

They regaled, They rejoiced, They reminiscenced and finally They broke down

Glimpses of the Alumni summit of The Anathalaya organised on the occasion of Thatayya Day celebrations

By C V Gopinath

**An Alumnus, President of the Anathalaya and
Former Additional Secretary to Government of India**

The 135 years old institution, Anathalaya Mysuru throughout its long existence is a well-known Institution taking care of the poor and meritorious students, pursuing their college studies and education, by providing free boarding and lodging, is celebrating 181st Birthday of its founder Sri Magge Venkatakrishnayya popularly known as “Mysuru Thatayya” on 07th September 2025.

As a prelude to this annual event several competitions like Essay Competition, Debate Competition were organized. Blood donation camp was also organized under the guidance of Dr.Sriram of Bhagwan Pathological Labs and a board member of the Anathalaya administration. And this year’s speciality was a summit of Alumni of the Anathalaya organized for assembly, interaction and to reminiscence their past apart from pouring out their experiences and giving various inputs to the present administration to improve the facilities to the present students at large. In all, there were approximately 40 members of the Alumni Group who had registered online for their presence and participation to meet and regale on 10th of August 2025. It may be recalled here that in the Alumni Basket of the anathalaya there had been personalities like Dr. Padmabhushan S L Byrappa, well known author and a Saraswathi Samman Awardee, Sri C Narasimhamurthy, the former Chief Secretary and an I.A.S. officer, the Present President of the Anathalaya and an alumnus himself who worked for Government Of India and retired at the level of Additional Secretary.

The entire summit was planned, coordinated and executed by Sri Dinesh N V of the popular “Dinesh Coaching Centre” of Mysuru, yet again an Alumnus and the present Vice President of Anathalaya. In his introductory and welcome address he spoke in depth as to how the Anathalaya provided shelter and food and taught the students to swim across turbulent sea of life. He entered into the Anathalaya to seek shelter and food. He stated that Anathalaya taught him the human values for character building and recalls proudly but for Anathalaya he would not have reached the heights in the society.

- Sri K Bhujanga Rao who was an inmate between 1960-64 who perused his B.Sc. degree and worked as a Science teacher and ultimately took his post-graduation degree, taught and remembered Thatayya the founder every day without failure and ultimately retired as Principal of a Government college. He said that standing at the age of 81, while he does his routine daily pooja starts with “Om Namoh Thatayya”.
- Ravishankar, who stayed in the Anathalaya and completed his B.Sc. and who had initially opted not to join the Government service, even if he has to work as a cook, ultimately became a chief loco pilot in Indian Railways. He said that Anathalaya taught how to pray and get peace of mind, he learnt discipline and he learnt to quit smoking for which he is grateful to Anathalaya. Ravishankar (1990-1993) remembers the process of selection for admission to Anathalaya as to how merit and

unbiased selections took place. He said students should bring name to the Anathalaya and they should give back to the society what they received from society.

- Sri Subramanyam, who stayed during 1984-87 and completed his mechanical engineering degree and joined the defence services, received the President of India Medal and ultimately post-retirement works as the Security-Head of a leading Bank. He had the entire praise for his alma-mater for the discipline the institution taught him to become a dedicated soldier.
- Dr. U H Ganesh during his stay in 1973-75, remembers fondly his studies in Science course and ultimately doing his post-graduation with 4th rank from the University of Mysore and obtaining a Ph.D. from the Mangalore University. He fondly remembered the positive side of debating abilities inculcated in the Anathalaya apart from how his ambition to achieve in life, how to overcome his laziness.
- Ashok Hegde, an alumnus during 1987-92, expressed his deep sense of gratitude to the Anathalaya and said that the alumni should meet at least once in a year in the sacred precinct of the Anathalaya.
- There were scientist stalwarts as products of the Anathalaya, like Dr. Gurumurthy (1979-84) a nuclear scientist who held the post of senior scientist with BARC and RMP as well as Sri Kashinath (1991-96) who did his computer science engineering and worked with Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO) as a senior research scientist in the Akash project .Dr. Gurumurthy said that the Anathalaya taught him, self-help to rise and developing self-esteem to achieve the goals. The President fondly remembered that Dr. Gurumurthy on the date of his retirement came to the Anathalaya and donated a good sum out of his pensioner benefits.
- Sri Kashinath had various experiences working in Infosys etc and opined that alumni should remember where they started and it is time for them to pay back to the society at large. A strong believer, he said that he owes a debt of gratitude for the food and shelter Anathalaya gave him and the deity “Gayatri Devi” of Anathalaya who gave him the strength to move up the ladder in society.
- Ravindra (1979-84) who performed well as a private entrepreneur said that the present management team has given easy access to the Students as well as the Alumni unlike in the past.
- Sri Krishna Prasad (1998-99) who works as an Auditor put it succinctly that while climbing the mountain of life, reminiscences of Anathalaya was the resting place to recover the energy and to climb up.
- Mrs Lakshmi (2018-19) said that Anathalaya taught her the values and traditions in life right from having vermilion mark (Kumkuma) on her forehead. Pruthvi Bhat a brilliant budding lawyer who aspires to enter judicial services was bubbling with energy and enthusiasm. The President of the Anathalaya fondly remembered how she donated Rs 1,000/- to Anathalaya out of the Rs 15,000/- cash prize amount earned by her by standing 1st out of 762 competitors in elocution competition held on entire Karnataka state basis. He further said that Pruthvi Bhat after registering in the Bar Council and joining as an advocate and receiving Rs 7,500/- for 10 days work in the first month

came back to the Anathalaya and paid Rs 1,000/- as donation. It is not the amount that you pay as donation that is important but it is the spirit of expressing gratitude to the alma-mater by way of giving back as a token of gratitude.

