

# THE WAKES NEWS

The official newsletter of Gilbert White's House & Gardens



## Note from the Editor

**KIMBERLEY JAMES**

As life continues (hopefully) towards normality we are over the moon to be fully open and seeing visitors each day. We are beginning to see lots of weddings and school visits as well as our day to day visitors.

We are so grateful for your continued support over the pandemic and hope that you will continue to enjoy the museum, gardens and events over the summer as this year is more critical than 2020 in making sure we get through.

In this edition of the newsletter you can learn the story behind the above image, follow Scott & Amundsen through lockdown in Antarctica and find out more about the events we have planned for the summer.

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# Gilbert White goes to Winchester

For 46 years, Rev Gilbert White (1720-1793) was a parish priest in 18th century Hampshire, most of that time at the village of Selborne. Besides being a much loved parish priest, he won enduring fame as a careful and disciplined observer and recorder of nature, finally publishing his great work, *The Natural History of Selborne*, in 1789. Ever since, *The Natural History* has held a firm place in the hearts of readers worldwide. As one reviewer of the time put it, "A more delightful, or more original work....has seldom been published."

Gilbert was a pioneer of gardening, and a careful observer of all things natural. As David Attenborough puts it, he was "a man in total harmony with his world."

In May a new exhibition opened in Winchester Cathedral, which tells the story of his life and his love for nature. Visitors will be able to see it in the North Aisle of the Cathedral until September.

We are delighted to welcome this display dedicated to one of the Diocese's most famous and fascinating past clergy" says Dr Roland Riem, Vice-Dean and Canon Chancellor of the Cathedral. "Dr Riem leads the educational team at the Cathedral, and sees Gilbert White as a man who is as much a beacon for our age, as he was for the 18th century. Roland Riem, Vice-Dean and Canon Chancellor at Winchester Cathedral said: "The Cathedral is delighted to welcome this display, dedicated to one of the Diocese's most famous and fascinating past clergymen.

It is important that Gilbert White, an iconic Hampshire figure, is recognised and celebrated as his life and work is highly relevant today, at a time of rapid environmental change." Ironically, Gilbert, like many 18th century clergy, was a very rare visitor to his diocesan cathedral. His brother Henry notes in his *Journal* Gilbert's only recorded visit to the cathedral, to admire the new altar piece on 6th April 1782. "Saw the new altar piece at Winchester Cathedral, the raising of Lazarus by Mr West - very fine, the frame gone to be changed."

"For a man who lived a quiet and secluded life in a small Hampshire village, Gilbert was immensely active," says Philip Geddes, Trustee of the Gilbert White's House & Gardens, and author of the display text. "He was a great gardener, producing food for friends and family. He was the first to grow potatoes in the area, and worked out a way of growing melons successfully in the unfriendly English climate. But he combined this with careful observation of all aspects of nature - he identified several new species of animals, including the harvest mouse, and his observations on the important role of earthworms in fertilising the ground inspired Darwin to write a book on the subject.

"We are very grateful to the cathedral for lending us the North Aisle so that Gilbert's remarkable life and achievements can be properly celebrated.

# Car Park News



You may have noticed signs in our carpark (located behind the Selborne Arms) about car park charges. After a turbulent year financially through the pandemic the trustees and staff have made the decision to charge for the use of the museum end of the Selborne Car Park, the proceeds of which will help us maintain the carpark and keep the House and Gardens a float.

Here are some of your questions answered...

## **When will it start?**

The signs are already up, but we won't start charging until the 26th June 2021.

## **How will it work?**

Your registration plate will be read upon entry and exit of the car park. Your first 30 mins are free then after that you will be charged. You can pay via an app, by text, online or via the phone. You don't have to pay on site you could pay once you've gotten home and have signal. All the info you need is on the signs dotted around the carpark.

## **Will the charges apply all the time?**

Yes, they will apply 24/7.

## **Parking is free if you are a visitor!**

When you buy or show your admission tickets you will be asked if you need your parking validated. You will need to give your registration number to the Front of House Staff who will ensure you are not charged.

## **What about the cafe?**

A price will be set that if you buy refreshments over that limit you will get free parking.

