Helen Goddard writes: Our grandchildren, all under age five, visited us this year from England as they did two years ago and the Camden Aquarium was the main place that they remembered and wanted to revisit. It does seem to be an excellent aquarium although my knowledge of its public spaces is limited. Allow several hours to look round as there is much to see and learn. These include informative talks, feeding of seals, touching small sharks in a shallow tank, the most beautiful floating jellyfish, hard-to-spot creatures hiding in crevices, interactive tasks, and some penguins.

Rather than our amusement it was deemed too cold on this recent December visit for the penguins to be outside and so we did not see them. Perhaps these penguins do not come from Antarctica! However, the hippo made up for it. These huge creatures (they have two, Button and Genny) can be seen swimming under water where they are extraordinarily graceful and you feel that you can almost touch them though the glass. In the same tank there are sting rays, shark rays, and many hundreds of other fish. Their male shark ray (actually a type of guitar fish) is called Einstein.

The aquarium has an excellent website, www.adventureaquarium.com, which is worth a visit on its own. Try reading about the Giant Pacific octopus (Jules Verne Gallery) and you will see what I mean. And here you will learn that the penguins are the African black-footed variety, which are accustomed to a temperate climate. The aquarium is suitable for all ages, from around two years old upwards, but it does make for an expensive day out and it is an hour’s drive away. It is possible to get there without a car. From Trenton (accessible by train from Princeton or from Bordentown (free parking), there is the River Line, an attractive but local train with large scenic windows. It is very expensive to ride, and it stops right in the car park for the aquarium. It is slow, taking an hour from Trenton, but you could all part be part of the day out.

Allowing for three to four hours at the Aquarium, it would be hard to combine with another activity even though Philadelphia is tantalizingly close, just across the Delaware River from Camden. If you visit, please do report back to us at TatI. We like to hear from our readers!

Didier Fassin, James D. Wolfensohn Professor in the School of Social Science, will speak about humanitarianism, which can mean many different things to many different people. Even to the most dedicated, humanitarianism means something very different than to the most skeptical. Humanitarianism is a principle that can be adapted to the situation it is applied to. The idea of humanitarianism is something extremely powerful.

Brig Gebert

Philadelphia skyline from Camden Aquarium

**Trip to the Camden Aquarium**

*February 2010*

**Getting to Philadelphia...on your own**

Linda Geraci writes: Philadelphia is about one hour away by car, but it may also be reached by train. NJ Transit from Princeton Junction will allow you to transfer to the Septa R7 line at Trenton. Exiting the train at the Market Street Station will allow you a short walk to the historic sites of Philadelphia, like the Liberty Bell, National Constitution Center, and Independence Hall.

However, if you get out at Suburban Station, one stop before Market Street, you can see one of Philadelphia’s newest tourist attractions – a 25-foot tall, 2,000 square-foot LED screen “projecting computer-generated images so realistic, you’ll think they’re jumping out of the wall.” The video wall is located in the lobby of the Comcast Center, the tallest building in Philadelphia.

The River Line will transport you to Camden, NJ, for $1.35 one way per adult and 65 cents for children, (www.riverline.com). The Freedom Ferry, which runs daily June through August, is a twelve-minute ferry ride between Camden and Penn’s Landing, providing a scenic view of the Philadelphia skyline as you sail across the Delaware River to the Philadelphia waterfront where there is a variety of fine restaurants and attractions; see their website at www.riverlinkferry.org.
A Day trip...maybe even on Valentine’s Day?

Brig Gebert writes:

My husband doesn’t like Valentine’s Day. He claims, as a native from Germany, he doesn’t have to be romantic. No matter what country you might be from, there is always room for traveling, sight-seeing, and pure enjoyment. The following suggestions will take you to the Brandywine Valley, http://thebrandywine.com, in Pennsylvania. They are doable as a daytrip or expandable to a romantic weekend, perhaps even on or around Valentine’s Day?

By car it takes a little more than an hour to drive to Brandywine. Unique wineries, antique shops, and some interesting estates and museums are all relatively close together.

We started our day at Longwood Gardens, www.longwoodgardens.org. The name implies that they are mainly known for expansive outdoor gardens, therefore you might not think of it as an attractive destination in February. But with beautiful sculpture gardens that look spectacular even in the snow and well-kept greenhouses, you can still be cozy on a chilly day. We especially liked the indoor glassblowing studio, where they show off their craft. Your lunch will be served on pottery, flatware, and glassware all made by Simon Pearce.

We browsed through some antique shops along the road and moved on to visit one of the many wineries. At Chaddsford, www.chaddsford.com, a company known for its artful pottery and glassware. You might have noticed their store here in town on Palmer Square. The restaurant is above a glassblowing studio, where they show off their craft. Your lunch will be served on pottery, flatware, and glassware. You might have noticed their store here in town on Palmer Square. The restaurant is above a glassblowing studio, where they show off their craft. Your lunch will be served on pottery, flatware, and glassware. You might have noticed their store here in town on Palmer Square. The restaurant is above a glassblowing studio, where they show off their craft. Your lunch will be served on pottery, flatware, and glassware.

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