- There had been plenty of engineers, scientists, economists, accountants and from the faculty of commerce, arts including indologist. Occasionally, there have been Medical Doctors. The President fondly remembered Dr.Udayshankar who perused his M.B.B.S. degree staying at the Anathalaya for 6 long years and runs a very big Hospital in Chikkamagalur District. Incidentally, the Anathalaya has initiated Alumni beneficiary award to be conferred on Thatayya Day and he had been the first recipient of such an award two years back.
- Dr. Karthik Udupa (1994-2000) who became a Medical Doctor, said that getting a seat in Anathalaya was not an easy task. The entry was merit based. He said Anathalaya taught him self-esteem and he has never felt shy to say that he is a product of Anathalaya. He feels a sense of belonging. He shared his experiences during his stay and said the Anathalaya imbued in him, both the Samskara and the Samskruthi. Recently the management board of Anathalaya has inducted him as a Governing Council Member.
- Sri Raghavendra remembered how he joined Veda Paathashaala to get free food and later to join the Anathalaya, fondly remembered that learning discipline was a key factor at younger age in Anathalaya. He said with the discipline imbued nobody could spoil him and his character throughout his lifetime.
- Sri Dinesh who is the present Vice president of the Anathalaya reminiscenced that he landed at Mysore all the way from Shimogga for his college studies with a railway ticket given by somebody. He had to find his way for free shelter and food and somebody suggested him about the Anathalaya. By his merit, he could get into Anathalaya and Anathalaya taught him to swim across the ocean of life. He said the products of the Anathalaya are available in several foreign countries.
- Ramamurthy (1985-91) said that he came from Sringeri along with a kerosene stove in hand and waited for 15 days for admission to the Anathalaya. He did his commerce graduation became a Chartered Accountant and holds an MBA degree now.
- Vishwanath (1986-1988) who after graduation joined KSRTC and worked for some time with BEML also had to take voluntary retirement for having been fed up with the prevalent corruption in those institutions. He turned out in to a private entrepreneur and faired very well in his later life.
- Sri Nithyananada (1986-90) joined Reserve Bank of India, Sri Ravindra (1979-84) who has excelled as a private entrepreneur, Sri Nagendra (1986-87), Pruthvi Sharma (2019-2024) who is a post-graduate in Physics and became a start-up entrepreneur. Like Sri Ankith (2023-24), each one of them remembers Anathalaya for inculcating discipline and values. They said they have easy access to the management during 3-4 years and the functioning of administration is totally transparent.

While each one of the alumni reminiscenced their stay, they could not forget travails in their lives before joining the Anathalaya and proudly mentioned how the Anathalaya gave them the lifeline to hang on in order to fulfil their ambition of college studies.

The custom of rising resources through the students came for appreciation as it taught them several values in their personality development. The President and the author of this article who himself is an alumnus (1960-61) spoke and gave examples of how value system was taught in a practical way by the Anathalaya. He said that if somebody considers his humility as hallmark of his personality, he owes it to Anathalaya. As they remembered their travails and the minimum needs served by the Anathalaya during their stay, they broke down profusely while the entire audience stared in appreciation with moist eyes.

Many broke down when they visited their old rooms where they had stayed, touched the walls and the doors to get a feel of their becoming and being and sobbed in gratitude and admiration. All were unanimous in offering their humble services and in unison committed to the Anathalaya for its development and growth. All appreciated from the bottom of their hearts the development that had taken place in the Anathalaya in achieving self-sufficiency.

Mysuru Thatayya's 181st Birth day celebrations on **7th September**

Dr.V.B.Arathi, internationally acclaimed spiritual guide and mentor as well as Motivational speaker for Youth will deliver the Keynote address on the Annual day celebrations.

Ophthalmologists couple, founders of Usha Kiran charitable trust and Dr. Uma Ravishankar and Dr.Ravishankar of Ushakiran Eye hospital of the city will be falicitated and conferred the annual "Thatayya Award" of the Mysuru Anathalaya on the eve of Thatayya's 181st Birth day celebrations to be held on Sunday the 7th September 2025 in a specially organized function.

Dr.T V Sathyanarayana Sanskrit scholar of Oriental Research fame and well known for spiritual discourses will be honoured with "Thayya Sri" beneficiary award for his life time achievements.

Sri A.S.Nataraj senior advocate and legal luminary of the city will be the guest of honour on the occasion and the function will be presided over by Sri. C V Gopinath, president of the Anathalaya and former Additional secretary to Government of India.

On the occasion Inter hostel debating competition and Essay writing competitions have been held as usual and Anathalaya's Alumni summit was also held for the first time.

Place: Anathalaya quadrangle Time: 4 P.M. Date: Sunday the 7th September,25