AMERICAN

Later Biko walked out of the cave. She still has the general's blood stained robe. In a few months she was working in the office of Paul Skuse, Boston, who still is director of public safety on the island.

"Some day, Eiko, I'll be working for you," Skuse once said after noting her efficiency and subition.

The prediction has almost come true. After a while Eiko quit her job and opened a coffee shop for the Americans. Later she opened others --- six in all. In 1951 she married Richard Rose, Portland, Ore., an official in the civil

government. They now have a daughter, Iva, aged 2.

Eiko saved her money, borrowed more from a bank, and opened her big teshouse Dec. 20, 1952. She searched for a name more catchy than the Japanese name it still bears, "Matsunoshita," or " Under the Pine Tree."

HAS 60 GEISHA, MOSTLY OVER 40

Brig Gen. James Lewis, civil government chief, had been reading Sneider's book. When Eiko asked him for suggestions, he said: "Why don't you call it the Teahouse of the August Moon?"

So now the techouse has two names side by side---one in English, the other in Japanese. Eiko has seating space for 400 persons and a staff of 90. Sixty geishs work for her at one time or another. Most of them are over 40, weigh about 55 pounds, and have gold teeth. But how they can play the samisen!

The teahouse was enormously successful from the beginning. Next year it will entertain the 500 passengers of the Caronia, luxury liner that takes its passengers around the world.

But running an entertainment business on Okinawa, a gloomily provincial little island where drinking and having fun are regarded as sinister, is no easy job. The closing hour, for instance, is 11 p.m. and it is strictly enforced.

Taxes are terrific---165 per cent on liquor sold, and another 30 per cent on atertainment. Thus every bill is tripled when the customer gets it.

This is Biko's story. It is punctuated by the coming and going of geishaone of whom has a hair-do like an inverted ice cream cone---samisen music, and the
boisterous hooting of GI's in other rooms.

Your legs creak again as you get to your feet. And the maid, who is taking off the dishes, again smiles broadly.

Teahouse of the August Moon' Booms



AUTHENTIC ACTRESS—Yukiko Hama (center), who has been selected to play the part of a geisha in the forthcoming production in Okinawa of the play "Teahouse of the August Moon," is in real life a geisha at the Teahouse of the August Moon. The restaurant, one of the best known on Okinawa, was named after the novel from which the play was taken. Entertainers at the restaurant dress in Okinawan costumes such as the Kasuri dress, worn by the lady on the left and the entertainment costumes worn by Yukiko and the girl on the right. (S&S Photo)'

By Cpl. Don Towles
NAHA, Okinawa, Mar. 20
(S&S)—A bit of ancient Okinawa can be found at a restaurant named after a smash
Broadway hit.

The "Teahouse of the August Moon," opened in December, 1952, was named after Vern Snyder's book of the same name and has become a popular entertainment spot for Americans on this Pacific island.

The colorful restaurant is owned by Eike Uehara, who ran Okinawa's No. 1 geisha house before the occupation. When American troops landed and the island fortress fell, Miss Uehara took a job with the U.S. forces.

In 1952, however, she bought the restaurant and started building it up. About that time, "August Moon," written by Snyder, who landed with the invading force, became popular.

Became Hit

Since events in Snyder's book place on Okinawa, Miss Uchara felt that a restaurant named after the book would make a hit with Americans here. It did.

Record crowds fill the unique building to enjoy Okinawantype food served by colorfullydressed waitresses and later to watch dances by native costumed geishas. Many of these dances were created some 300 years ago by a Ryukyuan, who later held a high position in the kingtom for his contribution to art.

The star entertainer in the "Teahouse of the August Moon" is attractive Yukiko Hama, who will enact the role of Lotus Blossom in the play which opens on Okinawa Apr. 21.

The restaurant, which caters almost exclusively to U.S. personnel, will accommodate 200 to 400 at a sitting, depending upon the arrangement of facilities. It is also used for special-occasion parties for Japanese and Oktowers.

nese and Okinawans.

Ed Potter, a native of Providence, R.I., manages the
tenhouse.