## **I was planning to visit one of the other Selborne businesses, can I get my parking validated there?**

The front part of the car park closest to The Selborne Arms is not our land therefore free parking still applies, however if you use the back museum section you will be charged unless you spend money in the museum or cafe.

## **I visit Selborne all the time and don't visit the House & Gardens! What can I do to make it cheaper?**

You can buy an annual pass (£100) which will exempt you from parking for one year. To purchase one email [info@gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk](mailto:info@gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk)

## **Will I be charged if I attend an event at the house and gardens?**

No, we will ask for your registration details before hand or collect them as you enter the event.

## **But I live in the Village or am a volunteer at the House and Gardens!**

You should have received a letter or an email from us explaining how they car park charges apply to you. If you haven't heard from us let us know! ([info@gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk](mailto:info@gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk))

We hope by introducing a small charge to our carpark that not only will the museum survive for longer, but that the carpark will be managed better and our visitors will be able to find somewhere to park more easily.



# The Unusual Plants Fair is BACK!



The Unusual Plants Fair has been a staple of the Gilbert White's House events programme since 1992 until last year when the pandemic made it impossible. Which is why we are delighted to say that the Unusual Plant Fair is BACK!

The event will be held on the 19th & 20th June 2021 from 10:30-17:00, there will be no pre-booking instead all tickets will be on the door. As this is an outside event we are not participating having to restrict numbers however we will be counting people in and out and restricting the number of people in the house. The cost of entry will be £8 for adults and £2 for children which will cover the event, house and gardens for one day.

The event will be a little smaller than in past years with fewer stalls to create more room and we would love for you to help support the stalls who are able to attend as much as possible in these tricky times!

Those who will be there include...

Bean Place Nursery, Charleshurt Farm, Edulis Nursery, Garden Bargains, Lavender Hare, Leesa's Not All Alpines, Lodge Hill Plants, Lonely Toad Studios, Madrona, Oakview Nursery, Parks Perennials, Pineview Plants, Rotherview Nursery, Seale Rose Garden, Tawny Nursery, and Wild Thyme Plants

We will have our outdoor and indoor café open as well as a BBQ area for refreshments!



# Retracing Scott & Amundsen's journey to the South Pole. Part 5

*Part 5 of our Retracing the Footsteps of Amundsen and Scott series written and researched by  
volunteer Anthony Fogg.*

As we begin to enjoy the freedoms of a looming Northern Hemisphere summer after a long winter, some of it confined and restricted, the Southern Hemisphere heads towards winter. In mid-April 1911 Scott's Terra Nova expedition and Amundsen's Fram expedition were preparing for their own winter lockdowns. They had plentiful supplies, but the extreme cold, darkness, isolation and being confined together in limited spaces meant they would also experience and endure psychological hardships. Both expedition leaders were aware of the impact on morale such circumstances could have and planned accordingly. There was much to do preparing for the forthcoming trips to the South Geographic Pole, but there was also time to indulge in reading, entertainment and bon viveur.

Fram: Amundsen writes: "What my comrades thought about the winter that was approaching I cannot say; for my part, I looked forward to it with pleasure.....the blacker and more stormy the winter night might be, the greater would be this feeling of well-being inside our snug little house."

Fram: 19th April: Amundsen writes: "we saw the sun for the last time..... It was intensely red, and surrounded by a sea of flame, which did not disappear altogether until the 21st. As far as the hut was concerned, it could not be better", but he also confesses "we had forgotten to bring out a tool which is commonplace necessity on a Polar expedition – namely, a snow shovel." The team had to improvise and use some iron plate to fashion "a whole dozen of the very best spades".

Terra Nova: 23rd April. Scott writes: "Winter Quarters. The last day of the sun and a very glorious view of its golden light. I begin to think we are too comfortable in the hut and hope it will not make us slack, but it is good to see everyone in such excellent spirits – so far not a rift in the social arrangements."



Fram: 27th April: Amundsen writes: “-48 degrees C. It has been rather cold today”

Terra Nova: 28th April. Scott writes: “The temperature remains about -15C. Today I have organised a series of lectures for the winter; the people seem keen and it ought to be exceedingly interesting to discuss so many diverse subjects with experts. We have an extraordinary diversity of talent and training in our people. We find one hut contains an experience of every country and every clime. What an assemblage of motley knowledge!”

