



July 14th 2014, sunny 28°

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Born on 28 March 2014:  
Cody Dylan Riemsdag, son of  
Bob and Digna.

Great to have another young boy in  
the family.

And we're going to have another  
one!

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Our postal code has changed. Recently, Pomba got its own postal code. We have complete faith that *all* packages will arrive in future. As long as you take note, obviously.

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**Portugal**



## 1. A TASTE OF THE NETHERLANDS

There are moments when you can no longer deny your roots. For instance, when the NCA organises its annual Herring Party. As it did on



the last Sunday of June. Spending an afternoon gorging yourself on the scrumptious Dutch herrings, smoked eel from the IJsselmeer and bay shrimps that have been flown in by Schmidt Seafood Rotterdam.

The herring party is not the only activity the NCA organises. Founded in the Algarve in 2002, the association aims to be the business and social platform for Dutch and Belgian nationals living in Portugal. They publish a magazine, containing informative stories and articles in the field of Portuguese laws and regulations. Lectures are given and meetings and activities are organised, including the herring party. This time, an unexpected bonus was the football match Netherlands - Mexico. Whoever was so inclined could follow the entire spectacle on a large screen. Even though the herring ran out, the orange shirts didn't have to be returned to the clothes cupboard. After all, we *are* still Dutch.

## 2. CORK

Cork has a long and rich history. As long ago as 3000 BC, cork was used in fishing in China, Persia and Egypt. The first amphora stoppered by cork dates from the first century AD, from Ephesus. That's how old the relationship between cork and wine is.

Throughout the ages, cork has been used for everything and anything, thanks to its special characteristics: not just in the wine industry, but also in shipping, building and the war industry. New applications continue to see the light, particularly in the field of eco-design and fashion. The latest (Portuguese) innovation: cork car seats. Less heavy, so less fuel consumption. Portugal has been the pre-eminent cork country for centuries. As long ago as 1209, a law was enacted to protect the cork oak. Today, Portugal accounts for roughly 50% of the world production, 85% of which comes from the Alentejo. And out of that share, a tiny bit comes from our mountain.



## 3. MORE CORK

I'll just stick with cork a bit longer. I could continue in the next newsletter, but the cork season is *now*. It's being harvested *now*.

Cork comes from the cork oak, the *sobreiro*. The cork oak is the only tree that can be divested of its entire bark. Any other tree will die, but the cork oak grows a new bark. It takes about ten years before the bark/ cork is good enough for the next harvest. The number on the tree indicates in which year it's been peeled. A cork oak lives to become approximately 200 years old. At the age of 25 the first cork may be harvested. That cork, the virgin cork, isn't worth a thing. Far too lumpy and uneven. Only after another ten years, the cork yields money.

Cork is still peeled in the old-fashioned way, without helmets, gloves or belays. Those are only impediments. And why is the cork oak light red when it's just been peeled? Here, people say it's from embarrassment, for being naked.



## 4. BIKE MAP

The Rota Vicentina, the new trail that runs from Santiago do Cacém to Cabo de São Vicente, has been discovered by cyclists too. Although bikes are rare, people do cycle around here, and bikes can be rented in more and more places.

The municipality of Odemira boasts three flourishing cycle clubs. However, they all operate independently and they all have their own cycle trails. The idea is to map all the trails within the municipality, approximately 1000 km, including a reliable route description (in English also) and proper signposting. That may yet take some time, but you can still explore the area. If you'd like to cycle, we can arrange it. The bikes are delivered on



the doorstep, along with a helmet and rubber solution. If you don't enjoy cycling uphill, you can just rent an e-bike. Effortlessly you can defy any mountain. Easy.

Nel