21 MARCH 1954 ISSUE OF PACIFIC STARS & STRIPES

CONFIRMS DECEMBER 1952 OPENING DATE FOR TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

YUKIKO HAMA IN THE CENTER IS THE ACTRESS WHO WILL PLAY LOTUS BLOSSOM IN THE PLAY "TEAHOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON" SEE PAGES 11 TO 31



ms yamada, Eiko, Dr. yamada me in back -

EIKO UEHARA ROSE, OWNER OF TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON



Dr. yamada (Prison Doeth) took this. Eiko + Dick Rise with Iva-clan inte in coch ground

Eiko married Dick Rose in 1951, daughter Iva probably born in 1951, was 2 years old in 1953, estimated date of photo. POSSIBLE PHOTOS OF OPENING RECEPTION FOR THE TEA HOUSE IN DECEMBER 1952.

NOTE THAT THE JAPANESE CHARACTER SIGN "MATSUNOSHITA" OR "UNDER THE PINE TREE" VISIBLE ON THE COVER PHOTO HAS NOT BEEN PUT UP YET. A 20 DEC 1954 AD FOR THE TEA HOUSE ON PAGE 56 SHOWS THE "MATSUNOSHITA" SIGN SO THESE PHOTOS WERE TAKEN BEFORE DEC 1954.

THE LANDSCAPING AND TREES AROUND THE WALKWAY HAVE JUST BEEN PLANTED AND ARE STILL SUPPORTED BY STAKES AND WIRE. CARS IN THE PHOTOS DATE TO 1952 FOR THE NEWEST ONE VISIBLE. YOU CAN EVEN SEE WORKMEN IN SOME OF THE PHOTOS WHO LOOK LIKE THEY ARE STILL WORKING ON THE BUILDING TO FINISH IT





























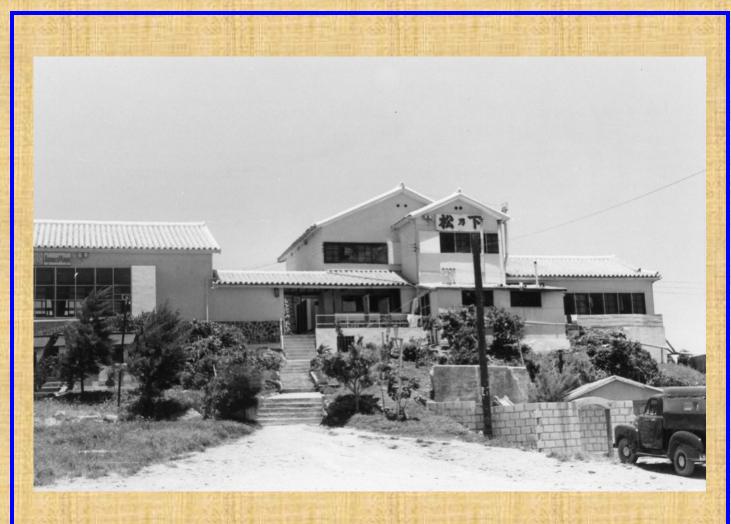


EIKO AT THE TEA HOUSE



Namy Pattn Hanzan Yasunaga

NANCY PATTON PROBABLY A FRIEND FROM THE USCAR PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICE WHERE EIKO WORKED BEFORE STARTING THE TEA HOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON.

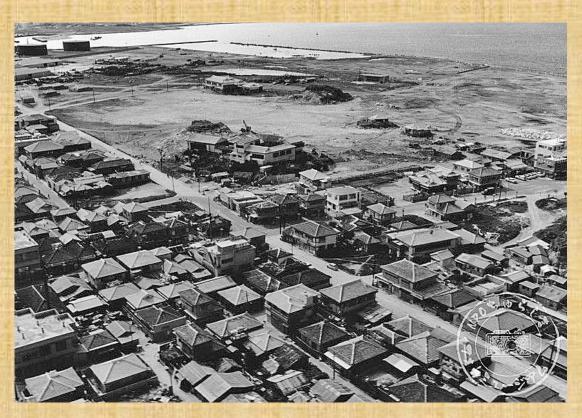




1953-54



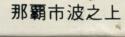
1954-55



EARLY AERIAL PHOTO OF THE TEA HOUSE AREA







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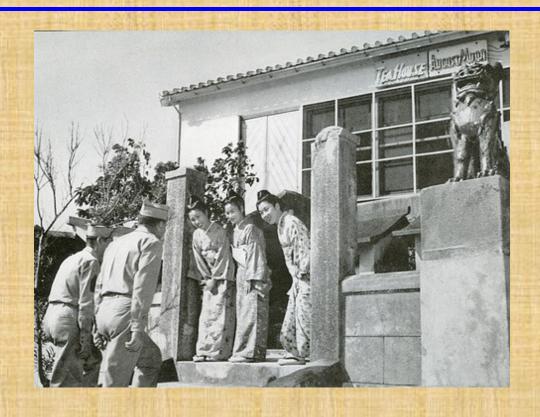
MATCHBOXS FROM THE TEA HOUSE

