Glenside gardeners uncover what lies beneath
The Heritage Gardeners at the historic Halfway House in Glenside have unearthed a wide range of artifacts (above) during their gardening activities. They are putting out an open call to anyone interested in photographing an item and researching its back story. The artifact and its history will go on display at the Halfway House during New Zealand Archaeology Week from 27 April to 5 May, with the story recorded on the Glenside website. The group is also keen to get children and young adults involved.

“The history can be anywhere from one or two sentences, to 500 words,” says gardener Paul Bicknell. “Archaeology is a connection that links us from today back to a person or a place in the past. For example, we found the button some fellow lost from his Armed Constabulary uniform more than 150 years ago!” If you are interested in being part of this, contact Paul Bicknell or Claire Bibby on info@glenside.org.nz or Claire on M: 022 186 5714.

www.glenside.org.nz/heritage-gardeners.html
www.nzarchaeology.org/news-events/national-archaeology-week

Fun workshop at Nairn Cottage
This may take you back to childhood experiments: the Nairn St Preservation Society is running a class on building your own colonial Crystal Radio set, with electronics wizard Tim Prebble. The crystal set is a simple radio receiver popular in the early days of radio. It uses only the power of the received radio signal to produce sound – needing no external power. Build your own at this specialised electronics workshop day. Nairn St Cottage,
Crowds respond to Kapiti heritage
Over 1000 people visited nine museums over Wellington Anniversary Weekend for the ‘Discover Kapiti Heritage’ event. This was its fourth year of the event, which is run by the Discover Kapiti Heritage Group (DKHG), and is now a successful annual fixture. A free competition offered family passes to the Wellington Tramway Museum at Queen Elizabeth Park at Paekakariki and to Southwards Car Museum at Paraparaumu, along with a 30 minute flight around Kapiti courtesy of the Kapiti Aero Club. Of the people who entered the event competition, 48% were from outside of the Kapiti region and many won prizes.
Allan Carley, Chairman, Discover Kapiti Heritage group.

Stories of Service and Sacrifice
Discover the many faces of the Kiwi airmen and women who have served New Zealand during times of war and peace, from World War One to the present, in a large-scale aviation exhibition at Aratoi. The exhibition has been developed by the Air Force Museum of New Zealand, Wigram, Christchurch, in collaboration with WOW Arts and Aratoi. Air Force Faces runs until Sun 31 March at Aratoi – Wairarapa Museum of Art & History.

Talk on ‘Hardwicke, The Small Town at the End of the World’
Wellington author Shona Riddell will give a presentation on the story of her ancestors who lived on the failed settlement on Auckland Islands in the 1850s, the subject of her recently published book Trial of Strength (below left).

Talks at the National Library
• Tues 12 March: Dr Philip Temple on Maurice Shadbolt. Philip Temple, of Dunedin, will be discussing his new biography, Life as a Novel: A biography of Maurice Shadbolt, Vol One 1932-1973, published last year.
• Tues 9 April: Gavin Pascoe on Alexander Turnbull – a sporting life. Gavin looks at Alex Turnbull’s gentlemanly pursuit of yachting to which he brought the same total involvement as he did his book collecting. Both events (presented by the Friends of the Turnbull Library) are at 5.30pm on the Ground floor of the National Library, Molesworth St. Entry free but donations are welcome.

News from Christ’s Church
John Daysh gives an update on developments at Christ’s Church, Taita. Organised by Wellington Historical & Early Settlers’ Assn. Thurs 18 April, Wellington Museum Draughtsman’s Room, 12pm. $15.
The tale of the boomerang postcard

A postcard has recently been donated to the Kapiti Coast Museum that was posted to an address in Wellington in 1910 from the Post Office in Waikanae which is now the Museum building. The postcard shows a then local swimming hole in Waikanae called ‘Loves Corner’ and came into the possession of the donor in Berlin, Germany. How it got there still remains a mystery.

