

Agent Johannes Jan Cornelus Buizer - Bronzen Kruis

AKA - Johannes Brouwer

Field Name - Jan Cornelius Brugman

Code Name - Piet; Spinach

W/T - Boni

Johannes, known as Jo, was born on 11 September 1918 in Almkerk, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands, the youngest child of Jan Buizer and Klaaske Buizer nee Heukels.

Johannes completed his military service in 1938-1939 with the 22nd Infantry Regiment in Ede, and during the mobilisation at the end of August 1939, he was posted to a radio station of the Dutch Army Engineers in Voorburg. After the enforced demobilisation in June 1940, Johannes was employed, under duress, as a radio operator at the Rijkstelegraafkantoor in Amsterdam where he was ordered to listen to British, American and African radio stations.

Unwilling to continue, and wanting to fight the occupiers, Johannes made plans to escape to the UK.



On 15 February 1942, together with two others, Johannes stowed away on board the steam trawler "*Beatrice*", and as soon as the boat was at sea, the three stowaways emerged and persuaded the skipper to sail to England. On 17 February 1942, Johannes arrived in Great Yarmouth. The next day Johannes was transferred to the Royal Victoria Patriotic School for questioning, before he was accepted for service with the SOE. In early March 1942 Johannes began training with the SOE, and over the course of three and a half months he was trained at Chicheley Hall, Audley End House, Roughwood Park, Ringway for parachute training and the radio school at Thame Park where he qualified as a wireless operator. On 19 June 1942 Johannes moved to Gaynes Hall to await his drop in the newly formed "Spinach" section, and to act if necessary as the radio operator to "Potato" and "Parsnip" sections, all intended to organise sabotage groups in Overijssel.

At 22:30 on 22 June 1942 Johannes and his leader, Jan Jacob van Rietschoten, departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire in 138 Sqn Whitley Z9287 NF-Z.

At 01:07 the aircraft crossed the Dutch coast at Callantsoog, and set course for the drop area via Harderwijk. The drop zone was near Holten, Overijssel, 1km SSW of Rijssen and 4km W of Enter. Successfully dropped, the Gestapo were waiting. Unbeknown to SOE, the Germans had infiltrated the Dutch Section and were operating a very successful counterintelligence operation, known as "Englandspiel". Immediately arrested, Johannes was sent to The Hague where he was interrogated by the SS, and then transferred to the SD prison Haaren in North Brabant. Following the escape of prisoners from Haaren, including Johannes's leader, on 29 November 1943 the remaining agents, including Johannes, were first transported to the prison in Assen, then in 1944 to Rawicz. Most agents were then transferred to the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. Johannes was executed, along with 22 other SOE agents, on 6 September 1944.

Johannes has no known grave and is commemorated on a Memorial Plate at Mauthausen that covers the area where the ashes of all agents killed with Johannes are believed to be buried.

Johannes is commemorated on Wall Panel -Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: brabantsegessneuvelden.nl