Terra Nova: 5th May. Scott writes: “One sees Wilson busy with pencil and colour box, rapidly and steadily adding to his portfolio of charming sketches. Simpson, master of his craft...doing the work of two observers at least...the current meteorological and magnetic observations are taken as never before by Polar expeditions. Atkinson is quietly pursuing the subject of parasites. Oates’ whole heart is in the ponies. He really is devoted to their care, and I believe will produce them in the best possible form for the sledging season.



DR. WILSON WORKING UP THE SKETCH WHICH IS GIVEN AT P. 258



THE STABLES IN WINTER  
(The figure is Captain Oates)



Fram: 5th May: Amundsen writes: “-27 degrees C. It feels quite mild now. Completed the digging out of the room for the storing of our sledging cases. This magnificent building (4m square and 2m high) has been given the name Crystal Palace. We have also taken out the American puzzles and the German puzzles (that were gifts) and amuse ourselves tremendously with these. When we are off work, we can spend hour after hour with them. We have now begun to guess the temperature every morning. I keep a full account of these guesses. Whoever guesses correctly the most times during the month is given a prize of five cigars.”



Fram: 8th May: Amundsen writes: “The moon reappeared today. It will be a good friend now. We have the Southern Lights all the time. We are all enjoying ourselves now. Our dogs as well. They gain weight constantly. One day they get meat, the other day fish.”

Terra Nova: 8th-9th May. Scott, in one of his lectures to the party, related that “I could not but hint that in my opinion the problem of reaching the Pole can be best solved by relying on the ponies and man haulage. With this sentiment the whole company appeared to be in sympathy. Everyone seems to distrust the dogs when it comes to glacier and summit”.

Terra Nova: 16th May. Scott writes: “The north wind continued all night but dropped this forenoon. Conveniently it became calm at noon and we had a capital game of football.”

Fram: 16th May: Amundsen writes: “Our daily life is ordered like this. The Lux lamp is lit at 6.30am, everyone is woken up and gets ready for breakfast at 8am. However, most of us go outside a little way and untie our dogs. There is a cry of jubilation when one arrives in the (dogs) tent. Then when they are released we go inside to get our lovely coffee and fresh and indispensable hot cakes. Work from 9-12. Dinner from 12-2. Work again from 2-5.15, when the dogs are tied up again. We are finished at 6pm and after that eat supper. At 10pm we all go to bed.”



Terra Nova: 21st May. Scott writes "Tonight we had a glorious auroral display – quite the most brilliant I have seen"

Terra Nova: 26th May. "We are living extraordinarily well. At dinner last night we had some excellent thick seal soup; this was followed by an equally tasty seal steak".

Fram: 3rd June: Amundsen writes: "Our bathroom was finished today. It is much superior to public baths. We are scrubbed clean and shaved and have had a toddy, cigar and music. We finish with a bit of reading."

Terra Nova: 4rd June. "A typical Sunday would run as follows: Breakfast. A half-hour or so selecting hymns and preparing for Service whilst the hut is being cleared up. Wilson strikes the note on which the hymn is to start and I try to hit it after with doubtful success! After church the men go out with their ponies. Sunday afternoon for the men means 'a stretch off the land'. Ponting has been out to the bergs photographing by flashlight."

Terra Nova: 6th June. "It is my birthday, a fact I might easily have forgotten, but my kind people did not. At lunch an immense birthday cake made its appearance and we were photographed assembled around it. Clissold had decorated its sugared top with various devices in chocolate and crystallised fruit, flags and photographs of myself. After my walk I discovered that great preparations were in progress for a special dinner, and when the hour for that meal arrived we sat down to a sumptuous spread with our sledging banners hung about us. Seal soup, roast mutton and red currant jelly, fruit salad, asparagus and chocolate – such was our menu. For drink we had a cider cup, a mystery not yet fathomed, some sherry and liqueur."







MIDWINTER DAY, JUNE, 1911.

Fram: 7th June: Amundsen writes: "Still and snow. -14 degrees C. Big celebration; Independence Day and the anniversary of our departure. We decorated the living room with flags and did all we could to make this day festive."

"In the hut preparations for a feast were going on... Everything was newly washed, and the table was gaily decorated. Small Norwegian flags were everywhere, on the table and walls. The festival began at six, and all the Vikings came merrily in."

