

Wim Winkelman is geboren tussen 1917 en 1920.

Keith Monroe, historicus van de Boy Scouts of America, schrijft na de oorlog het artikel *The way it was, Holland's heroic wartime scouts*, dat verschijnt in Boys Life. Hierin schrijft hij over Wim Winkelman die actief was in het verzet en woonde in Amersfoort.

Samen met zijn groep was hij actief in het verzet. Hij leidde twee overvallen waarbij distributiekaarten gestolen werden ten behoeven van ondergedoken Nederlandse Militairen. Bij een derde overval, waarbij hij niet aanwezig was, werd een andere scoutingleider gevangen genomen. Hij had de namen van de hele troep bij zich. Om de scouts te beschermen nam Wim de schuld van de drie overvallen op zich. Hij werd neergeschoten.

Na de oorlog werden vier groepen naar hem vernoemd.

## Meer informatie

The way it was, Holland's heroic wartime scouts. Lelie en Klaverblad, maart 1994

[Keith Monroe | troop2santamonica \(troop2bsa.org\)](http://troop2santamonica.troop2bsa.org)

# The Way It Was



**B**AD DREAMS BOTHERED SOME Scouts and Scouters from western European nations at the 1937 world jamboree in the Netherlands. Their nightmares sprang from rumors about the disappearance of Scouting in Germany, just over the border from the host country.

Germany's Scouts had been the most numerous in Europe. But Scouting in Germany in the 1930s had been overtaken by a rival movement, the Hitler Jugend (Youth). Spawned by the followers of Adolf Hitler and his Nazi party, the group's members got free uniforms, free camping gear, free food and travel—paid for by industrialists in Berlin and Hanover.

At street rallies of his brownshirted Nazis supporters, Adolf Hitler had shouted an ominous message: "In the struggles to come, we will see to it that the youth of Germany belongs to National Socialism only." When the Nazis swept to power in March, 1933, there were already 108,000 Hitler Youth members.

Two months later the Jugend executives and clerks moved into the group's commodious Berlin headquarters near the Reichstag, Germany's parliament building. Boys in trim brown-and-black uniforms, complete with whistle cords and daggers, guarded the door. After another month the government outlawed all non-Nazi youth groups and ordered their members into the Jugend. Some Scout troops kept meeting, however—until the Jugend wrecked their meeting places.

These events didn't make headlines outside Germany. But many European Scouters were among the hundreds of thousands of visitors to Germany in 1936 when Berlin hosted the Olympic Games. A year later, at the world jamboree, they spread sobering accounts of what they had observed. They told of glimpsing 25 big camps at which 14-year-olds flew gliders and sailplanes. A camp director had explained, "This gives them the feel of the air,

so they can become Luftwaffe [air force] pilots faster."

One Sunday, they said, roads had been filled with youth marching to Berlin to celebrate the anniversary of the Jugend's swallowing of other youth groups. A tremendous rally was held in the Lustgarten, a huge park bounded

by palaces and museums and the River Spree. The square was jammed with thousands on thousands of boys in mustard-color uniforms; teen-agers in brown; smaller boys in black; girls in berets and brown windbreakers. Streets shook with the Nazi hymn, the Horst Wessel song, and the crash of drums and shrilling of bugles. It had been a more massive demonstration than any at the jamboree.

At the jamboree the uneasiest Scouters of all were the Dutch hosts. They knew that Nazis made no secret of their deadly hatred of all Jews. And Holland was home to more Jews (140,000) than any other European country. Most were families who had lived there for generations. Could they be protected if the Nazis came?

After the jamboree, foreboding mounted. In 1938 Hitler annexed Austria and Czechoslovakia without bloodshed; the Jugend took over Scout camps in those countries, and Scout leaders were listed as "suspected criminals."

Then, in September, 1939, the shooting war began when Germany invaded and quickly conquered Poland. Most Polish Scouts joined a secret Home Army. In Holland, a Dutch Nazi movement arose, with its own youth units, the Jengstrom.

More nightmares came true on May 10, 1940, when the Germans invaded Holland. Pieter Koos, a patrol leader in Rotterdam's Troop 6, was one of thousands of Scouts who were plunged into war that bright morning.

