

AM-QUEEN-VISIT; BGT; 0604

BUDGET

SEE LASERPHOTOS

ESPY AP; REUTS

By GERRY ARNOLD

HALIFAX (CP) - THE QUEEN OF THE LAND OF WINDMILLS; WOODEN SHOES AND GOUDA CHEESE MADE A BRIEF VISIT WEDNESDAY TO NOVA SCOTIA WHERE SHE RECEIVED A WARM DUTCH WELCOME AND A \$3,000 PENCIL HOLDER.

QUEEN BEATRIX OF THE NETHERLANDS AND HER HUSBAND; PRINCE CLAUS; SPENT ABOUT FIVE HOURS IN THIS HISTORIC PORT CITY BEFORE FLYING TO QUEBEC CITY; THE NEXT STOP ON THEIR NATIONAL TOUR.

HALIGONIANS WERE POLITE BUT SCARCE AS COLD; GREY SKIES KEPT DOWN THE CROWDS THAT TURNED OUT TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THE MONARCH WHO FIRST CAME TO HALIFAX IN 1940 EN ROUTE TO OTTAWA WHERE HER FAMILY SOUGHT REFUGE FROM NAZI GERMANY.

ONE OF THE CURIOUS HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DAY WAS A METAL PENCIL HOLDER MADE ON THE SPOT BY STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY AT THE NOVA SCOTIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.

AS ROBOTS WHIRRED IN THE BACKGROUND; THE HOLDER WAS CHURNED OUT BY STUDENTS USING THE LATEST PRODUCTION-LINE EQUIPMENT.

"IT'S AN EXPENSIVE PENCIL HOLDER," SAID ONE STUDENT; WHO ESTIMATED THE COST OF PROGRAMMING COMPUTERS FOR THE GIFT; PLUS THE COST OF MAKING PRACTICE PENCIL HOLDERS; WOULD EASILY TOP \$3,000.

PRACTISES HARD

"WE'VE BEEN PRACTISING HOW TO MAKE PENCIL HOLDERS FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS," SAID THE STUDENT; WHO DIDN'T WANT HIS NAME USED.

WHILE 1,000 MARITIMERS OF DUTCH ANCESTRY WAITED INSIDE A DOWNTOWN CONVENTION CENTRE FOR A GALA POACHED-SALMON LUNCHEON HOSTED BY THE PROVINCE; ABOUT 50 CURIOUS ONLOOKERS WAITED TO SEE THE QUEEN.

ONCE INSIDE; QUEEN BEATRIX AND PREMIER JOHN BUCHANAN TRADED PLEASANTRIES AND TOASTS; AND BUCHANAN TRIED TO CHIRP OUT A FEW FEEBLE PHRASES IN DUTCH; MUCH TO THE DELIGHT OF THE GUESTS.

QUEEN BEATRIX SAID HER COUNTRY; LIKE THE MARITIMES; HAS THE SEA AS ITS LIFELINE. SHE SAID HER SON WILLEM-ALEXANDER HAS VISITED HALIFAX AS A DUTCH NAVAL RESERVE OFFICER.

"HERE IN HALIFAX THE EFFORTS OF THE SAILORS OF THIS COUNTRY TO BRING ABOUT OUR LIBERATION ARE UPPERMOST IN OUR MINDS," SHE SAID; REFERRING TO THE LIBERATION OF THE NETHERLANDS IN 1945.

"IT IS PRE-EMINENTLY THIS MEMORY THAT MAKES MY HUSBAND AND I LOOK FORWARD TO THE OPPORTUNITY OF BECOMING BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH NOVA SCOTIA."

AND EVEN IF IT WAS BUSINESS AS USUAL FOR MOST HALIGONIANS; THE HUNDREDS OF DUTCH EXPATRIATES AT THE LUNCHEON OBVIOUSLY ENJOYED SEEING THEIR FORMER QUEEN.

IMPRESSES SOME

"SHE'S QUITE A LADY; YOU KNOW," SAID PETER BERKELAAR; OF BELMONT; N.S.; BUT ORIGINALLY FROM CENTRAL HOLLAND. "YOU SIT THERE AND YOU'RE WATCHING HER AND SHE GETS ALONG GOOD WITH WHATEVER CROWD SHE'S IN."

ADMITTING SHE WAS NOT EXACTLY CAUSING A SENSATION ON THE STREETS OF HALIFAX; BERKELAAR ASKED WHO WOULD?

"IF THE QUEEN OF SPAIN CAME HOW MUCH ATTENTION WOULD SHE ATTRACT; RIGHT?" HE SAID; ADDING THAT THE MOB SCENE THAT GREETED BRITAIN'S PRINCE CHARLES AND DIANA; THE PRINCESS OF WALES; SEVERAL YEARS AGO WAS NEVER ANTICIPATED.

"DUTCH PEOPLE ARE NOT A VERY HYPER BUNCH ANYWAY," SAID JANNIE BERKELAAR; PETER'S WIFE. "WE'RE VERY COOL AND DISTANT."

BUT TO SOME OF THE FEW PEOPLE WHO WAITED TO SEE QUEEN BEATRIX; A QUEEN IS A QUEEN.

"I'D JUST LIKE TO SEE HER. IT'S ROYALTY AND WE DON'T GET TO SEE THAT EVERY DAY," SAID BARBARA BARNES; A HALIFAX RESIDENT WHO WAITED PATIENTLY OUTSIDE THE TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL.

"NO; I DON'T SUPPOSE (THEY WILL ATTRACT A CROWD); BUT IT'S STILL EXCITING."

HER TEENAGE DAUGHTER NANCY WAS QUICK TO AGREE.

"NO ONE EVER COMES UP TO THIS PART OF TOWN," SHE SAID; REFERRING TO THE WORKING-CLASS NEIGHBORHOODS OF THE CITY'S NORTH END. "ANYONE WILL DO."