NOTE THAT THE PHONE NUMBER 119 IS THE SAME AS APPEARS IN THE 1954 AD ON PAGE 40 AND ALSO ON THE MENU ON PAGE 14. THIS WOULD PUT THE MATCHBOX IN THE 1953-1956 TIME FRAME

THE MATCHBOX ON THE RIGHT DATES FROM THE MID 1960'S



PHOTO FROM "KICHI OKINAWA: OKINAWA A MILITARY BASE" PUBLISHED BY THE "OKINAWA TIMES" 1954





PHOTOS FROM FEB 1955 ISSUE OF NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, PROBABLY TAKEN BEFORE SEPT/OCT OF 1954.

NOTE THE SMALL "TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON" NEON SIGN, THIS WAS REPLACED WITH A LARGER SIGN PROBABLY AROUND 1956 OR 57.

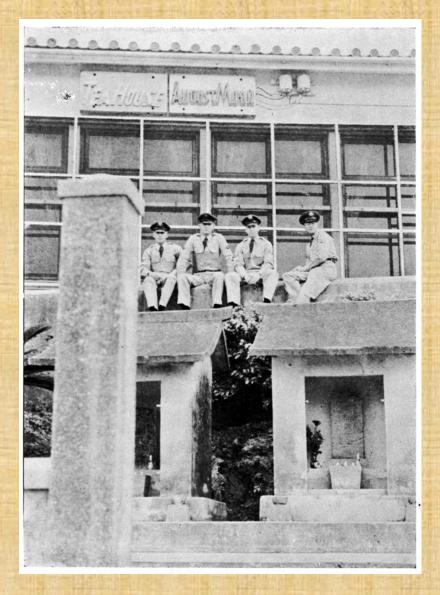


PHOTO FROM "THE U.S. AIR FORCE ON OKINAWA", PUBLISHED BY THE 313TH AIR DIVISION, PART OF THE FAR EAST AIR FORCES - 5TH AIR FORCE. THIS BOOKLET WAS PROBABLY PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1955 AND 1956. THE 313TH AIR DIVISION WAS ASSIGNED TO KADENA AIRBASE ON 1 MARCH, 1955.

NOTE THE SMALL "TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON" NEON SIGN, THIS WAS REPLACED WITH A LARGER SIGN PROBABLY AROUND 1956 OR 57.



Miss DORIS DENO

PUBLIC SAFETY

PROS. BRANCH

USCAR



1955 CHRISTMAS CARD ENVELOPE FROM THE TEA HOUSE NOTE THAT EIKO ONCE WORKED FOR THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY AT USCAR



MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY New Year

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August | 100n
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Tel. 351

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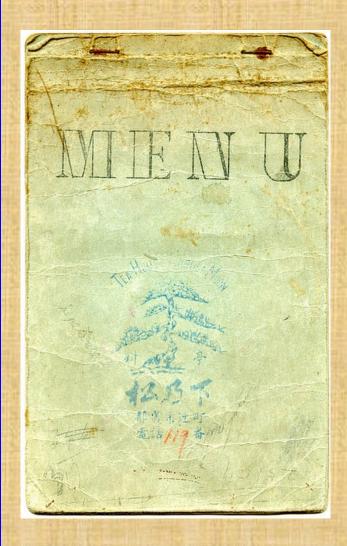
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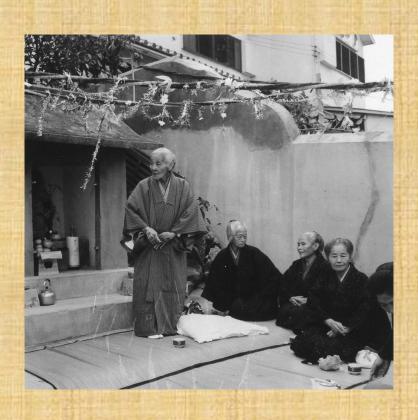
OKINAWAN Dishes (沖繩料理)	
Pork-Soup (足テビチ)羊	60
namuruchi-Soup(イナムルチ)半	60
NAKAMI-Soup (中咏吸物)羊	50
Chimagu-Soup (チマグー吸物)羊	60
Okinawa - Soup (取合セ吸物) 半	50
Mimiga Namashi (耳皮ナマシ)ギ	50
Liver - Sunomono (キモの配物)ギ	50
Tongue-Sunomono(舌の酥物)学	50
Ruruwakash; ひいつから)	50
Gobomak; (ゴボー巻)	50
Misoni (咏噌森)	60
Goya - Champre (デヤーチャプル)ーーギ	50
Tofu-Champre (トーナチャンプル)ギ	50
Noodle-Champre(ソーメンチベンプル)ーギ	50
Irichi (11) +	50
Dengaku (デンガク)	50
Peanuts Tofu(ジーマーミトーフ)羊	

