

New Haven Register

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Peter Hvizdak/Register

The Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument, located at the summit of East Rock Park, is being restored by G&L Capasso Restoration for the city's Department of Parks, Recreation and Trees.

Monument undergoing restoration

By Gretchen Zonas
Special to the Register

NEW HAVEN — Standing tall and proud at the highest point in the city, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument at the top of East Rock Park is a historic city icon.

But this once beautiful landmark, honoring those who died fighting for freedom and paying tribute to the soldiers who continue to defend the nation, has fallen victim to the harshness of weather and time, leaving its interior crumbled and its facade badly deteriorated.

This Memorial Day, at 11 a.m., Mayor John DeStefano Jr. will hold a ceremony at the base of the monument introducing the new restoration project taking place, giving citizens a chance to learn about the famous monument standing at the summit of the city's best vantage point.

"It is the sentinel marking the entry into the city," DeStefano said.

Little work was done over the years to maintain the structure, said New Haven Parks Director Bob Levine.

Sometime between 1910 and 1920, the stairs were coated, and during the mid-1980s beautification work was done, which included a fence surrounding the monument and graffiti removal. Other than that, he said, the monument hasn't been touched in more than 100 years.

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