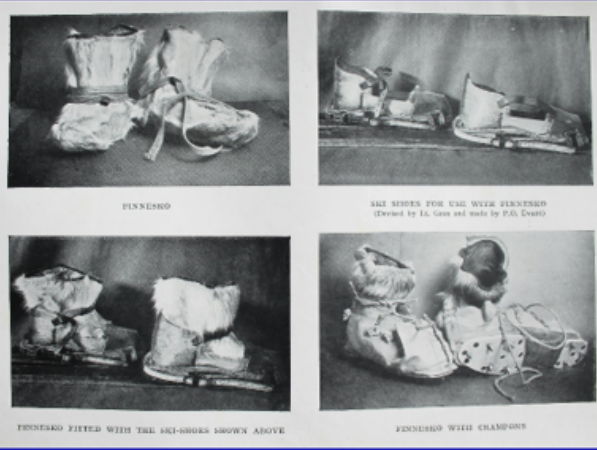
Fram: 16th June: Amundsen writes: "Although the lowest temperature outside this evening is -51.8 degrees C, our lowest yet, we sit here in the living room in our thinnest clothes, at 18 degrees C."

Terra Nova: 16th June. "Tonight Debenham lectured on volcanoes. His matter is very good, but his voice a little monotonous, so that there were signs of slumber in the audience, but all woke up for a warm and amusing discussion succeeding the lecture."

Terra Nova: 22nd June. Mid-Winter celebrations. Seal soup followed by roast beef with Yorkshire pudding, fried potatoes and Brussels sprouts. Finishing off with a flaming plum-pudding and mince pies and a dainty savoury of anchovy and cod's roe. And an unstinted supply of champagne and an array of liqueurs for the drinking of toasts. The men were also treated to a marvellous auroral display. We drank to the Success of the Expedition.'

Terra Nova: 1st July. "We have designed new ski boots and I think they are going to be a success."

Fram: 3rd July: Amundsen writes: "Southern Lights in tremendous draperies. It was a wonderful sight. It was as though, with its power and expanse, it would do battle with the dawn as to who should come first. This part of winter has gone in a flash. Constant work in comradeship and cooperation.... It is certain that not one of us has the slightest doubt that we shall reach it. Everyone considers the matter decided."



FENKESHO

SKI SHOES FOR USE WITH FENKESHO (Designed by L. Goss and made by P.O. Evans)

FENKESHO FITTED WITH THE SKI-SHOES SHOWN ABOVE

FENKESHO WITH CHAMPIONS



AT WORK ON PERSONAL GEAR.

The last page 106, Pic. 2.

Terra Nova: 25th July. "There is really very little to be recorded these days, life proceeds very calmly if somewhat monotonously. Everyone seems fit, there is no sign of depression. The light comes on apace."

Fram: 16th August: "We began to pack our sledges. It was a great advantage to be able to do this work undercover. The dogs did not like the cold weather we had now had for so long. They stood still and raised their feet from the ground in turn, holding each foot up for a while before putting it down again on the cold surface. They did not care very much for fish, and some of them were difficult to get into the tents on the evenings when they knew there was fish."

Fram: 23rd August: Amundsen writes: "The polar journey has begun. Myself, I sprang ahead on skis and the seven sledges followed after."

Fram: 29th August: Amundsen writes: "Have unfortunately been forced to postpone the departure. The temperature has fallen so far down that it would be wrong to continue such a long journey as this. -53C today."

The weather had closed in. We'll join the Fram expedition when they set off again for a second attempt on the 8th September.

Terra Nova: 10th September. Scott writes: "A whole week since the last entry in my diary. I feel very negligent of duty, but my whole time has been occupied in making detailed plans for the Southern journey. These are finished at last. If the motors are successful we shall have no difficulty in getting to the Glacier. I have tried to take every reasonable possibility of misfortune into consideration.....I feel that our chances ought to be good."





# Gilbert White's 301st Birthday Party

We are finally celebrating Gilbert White's birthday! On Sunday 18th July we will celebrate with an array of stalls provided by our original GW300 partners, there will be activities, live performances, tours and a lot of fun! The day is free to all and will be a great opportunity to celebrate Gilbert White's tercentenary albeit a year late!



