

## Synopsis

**Title of Exhibit:** The Swiss Landi 1939

**Purpose of Exhibit:**

A display exhibit of the postal stationery and officially sanctioned postcards issued for the Swiss National Exposition held in Zürich, Switzerland, April 20 to October 29, 1939

This exhibit concentrates on the officially sanctioned postcards sold during the exposition. These postcards are an area of on-going, original research by the exhibitor.

The exhibit will show through these postcards how the Swiss used the exposition to re-instill a spirit of "Swissness" and patriotism when war was threatening.

**Exhibit Plan:**

The exhibit begins with the advance publicity for the exposition in the form of slogan cancels and postage stamps. It then briefly discusses the postal stationery – letter cards and postal cards – issued by the Swiss post office.

The balance of the exhibit treats the officially sanctioned postcards, explaining why the exhibitor thinks they had some sort of "official" status by certain common characteristics. The postcards were almost exclusively used as souvenirs, either kept as mementoes or mailed to friends and family with the typical "wish you were here" message. To accommodate this, the Swiss post office had four post offices on the grounds of the exposition, each using a different cancel. Various examples of the use of these cancels on cards are included.

The exhibit then discusses size variations of cards with identical designs followed by examples giving an overview of the exposition itself.

The exhibit continues with two postcards which do not seem to follow the same pattern as the previously discussed postcards.

The exhibit concludes with postcards showing the exposition's patriotic appeal with a reminder of the sacrifices the founders of the country bore to ensure freedom for the Swiss.

**Observations:**

As these postcards are the subject of the exhibitor's on-going research, there are still many unanswered questions such as the missing spans of "L.A." numbers. It must be said that some experts in Switzerland disagree with the exhibitor on the "official" status of these postcards. The exhibitor fails to understand the difference between the postcards issued for the 1939 Landi and those issued for the 1914 exposition in Bern about which a monograph has been published in Switzerland.

**Items of impact in the Exhibit:**

The most interesting piece in the exhibit is on page 3. It is a censored letter card sent from Switzerland to France 11 days after the outbreak of World War II. It shows how quickly the French set up their censorship network. It is also interesting in view of the historical fact that Switzerland had a secret agreement with France which would be invoked if Germany tried to traverse Switzerland to invade France.

**Philatelic References:**

*Zumstein Spezialkatalog und Handbuch - Die Ganzsachen der Schweiz*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, edited by Georges Schild. Verlag Zumstein & Cie., Bern, 2002.

*Landesausstellung 1914: Ganzsachen, Stempel, Ansichtskarten und Vignetten*, by Georges Schild and Hansjörg Fankhauser. Heft 1 der Schriftenreihe des Schweizerischen Ganzsachen - Sammler - Vereins SGSV, 1994.

"The Post Cards of the 1939 National Exposition," by Richard T. Hall, *TELL (Journal of the American Helvetia Philatelic Society)*, Volume 31, No. 3 (May 2005), pp. 1/16.

*Histoire Postale et Militaire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, 1939-1945*, by C. Deloste.