

BULLETIN OF THE BURMA STUDIES GROUP
Association for Asian Studies
March, 1986
#32

Membership's Voting:

The twenty nominated by the membership as potential directors of a proposed Burma Studies Foundation were as follows:

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| * Aung Thwin, Maureen | Lieberman, Victor B. |
| * Aung Thwin, Michael | MacDougall, Hugh |
| Bailey, Jane Terry | * Maung Maung Gyi |
| Becker, Alton | * Musgrave, John |
| * Bekker, Sarah | * Silverstein, Josef |
| Bennett, Paul J. | Solheim II, W. G. |
| Cooler, Richard | Spiro, Melford |
| * Ferguson, John P. | * Steinberg, David I. |
| Keeler, Ward | * Wiant, Jon |
| * Lehman, F. K. | Woodward, Hiram |

Those ten marked above with an asterisk were eventually elected by the Burma Studies Group as founding directors of the Burma Studies Foundation. They will meet in Chicago and begin negotiations with Northern Illinois concerning the establishment of a Burma Studies Center there. The founding meeting will be at 9 PM, Friday, March 21, right after the annual Burma Studies Group meeting. Everyone is welcome.

Annual Meeting:

The annual meeting of the Burma Studies Group will be from 7 PM to 9 PM on Friday, March 21, 1986, at P.D. Room #3, at the Hilton and Towers Hotel, Chicago where the Association for Asian Studies will meet. The annual descent upon some hapless "nearby" Asian restaurant will be arranged for Saturday night. To have the dinner before 7 PM Friday is just not possible, considering the past eating and organizational habits of our group.

News:

This June the Woodrow Wilson International Center will hold a major conference on Burma. Organizing the event is Ronald A. Morse, Secretary of the Asia Program at the Center. Scholars will be brought to Washington from around the world, hopefully even from Burma. The event has been planned in consultation with the Burma Studies Group, and the occasion will be a welcome opportunity to discuss, among other matters, the future of the Burma Studies Center. Ron Morse has been invited to our annual meeting at Chicago. Forthcoming at this conference will be Doctoral Dissertations on Burma, 1900-1985: A Bibliographical Guide to International Research by Frank J. Shulman.

PAT HERBERT has donated to the Center a copy of FMR, No. 15, which contains strikingly beautiful photographs, with accompanying articles, of illustrated palm leaf manuscript depictions of the Life of the Buddha from Jorge L. Borges, Alicia Jurado, and Patricia Herbert, p.117-139. Pat also notes the exhibit, "Buddhism: Art and Faith," with a catalog of the same name of the exhibit at the British Museum (British Library Publications, W. Zwalf, ed. 1985). Pat further notes the release of Phases of Pre-Pagan Burma by Gordon Luce, 2 vols., OUP, London, 1986. Pat is working on a study of Burmese manuscript painting.

DAVID HYTHA writes that a three-record set of Burmese music is available: title, "Birmanie, Music d'Art," by Radio France, 1981 (reissued in 1982), OCORA label #558555, -56, -57, distributed by Harmonia Mundi, France, available at Tower Records, Broadway & 3rd St. (or Broadway & 67th St.), NYC, cost \$30. David says music includes Hsaing Waing, harp, fkytem, pattala, and voice, and he says that it is the "only high quality recording that I know."

RICHARD COOLER sent your editor the "Pagan Newsletter 1985," published by UNESCO. Interested parties are encouraged to contact U Bo Kay, Dept. of Archeology, Pagan, Burma; U Oak Gar, Director-General, Dept. of Archeology, 32 D Prome Rd., Kamayut P.O., Rangoon, Burma; or UNESCO CLT/CH, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, France; or Pierre Pichard, architect E.F.E.-O., P.O. Box 33, Pondicherry 605 001, India.

WARD KEELER is one of three people nominated by the Fulbright program for post-doctoral work in Burma. HARALD BOCKMAN, a new BSG member, is a Norwegian Sinologist doing research on the early ethno-history of Southwest Chica. ALBERT MOSCOTTI writes that the University of Hawaii and the Rangoon Arts and Sciences University have established an Affiliation Program, funded by USIA Fulbright grant. Prof. Anatole Lyovin of the Linguistics Dept. will be the first participant, starting in early 1986. Nine students from Burma are currently studying at Manoa. SARAH BEKKER will be teaching "A Day in the Life of a Burmese Family" in April at the Institute for Asian Studies in NYC. She just returned from guiding the Smithsonian tour to Burma and reports that U Bo Kay is recovering steadily from a recent heart attack.

