

BULLETIN OF THE BURMA STUDIES GROUP
ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES
SOUTHEAST ASIA COUNCIL
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The Annual Business Meeting

The annual meeting of the Burma Studies Group was held at the Sheraton Center in Toronto on Friday, March 13, 1981, from 4:30 to 6:30. Those present were as follows: Marta Nicholas, William W. Gage, Terry Bailey, John Musgrave, Betty Musgrave, Maureen Aung Thwin, Won Z. Yoon, Bruce Matthews, Frances Colley, Konrad Bekker, Sarah M. Bekker, Leedom Lefferts, John Seaburg Thomson, Thomas T. Gibson, Michael Aung Thwin, David J. Steinberg, Wilhelm G. Solheim II, John Ferguson, Catherine Ferguson.

Bill Solheim was asked to comment on how we might learn more about the state of archeology today in Burma. As a result of Bill's presentation, it was decided that David Steinberg should make overtures through the proper channels in order to invite a Burmese scholar familiar with early history and archeology to the next AAS meeting in Chicago, 1982.

An enthusiastic thank you was expressed to Terry Bailey and Denison University for the warmth of hospitality and hard work that went into making our third colloquium so successful. We expended all our AAS funds for transportation costs to the colloquium and were somewhat in the red. Those who used the transportation system were asked to contribute and enough did so that our deficit had been removed.

Thanks were given to SUNY Ag.Tech. at Cobleskill for bearing the cost of the last two mailings of the Bulletin, and it was agreed that an up-dating of our mailing list could be achieved by requesting that those who wish to continue to receive the Bulletin return the "Fill in and return" form at the end of this News Letter.

Michael Aung Thwin represented Burma at the SEAC meeting and gave a brief report on his participation. He noted that a \$500 grant was available for suitable translations. After some discussion it was thought that perhaps an important Burmese short story might be translated and sent to Michael, who is chairing the Translation Committee.

The Brill book, Essays on Burma, is forthcoming, and Editor Ferguson explained that a proposed Volume II depends on the reception to Volume I.

Thanks were given to Maureen Aung Thwin and Bruce Matthews for bringing "The Haunted Land" to the meeting, but we were unable to bridge the technical gap between U.S. and Canadian tape decks.

Elections were held with John Ferguson elected as chairman until Kris Lehman returned from Burma, and Jon Wiant as secretary and Bulletin editor for the same length of time. After the return of Kris Lehman, then Kris was to assume the chairmanship and John Ferguson the role of secretary and Bulletin editor.

Plans for the 1982 colloquium were broached. Perhaps Terry Bailey will not be on hand in the fall of 1982 and thus the Burma Studies Group may have to seek a welcome elsewhere. Possible hosts mentioned included Bucknell University, Cornell University, and Elmira College. Members were encouraged to explore the possibilities and report at the Chicago meeting in the spring of 1982. There was unanimous agreement that back-to-back panels on the State of the Art of Burma

Studies should be requested for the AAS Chicago meetings. Michael Aung Thwin will be in charge of arranging for participants and John Ferguson agreed to chair the panels. The remainder of the meeting was, as is our custom, devoted to a lively debate on where the group should re-gather for dinner.

Konrad Bekker - 1911-1981

We were all deeply saddened by the news that our dear friend and colleague had died suddenly in West Virginia on June 26. Your Acting Chairman attended a "A Celebration of the Life of our Friend and Colleague Konrad Bekker" on July 27 at the Asia Society. As you all know, Konrad was one of the most faithful members of our Burma Studies Group and has been present at all our meetings and colloquiums for many years. Our deepest sympathy is extended to his wife Sarah and hopefully we can arrange a fitting tribute to his contributions at the next colloquium.

News Briefs

At the AAS meetings in Toronto various members of the Burma Studies Group were in evidence: MICHAEL AUNG THWIN as discussant on Southeast Asian temples; SARAH BEKKER in the workshop on religion and society; TERRY BAILEY, SARAH BEKKER, and JOHN FERGUSON in the Theravada art session.

A catalogue entitled "Burmese Art and Its Influences" was prepared last spring by Beurdeley, Matthews & Co. Ltd., 16 Savile Row, London W1. Simon Matthews pointed out that some of the items in the catalogue were tested with Carbon-14 and thermoluminescence. While the exhibit was scheduled for April, 1981, those interested may still be able to obtain a copy of the catalog.

JON WIANT spoke on "NeWin's Burma" at the New York Conference on Asian Studies at Hartwick College, Oneonta, N.Y., in October. Jon also participated in the Burma Seminar taught by MICHAEL AUNG THWIN at the Southeast Asia Program at Cornell U. Additional participants in the Burma Seminar were SARAH BEKKER and JOHN FERGUSON. Michael was able to conduct the seminar and also continue his teaching in the History Department at Elmira College. JON WIANT is currently a Visiting Fellow of the Peace Studies Program at Cornell U., where he diligently works to finish writing his thesis. SARAH BEKKER this fall has been teaching a course on mainland Southeast Asia at the Institute for Asian Studies in New York City. KRIS LEHMAN returned to the United States late August from his stay in Burma and is teaching again at the U. of Illinois, Urbana. Kris reports that his linguistic work on Burmese dialects went very well and was "thoroughly productive and exciting." He perhaps will return to Burma next summer for a few months of work with U Sein on Kayah ethnohistory. JULIANE SCHIBER and her husband MARK WOODWARD are now working in Burma and have been helped greatly by the Religious Affairs Department. Kris also reports that at Illinois there are five leading Burmese scholars sent by the government in the fields of physics, chemistry, mathematics, and Geography, and History. It is hoped that more will come after these visitors return. The Light of the Dhamma is being published again in English, and your editor has seen two issues of Volume 1, which includes a number of articles particularly interesting to those who follow the fortunes of the Ne Win ceti. Through the kindness of KRIS LEHMAN my attention has also been called to a history of the Shwegyin Nikaya by Than Tun. ANNA ALLOTT writes with some news. She wrote in 1978 an article entitled "Prose Writing and Publishing in Burma: Government Policy and Popular Practice," which has recently been published in the book entitled Literature and Society in Southeast Asia: Sociological and Political Perspectives, Singapore Univ. Press, Yusof Ishak House (Kent Ridge, Singapore 0523) (cost 25 Singapore dollars per paper volume). Anna is the Honorary Secretary of the Britain Burma Society in the U.K.

The AAS Program Committee has approved the Burma back-to-back panels for the forthcoming AAS meetings in Chicago in March. Those who have agreed to participate include KRIS LEHMAN, MICHAEL AUNG THWIN, RICHARD COOLER, ROBERT TAYLOR, ANNA ALLOTT, JON WIANT, JOSEF SILVERSTEIN, and SARAH BEKKER, with JOHN FERGUSON as chair and discussant. The title will be "State of the Arts in Burma Studies."

New News

Your Editor needs new news. Do you have any? If so, please send to

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