

Eagles watch over valley

As a teenager, I worked in my dad's paint factory on Market Street in Kingston. Years later, I worked for a newspaper just off of Public Square in Wilkes-Barre. During my time spent working "down the line," I was always impressed by the Market Street Bridge, which physically links the two towns that are mentally linked in my past.

The most outstanding feature of the bridge are the four, large limestone eagles perched on the two pedestals at each end. The eagles are a memorial to the veterans of World War I and each one weighs 12 tons. The ornate pedestals that support the eagles are identical except for the inscriptions on the stone tablets above each arch. The inscriptions honor the residents' perseverance, patriotism, prosperity and progress.



KEVIN O'NEILL

Artistic Impression

The bridge was built from 1926 to 1929. The Beaux Arts-style structure was designed by Carrère and Hastings, a New York architecture firm that also designed the New York Public Library in the same style. At more than 1,200 feet long, with 12 arched spans, it is one of the state's longest and impressive concrete bridges. Classical granite balustrades run the length of the bridge on each side. Originally, 24 decorative light standards illuminated the bridge. Its the fourth bridge to cross the river at that location. Its grandeur reflects Wilkes-Barre's growth from an agricultural settlement into a bustling city built on a coal-fueled economy. The bridge was part of a building program meant to beautify the banks on both sides of the river. The buildings included the Luzerne County Courthouse and the 109th Field Artillery Armory. The bridge was the last structure in the program to be built before the Great Depression put an end to it. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

KEVIN O'NEILL is a staff artist for The Times-Tribune. Share your favorite artistic impression with him at koneill@timeshamrock.com.



Artistic Impression

Art is all around us. This is another installment in our occasional series that looks at the wonderful artistic elements in our community.