JOYCE WRIGHT, Head, Asia Collection, T. H. Hamilton Library, 2550 The Mall, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822, had, in December, two items to trade: 3 vols. of the Burmese Encyclopedia (Vol.2, 2nd print, 1973; Vol.3, 1st printing, 1956, and Vol.5; 3rd printing 1971); and Profile of a Burma Frontier Man by Vum Ko Han (Bandung, Indonesia, 1963), (binding worn).

Sent to your editor was the Karenni Journal, Serial No. 1, by Abel Tweed, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Karenni National Revolutionary Council, Box 19, Mae Hing Son 58000, Thailand.

EDITH PINESS reviewed John Cady's Contacts with Burma, 1935-1949, for the Journal of Asian History, Christopher Myint Oung has been granted his Canadian medical license and is interning at Sherbrooke, Quebec.

CHUCK SMITH will be leaving Krakow this summer for his next State Department assignment. ANNA ALLOTT has recently returned from a five-week stay in Burma. She reports that she met DR. DENISE BENNOT there at Moulmain. She noted also that Dr. Pichard is making a survey of Pagan temples and working with a team to train preservers of masonry and wall paintings. Dr. Deborah Swallow, Assistant Keeper of Indian and SEAsian art at the Victoria and Albert Museum, arrived in Rangoon in February on a month's visa, with a planned concentration upon parabaiks.

From the Institute of SEAsian Studies, Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Pasit Panjang, Singapore 0511 one can order (\$15 US) Burma - Literature, Historiography, Scholarship, Language, Life, and Buddhism, a selection of talks and lectures by Hla Pe, assembled by his colleagues at SOAS.

Three levels of Burmese will be taught at the Southeast Asian Studies Summer Institute, July 9 - Aug. 15, 1986, at Northern Illinois U., DeKalb, IL 60115.

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Also put July 31 to Aug. 3 on your calendar. Our leader U Chit Hlaing (F.K. Lehman) has earnest hopes we can plan a significant invasion of SEASSI this year, since it will be at DeKalb. Even if you cannot make the Chicago meeting on March 21 st, drop a note to your editor if you believe you could prepare some tidbit and bring it to De Kalb on July 31 st. Perhaps you have translated a chapter of a rare Burmese novel or have an unusual Burmese postcard collection ? Perhaps you wish to dance or deliver a tirade against inherent vice. Surely there is something you can share with us aspiring, easily- entertained scholars. Be not bashful.

U THAUNG sent your editor the following story:

SHWENYAUNGBIN NAT

Shwenyaungbin Nat, the Golden Banyan tree spirit, lives in a small Nat Sin building at a bus stop eighteen miles from Ranggon. This nat is regarded as the nat of motor vehicles.

There was a time when Burmese, Chinese, INdians, and some Westerners from Rangoon would go to the nat and offer him money, fruit, flowers, or liquor after the purchase of a new car. The medium (the nat's earthy representative) would then give the visitor a strip of red cloth from the nat's bnet, which, when tied somewhere in the vehicle, was believed to prevent accident. This practice has existed since Colonial days under British rule, when Automobiles first made their appearance in Burma.

In 1976, a Burmese journalist was invited to a farewell party for his friend, an American diplomat scheduled to leave Burma the following morning. The guest's attempts to locate a suitable going-away present for his friend were in vain, so he proceeded, in the wee hours of the morning , to the Shwenyaungbin nat's building (conveniently deserted at that hour), gragged the nat, then wrapped it and presented it to the departing diplomat as his farewell gift. It is likely that the American did not know the power of the golden statue.

Since this incident, the nat was replaced with a larger statue, and is now kept locked.

And now , here in America, we have a powerful nat who prevents motor accidents-- but no one knows of its power.

New-Members-Since the Last Issue:

W.G. Huff, 1, Carlyle House, 103 Old Church St., London SW3, 6DS, England
Daniel A. O'Donohue, Ranggon, Dept. of State, Washington, DC 20520
Eleanore E. MacDougall, 413 7th St. SE, Washington, DC 20003
Lee S. Dutton, 228 Tilton Park Dr., De Kalb, IL 60115
Harold Bockman, Dept. of East Asian Studies, U. of Oslo, Box 1118, Blindern
0317 Oslo 3, Norway
Inter Documentation Co. BY, The Netherlands, International Micro-Publishers,
Hogewoerd 151-153-2311 HK, Leiden, The Netherlands

New Addresses:

David Hytha, 277 Varick St., Jersey City, NJ 07302
Sylvia Lu, American Embassy, APO San Francisco, CA 96503
Christopher Myint Oung, / 980 rue des Paysans, Apt. 406, Fleuremont, Sherbrooke,
Quebec J1E 3J1

SEND NEWS TO JOHN P. FERGUSON, EDITOR- SECRETARY, THE BURMA STUDIES GROUP,
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