



The Unsung Hero's of WW2

Known as Pianists the Clandestine radio operators were mainly selected from the SOE training programme. The skills require were not in sabotage or reconnaissance as with other SOE operatives, but in Morse code and blending into society. Women were mainly chosen as they had a natural ability for telegraphy, most recruits were exiled native speakers, who were willing to risk their lives, for there native country.

Training concentrated on ciphers, defensive combat and survival.

The Pianists were mainly landed on the ground by Lysander, parachuting was considered too risky for both the radio and the operator.

Their number one priority was not to arouse any suspicion with the locals, so a good cover story was always essential. There was a high risk of the radio signal being detected; Pianists were constantly on the move, moving from house to house, with the radio in a suitcase. Operation was far safer with a longer range in the countryside, where the radios were housed in metal cases, stored in ditches, fields, woods and barns.

The pianist would not have known any other resistance agents and may have lived a very solitary life in the community. Communications with the resistance and SOE would have been by pre- arrange message drops, hidden in every day objects. Despite all their isolation, life expectance was very limited, and many ended up using suicide pills to avoid capture. Except for aerial photography, the Pianist provided the only method the allies had, of obtaining any intelligence, from within occupied countries.

Without the heroics work of the pianist, we may have lost WW2.