Menu from the Tea House of the August Moon

Prices are in Yen which were used between 1945 and 1958 so menu is prior to conversion to dollars in 1958. Probably closer to 1953-54 as it bears the phone number 119 which is seen in the 1954 ad.

Note that the menu has a pine tree on it which coincides with the original Japanese name of the tea house which is Matsunoshita or "Under the Pine Tree" which is written in Japanese under the pine tree on the menu.

PHOTO FROM A "THE AMERICAN PHOTO SERVICE" BOOKLET OF 10 PHOTOS SHOWING A CLOSE-UP OF THE GEISHA SHRINE ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON. BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN BETWEEN 1953 AND 1954



KODACHROME SLIDES DATED 1958

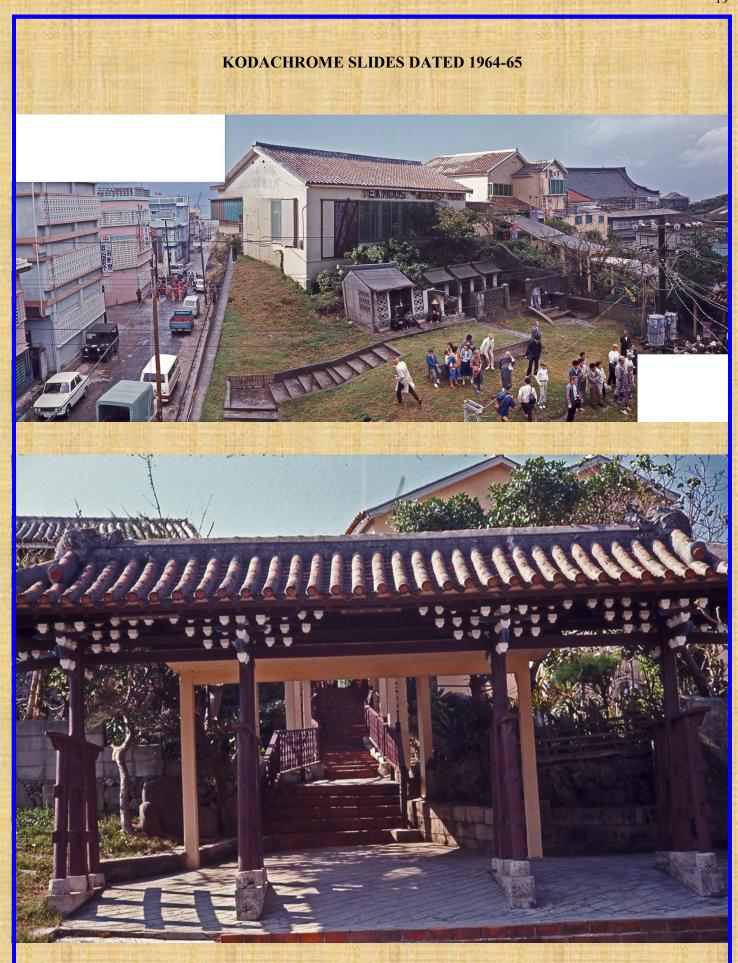








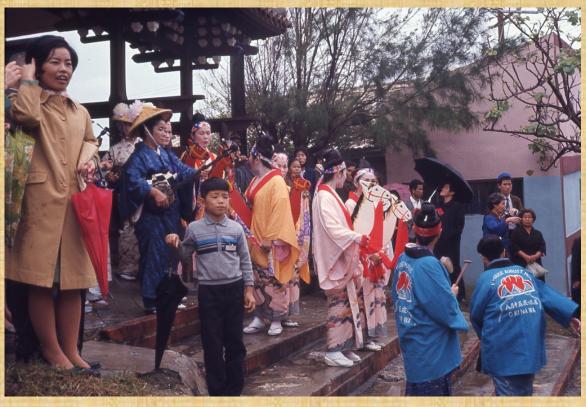
NOTE THE SMALL SIGN ON THE FRONT ENTRANCE GATE, THIS IS A "1" MILITARY SIGN INDICATING THAT IT IS ACCEPTABLE FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL TO ENTER.