# Let's go to the Theatre



All tickets  
& further  
info on our  
website!

## **25th June: *Blockbusters From The Musicals***

Have the time of your life & Sing-a-long to hit after hit from classic movies. Grab the popcorn and relive the greatest decades of movie music.

## **9th July: *Into the Breach***

A wonderful comedy written and performed by Mark Carey. It's "Dad's Army meets The Vicar of Dibley!" George Crocker is keen to liven up his dull life so he decides to join the village Drama Club hoping to play the panto dame. What happens next turns his world upside down and instead he finds himself taking on the role of Henry 5th! Set during the Second World War this original, inspiring show is suitable for everyone and with one actor playing all 17 parts you can guarantee it's going to be a hoot!

## **13th August: *Little Red Riding Hood and the three Funky Pigs***

Join Little Red Riding Hood and her Karate Granny on their adventures with the Three Funky Little Pigs....but watch out for that cantankerous Mr Wolf who is always on the lookout for his next meal! Written by Simon Downing & Kevin Oliver Jones

## **22nd August: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland***

Take a trip down the rabbit hole this summer as Chapterhouse Theatre Company present this brand new production of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Join Alice as she stumbles into the magical world of wonderland and meet a whole host of colourful characters. From the unforgettable White Rabbit and the madcap Mad Hatter to the terrifying Queen of Hearts, Alice's journey couldn't be filled with more mystery and adventure in a show alive with song, dance and original music. Children old and young alike are invited to come in their favourite Wonderland costumes and join in a Wonderland dance during the show.



# Natural History Museum scientists follow in the footsteps of Gilbert White

Scientists from the Natural History Museum are carrying out a Bioblitz in the former home of famous naturalist Gilbert White in Selborne.

The Bioblitz, which will include the collecting of various invertebrate species, is being carried out for the Darwin Tree of Life Project (DToL). The project is led by the Wellcome Sanger Institute and has an ambitious target of sequencing the DNA barcodes and full genomes of all 66,000+ described UK species and is the UK's contribution to the Earth Bio genome Project.

This latest fieldwork was initially planned to take place almost one year ago on 18 July 2020 to coincide with the 300-year anniversary of Gilbert White's birth but was unfortunately postponed due to the pandemic.

The significance of the contribution of specimens from his former home to the DToL Project is not lost on the team involved. 'Stephanie Holt, UK Biodiversity Training Manager at the Natural History Museum, said, 'It is incredibly exciting to be collecting specimens in the home of Gilbert White where he himself once collected. Our methods may have changed over the years, and through this project the DToL team are using particularly advanced techniques to both store and analyse the specimens, but the aim to understand the wildlife around us remains the same.'

Dr Gavin Broad, Principal Curator in Charge, Insects at the Natural History Museum, will also be collecting specimens at the historical site. 'Like Gilbert we hope to gain a better understanding of the natural world and the plants and animals that surround us.'

'By collecting specimens for the DToL project we improve our knowledge of the plants and animals that surround us and only by knowing what we have can we track changes over time and protect it for the future.'

Before visiting the site, the team consulted Gilbert's journals for the same time period back when he would have been studying the wildlife of his grounds. Stephanie Holt adds, 'On the corresponding dates in June it looks as though Gilbert often took some time away from Selborne and visited his brothers in London during several of his most active recording years. We have nearly as many wildlife records for these dates for Wandsworth and Stockwell as invertebrate records for Selborne!'

'We have however noted that one species he found regularly on the 10th & 11th June was the Glow Worm. This is a species yet to be added to the DToL project so I hope that we can find one to add on Gilbert's behalf.'

Once collected, specimens will be sent to the Natural History Museum for DNA barcoding, and voucher specimens will be incorporated into the collections. After this, specimens not previously collected for the DToL project, which have been stored at -80C, will be sent to the Wellcome Sanger Institute to assemble and annotate full their genomes.

As the database builds the combined teams involved in the DToL project are gaining a greater understanding of the biodiversity that surrounds us. It is hoped this knowledge can contribute to conservation efforts that are mitigating the impacts of negative environmental change and help create a future where both people and planet thrive.

# Local Nature Events



We will be at King's Pond on the 26th June helping them celebrate the town's 1st bioblitz! Should be a great family event!

