



Stichting Herdenkingsmonument Mierlo-Hout  
**News letter**  
7th year Volume No.6  
December 2021

**End of 2021**

**Another Monument**

**Rabobank Clubkas  
Campaign.**

**Acknowledgement**



Dear friends,

2021 is almost over.

What a year!

The 10th anniversary of our monument was celebrated with the unveiling of the names of two new war victims.

We also had an upgrade of the monument.



F | J. Dijstelbloem

COVID-19 is still in our midst.

Again extra measures, and not to everyone's satisfaction.

Infections are still lurking.

Will 2022 be the year in which everything will return to normal?

Who knows...

## Just a monument



Helena Kuipers-Rietberg

F | WIKIPEDIA

Winterswijk, 26 mei 1893 - Ravensbrück, 27 december 1944

Alias “Aunt Riek”



F | H.Raaijmakers

**She was a Dutch resistance fighter who played an important role in the World War II. She was the great and silent force behind the National Organization for Aid to People in hiding.**

**Soon after the occupation of the Netherlands by Nazi Germany, her family joined the resistance.**

**As with many, the resistance work started on a small scale, Kuipers took in two Jewish people and then went to take in more people in hiding. She received support from her husband Pieter Heijo Kuipers, who also moved into the Achterhoek to accommodate people in hiding and to help refugee prisoners of war.**

**After the Allies had started a major air offensive against Germany in March 1943, the crew members of the planes shot down over the Achterhoek were also added and supported in hiding. Kuipers received money to support them, from one of the illegal emergency funds, later the National Support Fund.**

False papers and food stamps were supplied by others.

In November 1942 Kuipers came into contact with the Reformed minister Frits Slomp from Heemse and with his help set up a national network of local committees. This resulted in a resistance organization spread throughout the Netherlands: the National Organization for Aid to the Hidden (LO) and the National vigilantes (LKP) affiliated with it since August 1943.

On May 24, 1944, a police officer warned Kuipers' husband of an imminent arrest. They moved their children partly elsewhere early July and managed to escape just in time. An attempt by the Sicherheitsdienst to track them down through broadcasting messages at train stations between Winterswijk, Arnhem and Zutphen failed. In this, they were asked to report to the counter in connection with a fatal accident involving one of their children. The couple initially hid at a cigar manufacturer in Bennekom. But the lady of the house could no longer handle the tension and Kuipers and her husband wanted to leave. On August 17, 1944, the courier, who brought the necessary new identity cards, was arrested on the way through treason. As a result, the Germans tracked down the couple. They turned out to be betrayed by Miep Oranje.

They were arrested two days later.

In the dome prison in Arnhem, Kuipers took all the blame in mutual consultation (one would charge a woman less heavily), and as a result her husband was released. He went into hiding immediately afterwards. Kuipers-Rietberg was transferred to the detention center in Arnhem, from where she was transported on 25 August 1944 to the Vught penal camp. Due to the advance of the Allies and the panic of 'Mad Tuesday' that seized the occupying forces, this camp was evacuated at the beginning of September. With one of the last transports, Kuipers-Rietberg was transported to Ravensbrück concentration camp on September 7, 1944. There she was rejected for the Arbeitseinsatz and placed in the knitting command. Later she became "Tischalteste" (oldest/ wisest). Because in that situation she distributed the food among the women who had to work during the day for the war industry in the Siemens factory, she was able to mean a lot to them. Also because of her cheerfulness, Kuipers-Rietberg, under the horrific circumstances, was a support and comfort to her fellow prisoners. She accompanied her resistance friend Minnie Jolink in her dying time and she commemorated, just a while later, Betsie ten Boom among the fellow prisoners. At the end of October, Kuipers-Rietberg herself became ill. She died on December 27, 1944, possibly as a result of typhus or a lung infection.

"Tante Riek" alias Helena Kuipers-Rietberg is one of the great women in Dutch (resistance) history. She is commemorated in various ways in her hometown. On May 4, 1955, the statue Monument to 'Aunt Riek', which was erected for her next to the town hall of Winterswijk, was unveiled by Princess Wilhelmina. The statue consists of a young woman protecting a young deer. The deer here symbolizes the persecuted in the years of war.



We once again participated in the Rabobank ClubSupport campaign.

Yield of this year is:

**€ 208,54**

We would like to thank all those people who voted for us once again for their vote.

## Acknowledgment

The liberation and commemoration festivities 1944-2021 in Mierlo-Hout were also made possible this year by our volunteers, partners, sponsors, the parish of Damiaan and last but not least all those who have joined the club of: 'Friends of the monument'.

In September of this year, the monument existed exactly 10 years. Thanks to good cooperation with the municipality of Helmond and local entrepreneurs, it was possible to thoroughly renew the memorial and the surroundings of the 'Memorial Park'. For example, Mierlo-Hout was able to commemorate the war victims and celebrate the anniversary on September 22, TOGETHER with young and old and fortunately without too many restrictions.

The foundation board of HMMH is very grateful to you and would like to express its respect and appreciation to everyone for all your small and large efforts.



F | M.Coolen

Also this year, our thanks goes out to the relatives of the deceased who this year donated / placed flowers at our memorial monument in a completely non-binding manner. For which we thank you again.

On behalf of board members, Harrie, Henk, Patrick and Ad, we wish everyone happy holidays and... may the new year be a year of which you say; it may continue forever!

Mario Coolen Chair



For more information about our Foundation, please refer to our website:  
<https://monumentmierlohout.nl>

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