

203rd Bhanu Jayanti at Hartford Public Library

On Saturday July 23rd, members of the Bhutanese Community of Connecticut, many of whom are Asylum Hill resident and members of the AHNA-HPL Welcoming Committee gathered with fellow Nepalese-speaking people from CT and beyond to celebrate the birth of Bhanubhakta Acharya the first poet of the Nepali language and the one who first translated the great Hindu epic, the Ramayana into Nepali.

This is the fourth consecutive year that this community has celebrated this occasion with HPL at the Center for Contemporary Culture. The Nepali speaking Bhutanese who have come to the Hartford area hold this annual event as a major cultural celebration, as poetry holds a



prominent place in their culture. They celebrate with music, dance, speeches and of course poetry recitations, not to mention the food. There is always food as a part of every celebration, and the Bhutanese are no exception. This year it was catered by Taste of India restaurant.

Each year, the Bhutanese community invites many of the western friends who have welcomed them here to Hartford and America as honored guests at this event, and there are never too many who accept. Each guest as they arrive is announced from the podium and given a hand made badge that is pinned to their shirt, as well as a ceremonial scarf placed around their neck. Their tradition of this warm and genuinely honored welcome has no comparison I can think of in the West. It is heartfelt, it is joyful and it is a reminder of how fortunate we here in Asylum Hill are to have been chosen to receive these immigrants and refugees into our midst. Of the little they were able to bring when they came here they share the very best with us.

For more photos of the event, go to: <https://goo.gl/photos/85wJfUPN9KvngwL7>