The person who bought the card has previous connections to Waikanae and currently lives in the town. The postcard will become part of our next display, currently being put together, about postal services on the Kapiti Coast. “The new owner of the postcard likely knows how it got to Berlin but we plan to keep that answer to ourselves for now.” Allan Carley, Chairman, Kapiti Coast Museum Incorporated.

Taphophile restores name of early diarist

“The only thing distinctive about James Cox is his complete lack of distinction.” So notes the Dictionary of NZ Biography of the man who immigrated to New Zealand from England while in his 30s, arriving in Christchurch in 1880 and living there until 1888.

James Cox became an itinerant worker and was often down on his luck throughout his life. He none-the-less kept a detailed diary running to some 800,000 words, thus providing an incredible record of colonial life during the period from late 1888 to early 1925. Clareville taphophile Adele Pentony-Graham knew that he was buried in an unmarked grave in Greytown Cemetery. So when a member of the public enquired recently about him, Adele decided it was time to give him the honour he was due. "I’d read the book by Miles Fairburn about his life in New Zealand and it was so interesting,” she says. “I thought James deserved to be recognised.”

She dipped into her own funds to purchase a headstone bearing his name from her local funeral home. "It came out of my pension. I like to be independent! She is pleased his entry in Te Ara has been amended to show that his grave is no longer 'unmarked'.”

The Kapiti Coast Museum, at 9 Elizabeth Street in Waikanae, is expanding its opening hours from 8 March. It will be open from 1pm to 4pm on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Also open at other times for group visits by prior arrangement. Entrance is free but donations are gratefully accepted. www.kapiticoastmuseum.org.nz
Tasman dreams

In early 1928, during a time of pioneering, long-distance flights, two New Zealand pilots set off from Australia to cross the Tasman by air for the first time. Author Bill Conroy, who is 88, has been interested in flying all his life. His mother witnessed Richard Pearse’s flight, and he remembers hearing the announcement of Jean Batten’s successful flight from Australia to New Zealand on the radio in the 1930s. He researched the story of John ‘Scotty’ Moncrieff and George Hood (who gave his name to Hood Aerodrome, Masterton) over the past 30 years and this is the first full-length examination of the fateful flight. Alongside many archival photos from the period, Bill recounts the flight’s planning, execution and aftermath which had the nation, and media on both sides of the Tasman transfixed.

The two pilots, along with their non-flying partner Ivan Kight, dreamed of closer British Empire ties, a safer New Zealand and a shot at aviation glory. They were carried along on a wave of fervent hope, patriotism, media adulation and family pride, plus government interference along the way. Bill unpacks a range of possible explanations for the tragic outcome. It’s a compelling read – one that shows why this remains one of Australasia’s great flying mysteries. The Nation Waited is published by Fraser Books for the Wairarapa Archive. Copies available, $35+$5 p&p, from archives@library.mstn.govt.nz or Tel: 06 3706311.
Curious about a cart

Top right: Nat, the farm dog, in Alfred Thomas Broderick’s farm trap. Right: The Broderick cart, excavating their new house ‘Woodlands’ in Glenside. The family home was taken under the Public Works Act for the railway deviation.

What type of cart is this? It is on the former Broderick farm, in Glenside. The Brodericks lived in the area as early as 1845 and bought large acreages of land on both sides of today’s Middleton Road (the old Porirua Road) throughout 1863-1904.

The diameter of the wheel assembly is 1.4m (4.5 feet). The remaining length of the cart is 2.1m (6 feet). Diana Flatman, née Broderick, wondered if it is the family trap. The cart is located on the site of Middleton’s Stockade, where Ensign Middleton and the 58th regiment was stationed in 1846. The cart has been offered to the Glenside Progressive Association Incorporated, for a display piece at the historic Halfway House.

The Association is keen to learn more about the heavy wooden cart with its iron rims. Please contact Claire Bibby M: 022 186 5714 or the Association at info@glenside.org.nz.