

# Thames Stamp Club Newsletter

June 2023

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The Thames Stamp Club meets the second and fourth Wednesday of each month, Sept. through June, at 7:30 P.M. at the Clark Lane Middle School, Waterford, CT. All area philatelists are invited. Annual dues are \$10.00. The club's email is [tbbee@aol.com](mailto:tbbee@aol.com). The club's address is PO Box 624, E. Lyme, CT 06333 and on the web at <http://www.ThamesStampClub.org>.

## May Recap

**May 10** – Zoom meeting was called to order at 1943 with six members attending. We noted that seven members attended the Boxborough Show last weekend. All indicated they enjoyed the show. The meeting was adjourned at 2023. A discussion on various philatelic items concluded the evening.

**May 24** – Zoom meeting was called to order at 1930 with six members attending. Brian is working to identify a cover theme for this year's show. We continued our discussion of setting in-person meetings and Dee volunteered to research several potential meeting places including returning to the Clark Lane School. The meeting was adjourned at 2009 followed by a discussion on the upcoming presorted first-class bridge coil stamps. The Arrigoni Bridge over the Connecticut River in Portland is one of the featured bridges. A short article on the Arrigoni bridge curtesy of member Sue Frechette is included. Discussions on various philatelic topics concluded the evening.

## June Meetings

**Jun 14** – Zoom meeting. 7:30 PM All are invited

**Jun 25** – Zoom meeting. 7:30 PM All are invited.

## June Stamp Shows

**23 Jun 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Show** @ The Annex Y.M.A. in East Haven

## Here and There

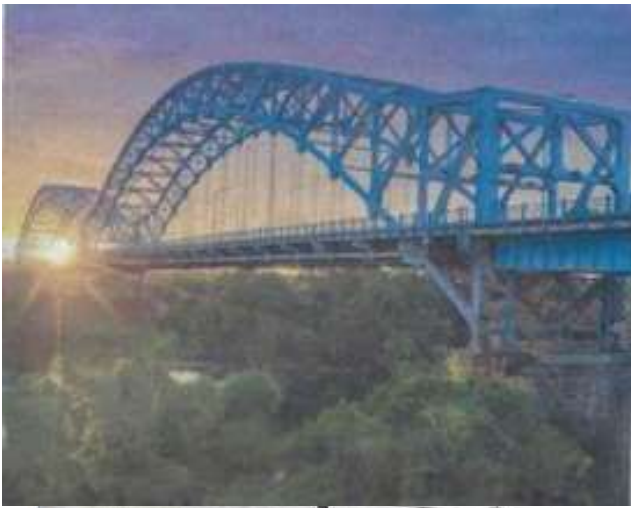
It is time to renew your membership in the Club. Dues are \$10/yr. Please mail \$10 to TSC, PO Box 624, E. Lyme, CT 06333. Even though Thamespex is over, you can still get your Thamespex'22 cover honoring the USS Seawolf (SSN 21). Contact us at the club's address if you want one. Covers are \$3/each, SASE please. I am circulating the stamp-circuit boxes; if you want to check out the box in your home for a few days, let me know. Everyone please stay healthy and safe. The following link will take you to the APS Newsletter:

<https://stamps.org/news/c/news/p/1>

Philatelically yours,

*Tony*

Tony Bruno



This photo – taken by East Hampton photographer Joe Gowac – is going to grace a U.S. Postal Service Forever stamp, new for 2023. While he wasn't sure why, the Portland first selectman bets the USPS chose the Arrigoni for its notable look, and the fact that it dates back to the Depression. (Federal officials say the bridge is in Middletown, but it's just as much a part of Portland.)

By Jack Lakowsky

Last week, the Town of Portland got a pleasant surprise – the Arrigoni Bridge, long a local landmark, will feature on a new U.S. Postal Service Forever stamp.

It is one of just four selected from all the bridges in the nation.

First Selectman Ryan Curley told the *RiverEast* he didn't know of the stamp until the postal service made its announcement, which came by way of the state Department of Transportation.