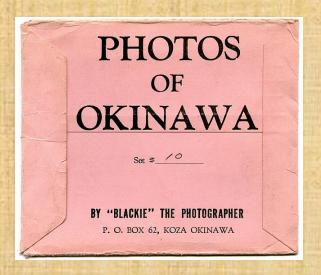


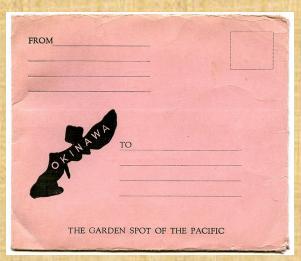




15 BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOS SOLD IN A PHOTO PACK BY BLACKIE THE PHOTOGRAPHER.

NOTE THE "A" SIGN ON THE FRONT ENTRANCE GATE. THE "A" SIGNS REPLACED THE "1" SIGN WHICH WOULD INDICATE THAT THESE PHOTOS WERE TAKEN SOMETIME AFTER 1958 BASED ON THE KODACHROME SLIDES ON PAGE 16.

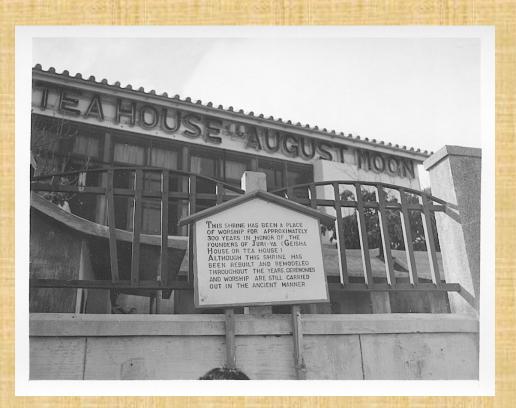








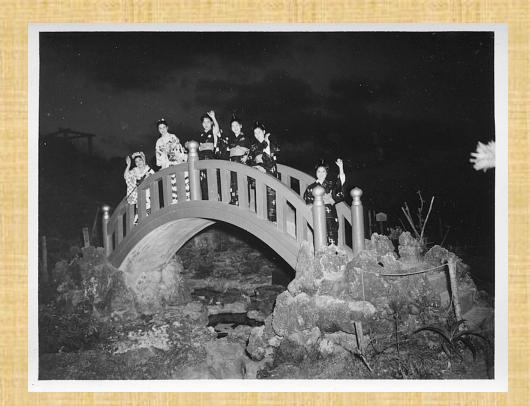




























BLACKIE THE PHOTOGRAPHER PHOTO SIMILAR TO THE FIRST PHOTO IN THE PHOTO PACK MAILER.

TEA HOUSE POSTCARDS





THE TOP POSTCARD HAS A SMALL AUGUST MOON SIGN ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE BUILDING AND IS THOUGHT TO BE CLOSER TO 1953-54, IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE LARGE NEON AUGUST MOON SIGN AS SEEN IN THE BOTTOM POSTCARD WAS ADDED IN 1956–57.

THE BOTTOM POSTCARD IS POSTMARKED 1961. THE BACK DESCRIPTION SAYS THAT IT WAS NAMED AFTER THE "CURRENT STAGE PLAY" WHICH WAS ON BROADWAY FROM 1953 TO 1956 WHICH WOULD INDICATE THAT THE POSTCARD MAY ACTUALLY HAVE BEEN MADE IN 1956 OR EARLIER.







VARIOUS DANCERS FROM THE "TEA HOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON". THESE POSTCARDS ARE BY "BLACKIE THE PHOTOGRAPHER"



DANCERS FROM THE "TEA HOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON".
POSTCARD BY "BLACKIE THE PHOTOGRAPHER"

VARIOUS TEA HOUSE PUBLISHED PHOTOS BETWEEN 1954 AND 1966



The Top Performers of the Tea-House of the August Moon.
These entertainers do not render personal services but pass from room to room
to perform their specialities of music, song or dance.



