

Pe Yee (1917–1995)

DO HEN PAU

Do Hen Pau, born in Myanmar, studied in mission schools and completed his advanced studies at Spicer Memorial College, India. He worked in various capacities from 1969 to 2010 as an evangelist, assistant pastor, translator, bookkeeper/accountant, secretary-treasurer, assistant union treasurer, union treasurer, and manager of the Kinsaung Publishing House.

Pe Yee was an Adventist pastor, administrator, and writer in Myanmar for more than thirty years.

Early Life

Pe Yee was the fourth child of Ahlon Shoke and Ma Kywe, born on August 17, 1917, and brought up in an Adventist family in Meiktila, Myanmar. His father was Chinese and his mother Burmese. They lived on the campus of Meiktila Adventist Technical High School, which was established by R. B. Thurber in 1910. Ahlon Shoke supervised the school's vocational trades such as carpentry and shoe makings. Pe Yee was one of nine children. He had five sisters, Shwe Kyin, Ma Yin, Kyin Myaing, Ah Tin, and Khin Khin, and three brothers Pein Kyi, Maung Muang Aye, and Nyunt Hlaing. All of them spent their childhood in Meiktila.¹

Education and Marriage

Pe Yee enrolled at Meiktila Adventist Technical High School from primary through 10th standard and was baptized there in 1929. He passed the Division School Leaving Certificate (DSLCL) in 1936. He continued his studies at Spicer Memorial College, in Coimbatore and Bangalore in southern India (1939-40). In 1955, he completed an Intermediate of Arts (IA, Part B) from Rangoon Arts and Science University.²

On April 30, 1940, Pe Yee married Nan Shein, a Pwo Karen lady who was born on August 1916 at Theinlar Village, Myaungmya, Myanmar. Nan Shein also studied at Meiktila Adventist Technical High School through the Sub-High School level. She was baptized in 1930. The Pe Yees had four daughters: Khin Hnin Kyi (born April 19, 1942), Khin Hnin Yee (born October 10, 1944), Khin Than Yee (February 19, 1947), and Thein Thein Yee (July 21, 1950). The Pe Yees had ten grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.³

Ministry

Pe Yee's was initially employed at Meiktila Adventist Technical High School as school treasurer for four years (1937-38, 1940-41). He was sponsored for further studies at Spicer Memorial College in India in 1939. During the four years of Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945, he remained with his parents in Meiktila. After the Second

World War ended, he worked as a steno-typist for three years (1946-1948) at the Burma Union office. From 1949 to 1954, he was school treasurer at the Seventh-day Adventist high school in Myaungmya, which was established by Frank A. Wyman in 1927.⁴ Pe Yee became manager of the Kinsaung Press for two years (1955-56)⁵ at 72 U Wisara Road, Rangoon, next to the Burma Union Headquarters.⁶

Pe Yee was promoted to secretary-treasurer of the Delta Section,⁷ Myaungmya, in 1956. Seven years later, he transferred to the Tenasserim Section (Southeast Mission of Myanmar), Moulmein, where he also served as the secretary-treasurer from 1963 to 1964.⁸ He was on leave of absence from 1964 to 1966, before he was resumed work as an evangelist for two years (1967-68) at Meiktila. On December 17, 1968, Pe Yee was ordained to the gospel ministry.⁹ He was then appointed president of the Upper Burma Mission in May Myo, Mandalay Region, for another two years (1969-1970).¹⁰ During his presidency, Pe Yee reported that new a mission field in the Matupi area of the Southern Chin Hills extended the reach of the Burma Mission, and forty-one people, including several animists, were baptized.¹¹ On April 6, 1969, Pe Yee, joined by Tun Sein, Burma Union secretary, undertook a walking tour of the southern Chin Hills, which covered more than 180 miles. They spent twenty days, sometimes climbing mountains 6,000-7,000 feet tall to reach villages with their evangelistic message. In Pyidawtha Village, Pe Yee baptized eight people.¹² In October 1969, Pe Yee visited the new mission field of Naga to see the progress of the mission work.¹³

It was during the Burma Union Constituency held on December 19-21, 1970, in Rangoon¹⁴ that Pe Yee was appointed book depot manager. He served in this capacity from 1971 to 1972.¹⁵ He became president of the Southeast Mission at Moulmein in 1973.¹⁶ Two years prior to his retirement, he served as the Voice of Prophecy Bible correspondence school director for one year in 1974, an appointment he received during the Burma Union Triennial Session on December 18-21, 1973.¹⁷ His final position was interim auditor for the Burma Union in 1975.¹⁸

Later Life

Pe Yee served the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization in various capacities for thirty-eight years, finally retiring on January 1, 1976. He and his wife settled permanently in Insein, Yangon Region, Myanmar. On May 22, 1995, Pe Yee unexpectedly died at the age of 78 after suffering a heart attack. His wife, Daw Nan Shein, died at her home town in Insein, Yangon, Myanmar, at the age of 100 years, on January 20, 2016.¹⁹

Contribution

Among Pe Yee's many contributions to the Adventist Church community in Myanmar are several books, such as "*The Story of Seventh-day Adventists in Myanmar*," published in 1986 by the Kinsaung Publishing House; "*The History of Adventist work in Myanmar*," published in "*Light Dawns Over Asia*" (1990); *Life-time Achievers*; *Drug Abuse Therapy*; *Smoking Cessation*; and *Vitamins and Minerals*. Pe Yee was a second-generation Adventist. He

was a devoted and God-fearing leader in the Seventh-day Adventist Church community in Myanmar.²⁰

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. Workers Service Record of Pe Yee, Burma Union.
2. Pe Yee, 1986, *The Story of Seventh-day Adventists in Myanmar* (Kanbe, Yankin, Myanmar: Kinsaung Publishing House), j-k.
3. "Pe Yee, Burma," in *Light Dawns over Asia: Adventism's Story in the Far Eastern Division 1888-1988*, ed. G. G. Fernandez (Silang, Cavite, Philippines: Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies Publications, 1990), 278.
4. Sidney Gyi, interview by author, September 2017.
5. Pe Yee, Ibid, 369.
6. Sidney Gyi, interview by author, September 2017.

7. *Workers Service Record*, Burma Union.
8. Burma Union Committee, Action No. 63-6.
9. Burma Union Committee, Action No. 68-217.
10. Burma Union Committee, Action No. 86-260.
11. Pe Yee, "Converted Animists Wait a Year for Baptism," *Southern Asia Tidings*, July 1969, 12.
12. "During this trip...," *Southern Asia Tidings*, July 1969, 12.
13. C. B. Guild, "Officials Invite Temperance Secretary," *Southern Asia Tidings*, February 1970, 11.
14. Cecil B. Guild, "Burma Constituency Appoints Youthful Leaders," *Southern Asia Tidings*, February 1971, 4.
15. Harries Pein Kyi, interview by author, October 2017.
16. Burma Union Committee, Action No. 72-319.
17. Ephraim Han, "Ordination Highlights Triennial Session," *Southern Asia Tidings*, February 1974, 4.
18. Burma Union Committee, Action No. 72-319.
19. Khin Hnin Yee, interview by author, October 2017.
20. J. O. Wilson, *Advent Angels in Burma* (N. p.: Published by "Friends of Burma," n. d.)

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