

Gurus and Wayward Wards

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MILANers Meet in the backdrop of Golden Jubilee Summit is a golden opportunity for us, the old students, to reconnect and reminisce.

I was a student of 1972-73 batch. It is very nostalgic visiting MyDLIS and interacting with the teachers. It brings back fond memories of my good old college days.

I had finished my graduation and had a PG seat in Biochemistry but for personal reasons, I could not join. Despite very little clue about the course, I decided to take up Library Science course. Like most of us, I joined the course not out of choice. It was not a very sought after PG course then. I remember vividly Prof. Patil telling us in lighter vein that not many girls were willing to marry him!

Our class was a mix of freshers and deputed students. The deputed students were more serious than us (girls). We were a group (or should I say gang?) of five with three 'Geethas' and two non-Geethas. As we had no great knowledge about the course, we were a bit anxious. While we eagerly waited to meet the teachers on the first day, entered an immaculately dressed, Prof. Patil (Late) and wished us with a wink! We later realized it was one of his mannerisms. For a head of the department he was pretty cool. Prof. Nagappa, a very active Dr. Raghavan, a sober Prof. Subramaniam, all wonderful and dedicated great teachers, made us feel at ease. Prof. Khan was a very serious and a no nonsense teacher. So, we were at our best of our behavior in his class. Prof. Pangannayya, (Late) an easy-going teacher, was more of a friend and we took complete liberty in

his class. Generally the girls were very noisy and bold, and often took his class a bit casually which the boys did not appreciate.

Fun apart, we were pretty good in internal assessment and regular in studies. One year was too short to learn new subjects and we had to make the best use of the available resources. I fondly remember the "Friday talks" where we opted for the last bench in a class with three rows of seats! The most memorable part of the curriculum was the educational tour. Visiting good libraries was a great learning and a good exposure for us, the budding librarians.

Well, the tour was more fun and pranks, which we of course looked forward to. Visiting library-after-library was getting a bit overbearing. In Delhi a bunch of our classmates took some time off to go around and have an exotic dinner. We lost our way back. Delhi was too unsafe for youngsters even in those days. After about three hours, a good Samaritan helped us find our way back by 11.30 in the night. Mr. Pangannayya, unaware of our whereabouts, was fuming (otherwise a very cool person) and refused to let us in. We pleaded and gave a written apology with a promise that our parents meet him, which of course never happened. We did the vanishing act in Chennai too by hiding in the huge pipes on the road!





Mr. Pangannayya, a great window shopper, bought a tie in a roadside shop in Delhi, a bright red tie! We were drenched in the rain and our teacher's tie too got wet. Next day the size of the tie was reduced to half its length as it had shrunk. I still remember his pathetic expression!

It is a pride to be a student of one of the early library science schools. I take this opportunity to thank all my teachers who were more of a guide than a teacher. "Guru is very representative of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He teaches and spreads knowledge and destroys the weeds of ignorance. I salute all my teachers - who were truly The Gurus.

Libraries are reservoirs of strength, grace and wit, reminders of order, calm and continuity, lakes of mental energy, neither warm nor cold, light or dark.... In any library in the world, I am at home, unselfconscious, still and absorbed.

Germaine Greer

If we can put a man on the moon and sequence the human genome, we should be able to devise something close to a universal digital public library.

Peter Singer

Libraries allow children to ask questions about the world and find the answers. And the wonderful thing is that once a child learns to use a library, the doors to learning are always open.

Laura Bush