

Monumental task for club cleaners

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By SARAH GAULT

A NEW PLYMOUTH service club is offering to clean up Marsland Hill following claims that monuments on the site are neglected.

Bob Maxwell, president of the Rotary Club of New Plymouth, said the club was taking the bull by the horns after comments last week by Daily News columnist David Bruce.

Mr Bruce criticised the care of many monuments around the city, although the New Plymouth District Council has defended their upkeep.

Mr Maxwell said Mr Bruce's comments were spot-on.

"It's a shame to see the state Marsland Hill is in. The whole site needs to be tidied up because it's a beautiful location."

There was broken glass around some of the hill's monuments, no evidence of rubbish bins, vandalised fences and broken furniture, he said.

Club members had been looking for community projects as this year was its 75th anniversary, and they felt the hill's tidy-up fitted the bill, he said.

"It's right in the middle of the city. We are the oldest club in New Plymouth and it's smack bang in the centre of our patch."

This week the club wrote to the New Plymouth District Council suggesting its members restore the wooden slats on the Bernard Aris memorial seat.

As well, the club offered to do other tidying up such as cleaning and painting.

"We want to get some of the community behind the project and use our muscle to get it cracking."

Mr Maxwell hoped items could be donated by businesses or money raised to help pay for their purchase.

Yesterday, NPDC parks director Grant Porteous was enthusiastic about the club's offer, saying the council always appreciated community help.

"It's a great response and we will certainly be acting on it," he said.

A meeting would be held with the Rotary club to discuss the project.

Last week, Mr Porteous said a lot of effort and expenditure had gone into a range of heritage items, and the council was committed to their ongoing maintenance.



SPRUCE-UP: Rotary Club of New Plymouth president Bob Maxwell (bottom) and directors Gordon Gower and Russell Moore, don overalls in anticipation of a clean-up of monuments on the top of Marsland Hill.

Photo: ADRIAN MALLOCH