Lt Gerrit van Os Dutch Air Force Bronzen Kruis
Training Name - G van Oosterom
Field Name - Gerard van Emden
Code Name - Broadbean; Frans; Joust



Gerrit was born on 2 May 1914 in Hilversum, North Holland, Netherlands, the son of Hendrik van Os and Grietje van Os nee van der Tweel.

Educated at Hilversum and Haarden-Bussum Elementary Schools, and the MTS Technical School, Amsterdam, on leaving school Gerrit managed his father's garage until September 1933 when he was called up for military service.

Following his compulsory service, Gerrit opted to stay in the Dutch Air Force and, in May 1936, he was awarded his Wings. Gerrit remained in service until the German invasion in 1940 when he was de-mobilised and returned home. Gaining employment as a sales rep for a food manufacturer, Gerrit used this freedom to travel around the Netherlands to gather information and forge links for the Dutch underground movement. When he became known to the German occupiers, Gerrit commenced his escape via the route through Belgium, France, Spain and Switzerland before arriving in Gibraltar to await transport to the UK. In July 1942 Gerrit arrived in Glasgow, Scotland on board the SS Llanstephan Castle.

In August 1942 Gerrit joined the SOE (Dutch Section) and was trained at STS 6 West Court, Berkshire, STS 24 Knoydart, Scotland, STS 31 Beaulieu, Hampshire, Station XVII Brickendonbury, Hertfordshire, STS 51 Ringway, Manchester for parachute training and STS 61 Audley End, Essex. Allocated to his operation "Broadbean", his mission was to carry instructions for George Louis Jambroes "Marrow" who had been dropped in June 1942 and unbeknown to SOE had been captured on landing. Additionally, Gerrit was to organise an escape-line and courier routes through Belgium and France and arrange for the carriage of messages by pigeon.

At 23:53 on 18 February 1943, Gerrit, together with his radio operator, departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire in a 138 Sqn Halifax.

Successfully dropped at the drop zone near Loenen, Gelderland, Netherlands, 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, Gerrit was interrogated by the SS and transferred to the SD prison Haaren in North Brabant.

Following the escape of prisoners from Haaren on 29 November 1943 the remaining agents, including Gerrit, 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. Gerrit was executed, along with 22 other SOE agents, on 6 September 1944.

Also Killed: Sgt Willem van der Wilden BK

Gerrit 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 Gerrit are believed to be buried.

Gerrit is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: dirkdeklein.net