## Alton Eco Fair

**CELEBRATING EARTH-FRIENDLY LIVING**

Join ACAN and Alton Town Council for Alton's first ever Eco-Fair on Sunday 11 July, 10.00 – 4.00 in the Public Gardens, GU34 1EN.

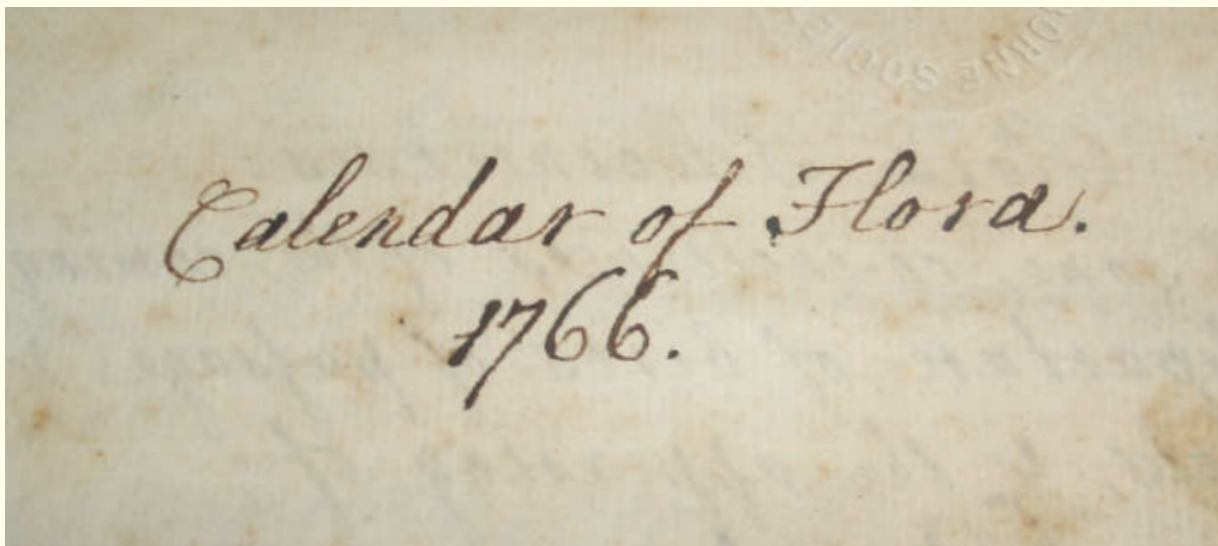
Something for everyone – live music, talks on nature and the environment. Hear from local schools. Hear children sing and speak about the future. A re-use, recycle and repair area, community and wildlife groups, art and ideas tent, sculpture from waste, children's activities, electric cars, eco-friendly refreshments. The museum will be there with a stall and we will also be giving a lecture!



# Flora Selborniensis

We are excited to announce that over the summer we will be displaying Gilbert White's Flora Selborensis in the Discovery Room. In 1766 Gilbert White closely recorded the Plants of Selborne for one year, giving us an incredible insight to the biodiversity of the area 250 years ago.

With thanks to the the Selborne Society for the first time ever the original manuscript will be on display at Gilbert White's House, along with other never before seen treasures from the Selborne Society's collection.



# Watching Narrowly Photography Competition

Thank you to everyone who entered our Watching Narrowly Spring Photography Competition! The Trustees have picked three winners who as well as receiving entry to the house will be featured in next years Watching Narrowly Photography exhibition. Entries are now open for the Summer competition. Send your nature photo entries to [info@gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk](mailto:info@gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk).



**1st place went to Andrew Dunshee**

**2nd place went to Rog Pendell**



**3rd place went to Rhys Leigh**



# Dates for your Diary



**Until 22nd August** 'Watching Narrowly' Summer Photography Competition

**19th & 20th Jun** Unusual Plants Fair

**24th Jun & 27th Jul** Moth Nights

**25th Jun** Blockbusters from the Movies

**July-September** Flora Selbornienis Exhibition

**9th Jul** Into the Breach

**16th Jul** Village Picnic

**18th Jul** Gilbert White's 301st Birthday

**13th Aug** Little Red Riding Hood and the Three Funky Pigs

**22nd August** Alice's Adventures in Wonderland