The Fisherman's Dance



Toward the end of the evening at a Tea-House, the sliding doors are stacked aside and all the pleasure-seckers turn to face a stage where several formal, stylized, traditional dances are performed. Above is a scene from one telling the story of a fisherman's familiar living, courtship, marriage, loss at sea, and the monrning of his bride. At left is shown a pose from a more beautiful and graceful traditional Solo Dance having no story but still following ancient movements of positioning.



Sukiyaki is prepared at end of the Banquet Table where it is to be eaten.



Americans find an occasional dinner interesting and enjoyable at this Tea House.



Music is furnished for the few participant games of the evening.



Entertainers seem never too tire of playing games with the guests.



TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON-OKINAWA

Tea House August Moon, which has been a shrine for over three hundred years, was made world famous by the movie which derived its name from it. Ceremonies and worship are still carried out there in the ancient manner. Americans love to go to the tea house for an evening's entertainment. They sit crosslegged on the floor and try eating with choosticks while Okinawan ladies in beautiful kimomos entertain them with novelty tricks and games. A gala evening ends with a floor show and guests are given souvenirs to show that they have been to the one and only Tea House August Moon. This is a "must" for all who come to Okinawa.



TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON, NAHA, OKINAWA

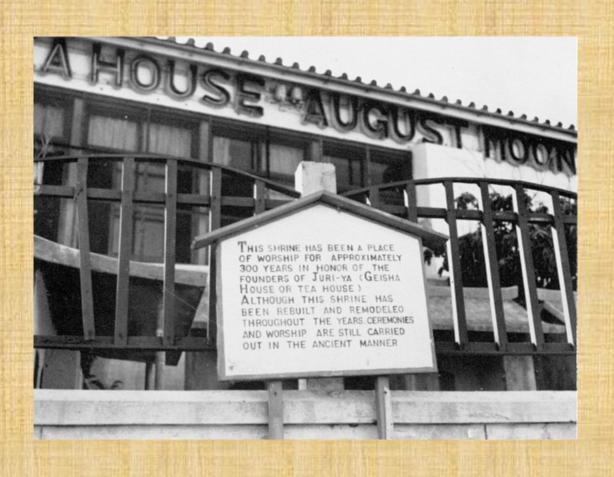
A visit to Tea House August Moon is a "must" on Okinawa. An evening's entertainment there will include dances by beautiful Oriental girls. The dances portray stories of Okinawa or Oriental occupations. These girls with their ornate headdresses are performing a classical Okinawan dance.

