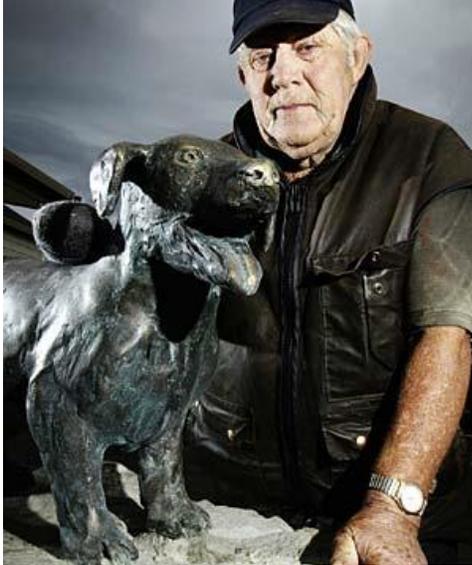


# George, dog and hero, honoured

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**GEORGE THE PROTECTOR:** Alan Gay with the newly erected statue of brave George who was mauled saving children from a dog attack.

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Pint-sized hero George, the brave Jack Russell terrier, has been immortalised in bronze.

George gave his life protecting two young boys from an attack by two savage pitbulls in Manaia in April.

The statue, mounted on a rock in the centre of town, was unveiled this week.

A plaque simply states, "In memory of George who gave his life on Kauae St 29th April 2007, protecting children from two savage dogs."

George's owner, Alan Gay, says the statue looks just like the plucky little dog.

"I think it's great. It must have cost them (the Waimate Plains Properties Society) a fair few dollars."

Mr Gay's only concern was vandalism.

"There are a lot of hooligans around here. The little sods will smash anything for nothing," he said.

New Plymouth sculptor Fridjof Hansen, the man who created Opunake's Peter Snell statue, also did the work on George.

Society chairman John Hosie says there was a lot of talk at the time of George's death that he deserved a statue.

"Well, we listened and there is now another reason to stop in Manaia."

Visitor Richard Goodwin of New Plymouth said: "Dogs like George are living proof that the animals we share the planet with, we can't live without."

Mr Gay said he has had a lot of phone calls and mail about George, from all over the world. "People are very soft hearted when it comes to things like this. I still miss the little dog."

George's fame continues on in America and on the Internet.

According to Mr Gay, George was recently nominated for a bravery award in London.

The Classic Hits radio station is to put a plaque in the footpath on Kauae St where the battle between George and the vicious pitbulls took place.

**- Taranaki Daily News**