The selected bridges range from pedestrian to car carrying, all regarded as local landmarks, and other selectees include more modern bridges in Omaha and Oklahoma City, and one connecting the states of Iowa and Illinois.

While the stamps are only available for bulk purchases for now, the Arrigoni will still be seen all over the country.

Why the Arrigoni got picked isn't clear, likely its venerable history and its impressive pair of 600-foot steel arches, the tallest in Connecticut.

"This came as a pleasant surprise," said Curley of the national recognition.

It may not be a "formal" honor, but, Curley said, the "stamping" can be used as leverage in appeals to the state and federal governments for funding future bridge work.

The online history transportation archive [Kurumi.com](http://Kurumi.com) features a wealth of information about the bridge's long, and at times expensive, history.

## High School

with the auditorium director.

The bridge, which spans well over a half mile, was opened in August 1938, at a cost of about \$3.5 million, more than \$60 million in today's dollars. The year it was built, it won first prize in the large bridge category from the American Institute of Steel Construction.

It was named for Durham state Sen. Charles J. Arrigoni, who fiercely advocated for the bridge's construction.

Until the 19th century, the only way to cross the Connecticut River was by ferry. The first service in Connecticut was at Windsor in 1642; in Middletown, service was started in 1726.

On April 12, 1896, a 1,300-foot two-lane plank drawbridge was built at Middletown. At the time, it was the longest highway drawbridge in the world.

As motor traffic increased in the early 1900s, especially on weekends and holidays, drivers clamored for a way to cross the river without being interrupted to let marine traffic pass through. Studies for the new bridge date back to at least 1933.

Construction started in 1936 and continued nearly 24 hours a day until the Arrigoni Bridge opened to traffic on August 6, 1938. The day it opened, the bridge was the longest of any kind in New England.

The bridge was completely repainted in 1997. The bridge's history has a darker side as the site of suicides and nearly a decade ago, a man threw his infant son into the river, drowning the boy.

An idea to decorate the Arrigoni Bridge with necklace lighting and spotlights from below has gone back and forth for decades. Many oppose this move, saying the money could be better

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### ★ Arrigoni Bridge, cont. from page 1

spent elsewhere and that light pollution will further hinder stargazers and astronomers. Supporters say the bridge will look more attractive and support tourism.

In 2022, yet another multimillion dollar investment in bridge was finished, work that started just before the pandemic began.

Last August, the Connecticut Department of Transportation announced the safety and pedestrian improvement project at the Arrigoni Bridge has been completed.

The project, which started in February 2020, included replacement of the bridge deck, improvements to the bridge approaches on

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both sides of the Connecticut River, new sidewalks, and steel and concrete repairs which improve safety and increase the lifespan of the bridge.

The project was originally slated to finish in February 2022, but completion of the weather-dependent work was delayed until late summer.

While the Arrigoni Bridge deck was paved in summer 2021 work continued underneath the structure until summer 2022. That work included replacement of bearings, steel upgrades, painting, and other structural improvements.

Other new stamps include civil rights icon and late U.S. House representative John Lewis, skateboard art, a painting of the Everglades and close-ups of microorganisms.

**Free Books available from American Air Mail Society:**

American Air Mail Catalogs, 6th Ed. Vol. 1 - 3 and Canadian (Vol. 4)

The Pioneer Period of Hungarian Airmail by Victor G. Berecz, Jr.

Newfoundland Air Mails 1919 - 1939 (Revised Ed. 1984) by C.H.C. Harmer

Via Airmail, An Aerophilatelic Survey of Events, Routes and Rates

The Pioneer Airplane Mails of the United States by Thomas J. O'Sullivan

Correio Aéreo, A History of the Development of Air Mail Service in Brazil by William Victor Kriebel

O.A.T. and A.V. 2 Markings, 3rd ed., by Murray Heifetz

Aerial Mail Service, A Chronology of the Early US Gov. Air Mail, March - December, 1918 by A.D. Jones

Limited quantities of 1 to 6 copies of each pub., will provide on first-come, first-served basis. If mailing is requested, shipping costs of \$5.00 per publication will be charged. Contact us through the club's address to reserve your books.