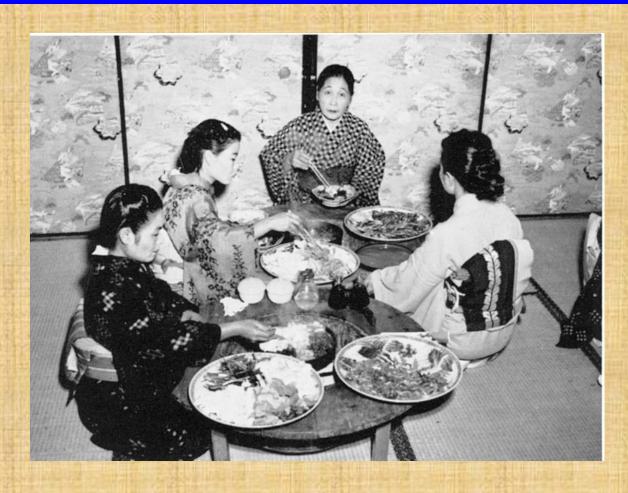




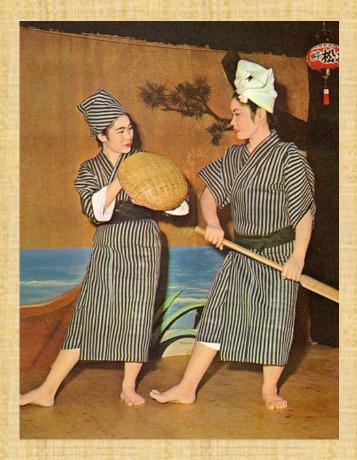










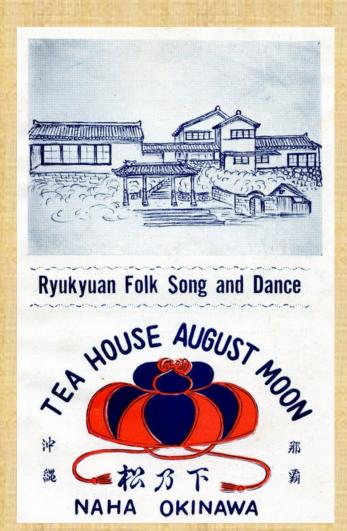








MID 1960'S 16 PAGE PROGRAM FROM THE TEA HOUSE EXPLAINING THE FOLK DANCES THAT THEY PRESENT. AD IS FROM THE LAST PAGE OF THE PROGRAM.



OKINAWA MEANS TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

八月十五夜の茶屋

料を松の下

電話 (8) 2945 沖縄那覇市辻町

CABARET TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

COMPLETELY REMODELED, WITH THE UNIQUE PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE EAST CHINA SEA FEATURING LATEST STEREOPHONIC MUSIC.

GEISHA — KIMONOS — JAPANESE AND OKINAWA DANCES — EXOTIC SAMISEN

TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

Naminoue Area, Naha.

For Reservation Call 8-2945 8-6743

TEA HOUSE ADS FROM VARIOUS PUBLICATIONS ON OKINAWA



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那覇市辻町(波之上神宮前通り) 電 話 一 一 九 番

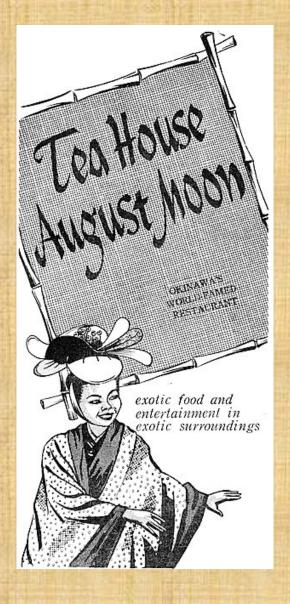
"AUGUST MOON"

Naminoue St.,
Tsuji-cho,
Naha City
Tel: 119

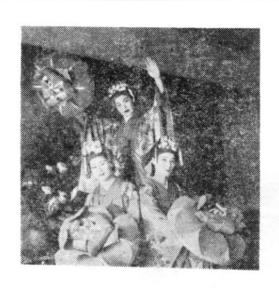


AD FROM "THE GUIDE BOOK OF NEW OKINAWA"
PUBLISHED BY THE OKINAWA SIGHTSEEING ASSOCIATION ON 20 DEC. 1954

THE TOP PART OF THE AD IN JAPANESE READS TEA HOUSE MATSUNOSHITA OR "UNDER THE PINE TREE" AS DO THE JAPANESE CHARACTERS ON THE BUILDING WHICH WAS THE ORIGINAL NAME OF THE TEA HOUSE



AD FROM "OKINAWA SPRING 1955" PUBLISHED BY LARRY KREBS.
ACTUAL PUBLICATION DATE WAS JUNE 1955 AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF DELAY. THIS WAS THE ONLY ISSUE OF "OKINAWA", A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION, THAT WAS ACTUALLY PUBLISHED. LARRY KREBS STARTED PUBLISHING "THIS MONTH ON OKINAWA" IN JUNE 1955 AND DUE TO THE DIFFICULTIES WITH PUBLISHING "OKINAWA" WHICH CONTAINED PHOTOS THAT HAD TO BE PRINTED IN HONG KONG HE APPARENTLY DECIDED TO DISCONTINUE "OKINAWA"



TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

NAHA OKINAWA ISLAND
TEL. No. 351

Ad from "A Brief Glimpse Into Okinawa's Past" published 1956-1957

Some of you have read the book

Some of you have seen the Play

But ALL

of you can enjoy yourselves "The Tea. House Way"



TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

Tops in hospitality and entertainment New Floor Show from Japan

FINE FOOD - DRINKS - RELAXATION

ADS FROM "THIS MONTH ON OKINAWA" 1957



You've seen the movie-you've read the book.

Now visit the incomparable

TEA HOUSE **AUGUST MOON**

NAMINOUE. NAHA Exotic Oriental or American Food. New Floor Shows and Entertainment

Nitely FOR RESERVATIONS: 880-351



You've seen the movie-

you've read

the book.

