

Push to move fountain to plaza

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Taryn Utiger

A call has gone out for the Boer War memorial fountain, once centre stage in the old Devon mall, to move back into New Plymouth.

Taranaki musician Kimba Mallowes believes the fountain, now on Marsland Hill, is just what is required to turn the Huatoki Plaza into the heart of the city.

"The Huatoki Plaza is pretty much dead at the moment. The fountain is what is needed to bring feeling and life to it. We would have a heart of the city again," he said.

Mr Mallowes is planning a submission to the New Plymouth District Council and has started a Facebook page in support of the relocation, which picked up 116 likes in its first two days.

Mr Mallowes, who has lived in New Plymouth for 43 years, has fond memories of the fountain when it was in town.

"Lunchtimes during summer were just wonderful at the fountain. Children were playing in the water. People ate their sandwiches around the fountain. It was a beautiful and friendly place."

The New Plymouth Boer War Memorial was unveiled on Marsland Hill on January 26 1911, by Governor of New Zealand, Lord Islington. The central column was moved to the Devon mall in 1980, where it stayed until 1997.

Parks manager Mark Bruhn said the council had no plans to relocate the fountain and the Historic Reserves Management plan was evaluated in 2010.

"This process was open to the public and the suggestion that has been made [by Mr Mallowes] was not suggested then," Mr Bruhn said. "The memorial



To and fro: The Boer War Memorial Fountain now on Marsland Hill, but some residents are keen for it to move down town.

Photo: ROBERT CHARLES/FAIRFAX NZ

was originally at Marsland Hill, and was only in the centre of town from 1980 to 1997, so when you read the history it is appropriate for it to stay there."

Mr Bruhn said relocating the memorial was also not in the council budget.

"We are trying to reduce costs, not create new ones."

Mr Mallowes said the memorial, erected in memory of Taranaki men who fell in the 1899-1902 South African War, was

in disrepair on Marsland Hill and had been forgotten about.

"To me, its current state is dishonouring the people it was made for. It makes me feel sad that the memorial is up there and overgrown," the 51-year-old said.

"It holds significance. It was a big part of my childhood and a big part of people's memories, I say bring it to the plaza."

■ Taryn Utiger is a Witt journalism student