

Sgt Michiel Pals Dutch Army
Bronzen Kruis
Training Name – Michiel Post
Field Name – Marinus Van de Plas
Code Name – Postman
W/T Name - Anke

Michiel was born on 4 May 1912 in Hoge en Lage Zwaluwe, Nord Brabant, Netherlands, the son of Petrus Pals and Antonia Pals nee Mureau. In 1932 Michiel joined the Dutch Army, before transferring to the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee Brigade (Mounted Police) in 1934.

After the Dutch capitulation on 15 May 1940, the military police brigades were ordered to flee to the UK via France to join the government-in-exile in London. On 10 June, Michiel reached Brest where he boarded the "Princess Beatrix" and sailed for Plymouth together with eleven to twelve hundred Dutch soldiers.

On arrival, Michiel joined the Princess Irene Brigade and served at Dan-y-Graig Camp, Porthcawl, Wales, Congleton, Cheshire and Wrottesley Park, Wolverhampton. In November 1941 Michiel was selected for tank wireless operator training and was identified as a possible recruit for the SOE (Dutch) Section. In June 1942 Michiel volunteered for service with SOE.

Following training at STS 6 West Court, Berkshire, STS24 Knoydart, Mallaig, Scotland, STS 31 Beaulieu, Hampshire and STS 17 Brickendonbury Manor, Hertford, Hertfordshire in October 1942 Michiel was allocated his operation - "Pumpkin", as W/T operator, and moved to STS 61 Gaynes' Hall, St Neots where he awaited his drop date.

At 22:07 on 21 October 1942 Michiel, and two other agents, departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire in 138 Sqn Whitley V Z9428 (NF-F).

Successfully dropped at the drop zone at Ermelo, 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, Pieter 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 Michiel, 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. Michiel was executed, along with 22 other SOE agents, on 6 September 1944.

Also Killed: Sgt Pieter Kamphorst Dutch Army BK; Sgt Meindert Koolstra Dutch Army BK

Michiel 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 Michiel are believed to be buried.

Michiel is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: oorlogsgravenstichting.nl