Now visit

the world-famed

TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

Floor Shows and Extertainment Nitely

> Exotic Orintal or American Food.

NAMINOUE NAHA. RESERVATIONS: 882945





You've seen

the movie-

you've read

the book

Now visit the incomparable

TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

Exotic Oriental or American Food. NAMINOUE: NAHA

Floor Shows and Extertainment Nitely RESERVATIONS: 882945



The world-famed

TEA HOUSE
AUGUST MOON

looks forward

to your

frequent visits

during the

New Year

The Tea House August Moon has an atmosphere not found anywhere else on Okinawa. Traditional Okinawan and Japanese dances, as well as the most modern Ginza night club acts, are found here. The rare blend of the old and the new, results in a choice of the finest in each category. Your visit to Okinawa is not complete unless you have come and seen for yourself.

TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

Floor Shows and Entertainment Nitely
Fine Oriental or American Food
NAMINOUE, NAHA RESERVATIONS: 882945



You haven't seen Okinawa

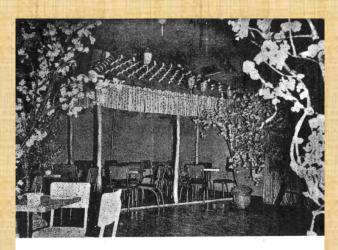
—if you haven't visited the charming, incomparable

TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

Floor Shows and Entertainment Nitely
Fine Oriental or American Food

NAMINOUE, NAHA

RESERVATIONS: 882945



You haven't seen Okinawa

if you haven't visited the charming, incomparable

TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

Floor Shows and Entertainment Nitly Fine Oriental or American Food

NAMINOUE, NAHA RESERVATION: 882945

ADS FROM
"THIS MONTH ON OKINAWA"
1958



The Past Lives Again

at the

TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON OBON - 18 AUGUST

Special dances will be performed by the charming young ladies pictured at left. Souvenirs of the occasion will be presented to patrons.

AIR CONDITIONED

Entertainment nightly—
Modern and Traditional
Draft beer on tap—

Ask for it!

NAMINOUE AREA, NAHA For reservations—882945



ENJOY the FESTIVAL of the AUGUST MOON at the TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

SEPTEMBER 17

Special dances will be performed by the charming young ladies pictured at left. Souvenirs of the occasion will be presented to patrons.

AIR CONDITIONED

Entertainment nightly— Modern and Traditional

Draft beer on tap— Ask for it!

NAMINOUE AREA, NAHA For reservations—882945

ADS FROM
"THIS MONTH ON OKINAWA"
1959

OKINAWA MEANS TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

BEAUTIFUL GEISHAS PLAYING SAMISEN WILL DANCE FOR YOU IN THE JAPANESE TEAHOUSE ENJOY THE UNIQUE PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE EAST CHINA SEA FROM THE WINDOWS OF THE CABARET,



CABARET TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

STARTING OCTOBER COMPLETELY REMODELED UNDER PROFESSIONAL DIRECTION. FEATURING LATEST STEREO PLUS CLASSICAL JAPANESE ENTERTAINMENT

NAMINOUE AREA, NAHA.

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL 882945



OKINAWA MEANS TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON



BEAUTIFUL GEISHAS PLAYING SAMISEN WILL DANCE FOR YOU IN THE JAPANESE TEAHOUSE AN ENTERTAINMENT YOU'LL NEVER FORGET. ALL LADIES WILL BE PRESENTED WITH "HANA-GASA; THE WONDERFUL FLOWER LIKE HAT OF OKINAWAN DANCING GIRLS AS SOUVENIR.

CABARET TEA HOUSE AUGUST MOON

ENJOY THE UNIQUE PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE EAST CHINA SEA FROM THE WINDOWS OF THE CABARET. STEREO PLUS CLASSICAL JAPANESE ENTERTAINMENT

NAMINOUE AREA, MANA. FOR RESERVATIONS CALL (088)2945

AD FROM "THIS MONTH ON OKINAWA" 1960

AND SO LOVELY LADIES AND KIND GENTLEMEN, AS THE SUN SETS IN THE WESTERN SEA AND THE BREEZE WHISPERS THROUGH THE PINE TREES, WE BID GOODNIGHT TO THE TEA HOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON

