

ALOHA from Burma (Myanmar)

Dear Friends,

We had our BARS (**B**achelor of **A**rts in **R**eligious **S**tudies) finals first week of March. It was fun the last two months teaching them. I enjoyed third year English students performing a play for their final exams. I wish I had that kind of final for my English class at my university. Enjoying their plays, I admired their talents in this atmosphere less conducive to education. I do hope that they will get an excellent education from our BARS program.

The annual Commencement of Myanmar Institute of Theology was on the morning of March 8, 2003. The weather was good enough for the beautiful morning, being cool and not very hot in favor of graduates and us with all those thick gowns and caps. I caught cold the last few days and I was still sick that morning. Beautiful morning for everybody wasn't a beautiful one for me because of my sickness. I took a bus from my house to the school to get there a little bit late. I had my cap and gown on in front of the hall just before the ceremony. All faculties led by Dr. Anna May Say Pa walked in a procession into the hall while the audience sang "O Worship the King". The procession was very nice and for the first time in my life, I had to sit up on the stage with a bunch of Ph.Ds being the youngest faculty among the old sages.

The commencement went well and so did the dedication of new faculty. Nixon and I were dedicated to be new faculties for BARS. Here is an excerpt from the commencement program:

Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies

This is a season of firsts for BARS. For the first time all the classes of BARS could be held on one campus. For the first time, there is a full time English lecturer, **Mr. Robert Winter**. And for the first time two nationals have joined the BARS Faculty after their studies abroad: **Mr. Lwin Moe** (Bachelor of Science, Purdue University) and **Mr. Nixon Eway** (M.Sc. Information Management, Asian Institute of Technology). This program is under the leadership of **Daw Tin Hla Kyi**, Chairperson, **Thra Pawlu**, Dean, **Thra Augurlion**, Assistant Dean, and **Saya Mang Tung Thang**, Administrative Secretary.

Robert Winter, by the way, is from Chicago, IL and has been teaching English to Master of Divinity and BARS students. He has a Master degree in English from University of Illinois. He was a nice guy to be friends with.

Generally speaking, I had fun last month even though I was faced with a lot of difficulties including my laptop being broken and having communication difficulties with friends like you, especially Neil and Diana, my host-parents. In spite of problems and difficulties, God has been kind to all of us here in Burma.

Love in Christ,

Lwin Moe

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