At age 68, Koos (continued on page 54)

## Holland's Heroic Wartime Scouts

**In World War II, Dutch Scouts defied the German invaders by publishing resistance newspapers, helping Jews escape, and engaging in other acts of sabotage.**

**By Keith Monroe**





## Way It Was

still vividly recalls that fateful day. When he heard gunfire he ran home, pulled on his Scout uniform, then ran on. Dutch marines were digging in at a bridge south of the city, where Koos manned a wheelbarrow for four days, carrying food to the firing line and wounded men to the rear.

The German Luftwaffe hit 70 Dutch air bases the first day. Then thousands of air troops leapfrogged deep into Holland by parachute, glider, and sea-plane.

But Rotterdam's defenses held. So Hitler ordered Stuka dive bombers to raze the city. "This was beyond description," Pieter Koos wrote. "The heart of Rotterdam was ablaze. All we could do was lend a hand in evacuating hospitals, help the very large number of injured, and carry away the dead."

The Dutch government had no choice but to surrender. But the opposition to the German invaders didn't stop. The same night as the surrender, Scouts were cranking out underground newspapers on toy printing presses. In the dark of the night they slipped them under doors and pasted them across signboards. Eventually 1,200 secret newspapers circulated.

For the first few months a deceptive calm settled over Holland as the Nazis systematically took over.

They required adults to carry several kinds of identification. However, minors didn't need credentials. So Scouts in shabby clothes wandered freely. Asked for directions, they sent soldiers the wrong way. In theaters, they trooped out when Nazi propaganda films began.

They carried messages (oral, never written) for Resistance teams. They watched for chances to snatch weapons that German soldiers carelessly left near barracks windows and accomplished feats of sabotage with nothing more than a match or a screwdriver.

Scouters took mortal risks. A den mother, Truus Wijsmuller, foresaw that Jewish children would soon be in peril. On the day of the surrender, May 14, she learned of a ship in IJmuiden ready to sail for England. She swiftly rounded up five buses and filled them with 80 Jewish children from an orphanage. En route, Scouts and Cub Scouts hoisted 90 more Jews aboard, to lie flat on roofs or cling to steps. All 170 reached England.

Wim Winkelman, 23-year-old Scoutmaster in Amersfoort, led two burgla-

ries that stole ration cards for fugitive Dutch soldiers. Another Scouter was caught during a third burglary, in which Winkelman didn't participate. The leader had been carrying the names of the whole troop, and to shield the Scouts, Winkelman quickly confessed sole blame for all three raids. As punishment, he was shot.

Today, four Scout troops are named after Scoutmaster Wim Winkelman.

Under German rule, Scout troops met openly for nearly a year, until the Jengstrom tipped off the police. On April 2, 1941, the government proclaimed Scouts to be "terrorists." Mass-arrest teams appeared on the streets, ready with folding tables, portable typewriters, and boxes of handcuffs. They had various troop rosters, but most Scouts were warned and stayed off the streets, aware that the

police were too busy to go to their homes. But some boys were caught and held in "preventive custody." Some were never seen again.

During 1942, the authorities ordered all Jewish families to register. Suspecting they'd be sent to labor camps, many hid with friends.

Scoutmaster Joop Westerweel guided many Jews out of the country. His last party included 23 boys, and he asked their pledge to try to go to Palestine. Some did and planted a grove of trees in his name. Westerweel never knew this, however; he died under interrogation.

Jan van Hoof was a 15-year-old Scout at the 1937 world jamboree. Later he worked in the underground for four years. In 1944, the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division landed in Holland and began fighting toward a big bridge across the Waal at Nijmegen. Jan saw the Germans prepare to blow it up, which could block the Allied advance for weeks. Posing as an idle canoeist, he saw explosives in one arch.

No one knows what Jan did. But on September 18, as Allied tanks began crossing, German guards pressed the plunger to destroy the bridge, and nothing happened.

When Jan returned home, he seemed almost indifferent to the fact that a shell had destroyed the family house. "The bridge is safe anyhow, thank God," he said. The next day he died in the fighting.

A few months later Holland was free again. Its Scouts emerged from hiding. There were 116,000, as compared with 36,212 when the war began. Since then, 30 troops have been named for the heroic Jan van Hoof. ■