

Lt Joseph Jan Bukkens Dutch Air Force - Bronzen Kruis
AKA - Joseph Boogaeets; Evert Loomhuizen
Field Name - Smit
Code Name - Marrow II
W/T - Marrow

Joseph, known as Sjef, was born on 8 June 1916 in Vlissingen, Zeeland, Holland, the youngest son of Charles Johannes Bukkens and Helena Anna Bukkens nee de Reeper.

Educated at Mulo School and the National High School, Vlissingen, Joseph was called up for his compulsory military service and, having completed the required time in the Army, he volunteered for service in The Dutch Air Force.

On the outbreak of war Joseph left Holland with a group of Dutch military, and arrived in the UK via Belgium and France. Spending time in Wales and Staffordshire, in September 1940 Joseph embarked in Liverpool to sail to the Dutch East Indies, via the Cape of Good Hope, where he planned to continue his flying training that had been interrupted at the outbreak of war.

On the completion of his training at Surabaya, Joseph returned to the UK via the Panama Canal, USA, Canada, Iceland and, finally landing in Scotland, he joined 320(Netherlands) Sqn at RAF Leuchars as an Observer. Joseph was approached three times to join the SOE, but he refused twice as he did not fully trust the organisation in London, particularly due to frequent plan changes, but agreed on the third request, training as a Radio Operator.

Joseph was appointed as the radio operator of the newly formed "Marrow" Section, intended to implement the "Plan for Holland". The Section was to make contact with various resistance groups and forward the instructions from the government in exile to them.

At 23:25 on 26 June 1942 Joseph and his leader, departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire in 138 Sqn Whitley Z9288 (NF). The drop consisted of the two agents, six containers, one package.

The aircraft navigated via the Zuiderzee Dam and set course for the drop area via Elburg. Successfully dropped at the drop zone, 3km SW of Hattem to the SW of Zwolle, 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, Joseph 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 on 29 November 1943 the remaining agents, including Joseph, 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. Joseph was executed, along with 22 other SOE agents, on 6 September 1944.

Also killed: George Louis Jambroes (Agent)

Joseph 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 Joseph are believed to be buried.

Joseph is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: englandspiel.eu

