



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

27 SEPTEMBER 1988

Her Majesty Queen Beatrix and His Royal Highness Prince Claus of the Netherlands will make an official visit to Australia from Monday October 24 to Saturday November 5.

It will be the first time a reigning Dutch monarch will have visited Australia.

The visit will take the Royal Couple to the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales.

It is fitting that Her Majesty and His Royal Highness visit Australia to honour our Bicentenary, as Dutch navigators played such an important part in the discovery by Europeans of this continent.

Indeed the Dutch were the first recorded Europeans to sight and to set foot on Australia, and the mapping of much of the western part of our coastline was carried out by them.

In the ACT, the Queen and Prince Claus will be given a ceremonial welcome at RAAF Base Fairbairn on 24 October. Later that day, they will be the guests of Their Excellencies the Governor-General and Lady Stephen at a State Dinner. Other highlights of their visit to Canberra will include a lunch hosted by myself and Mrs Hawke at Parliament House on 25 October, and visits to the Australian War Memorial, Mt Stromlo Observatory, the Regatta Point Exhibition and the Canberra School of Art, as well as a reception for members of the local Dutch community.

Other important events in the visit will be the unveiling of a monument to the Dutch navigator, Abel Tasman, in Hobart, and attendance at the Melbourne Cup.

Further details of the visit elsewhere in Australia will be announced separately by the Premiers of Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales.

I know many thousands of Australians of Dutch descent - and indeed all Australians - will give Queen Beatrix and Prince Claus a warm and enthusiastic welcome.