Unifying the Swiss with War Looming

by Richard T. Hall

The year was 1938. Switzerland’s neighbors to the north and south were clearly headed for war with the rest of Europe. Tiny Switzerland knew its trans-alpine transit routes were likely targets in the event of war. And the every-twenty-five-year Swiss National Exposition was due to be staged.

The Swiss had faced larger and better-armed opponents over its 650 year history. The question was would they be able to withstand an attack with modern weapons of war. The government decided the best way to counter this threat was to remind their citizens of their “Swissness” and their heritage of being the David in the face of a Goliath. So they decided to use the 1939 Swiss National Exposition in Zürich as the vehicle to convey this message (Figure 1).

The lead-up to the Exposition began with special slogan cancels used in the larger cities across Switzerland beginning in June of 1938. Simple in design, these cancels showed the wing and rings logo of the Exposition, the year 1939, and the words Zürich Swiss National Exposition in the language of the region. The cancel slugs for the machine cancellers circulated around the region. For example, the French-language version of the cancel shown in Figure 2 was used at the Lausanne 2 post office in June, July, September to November 1938, and February and March 1939. (Continued on page 13)
On February 1, 1939, a set of three stamps (Zumstein 219-227; Scott 247-255) in each of the three official languages at the time was issued (German, French, and Italian; Romansh didn’t become an official language until 1996). The stamps depicted a parade of various professions, the spiritual life of the Swiss, and Piz Roseg and the Tschiera Glacier which are located on the Italian-Swiss border (Figure 3).

But it was not enough just to get the message out to the Swiss, they needed to let the rest of Europe know, in particular Germany and Italy, that Switzerland would not be another Austria. To accomplish this, a series of three Swissair flights publicizing the Exposition were flown. The first went to capitals to the south of Switzerland (Europaflug Süd) (Figure 4). It left Zürich on April 29, 1939, and landed in Rome, Italy; Athens, Greece; Cairo, Egypt; returned to Athens; Sofia, Bulgaria (Figure 5); Bucharest, Romania; Belgrade, Yugoslavia; Budapest, Hungary, returning to Zurich on May 6, 1939, the opening day of the Exposition. Mail was carried on this and the succeeding flights. The number of covers flown between Zürich and each of the capitals ranges from a low of 349 for the second Athens landing to a high of 4,372 to Cairo (16,174 covers made the round trip).

The second flight (Europaflug Nord) (Figure 6) left Zürich on May 15, 1939, and flew to capitals to the north of Switzerland – Warsaw, Poland; Kaunas, Lithuania; Riga, Latvia (Figure 7); Tallin, Estonia; Helsinki, Finland; Stockholm, Sweden; Oslo, Norway; Copenhagen, Denmark; Berlin, Germany; returning to Zurich on May 21, 1939. Interesting by their omission are Vienna and Prague, former capitals already swallowed up by Nazi Germany. For this flight the number of covers flown ranges from a low of 1,671 to Kaunas to a high of 5,050 to Helsinki (20,004 covers made the round trip).
The third flight (Europaflug West) (Figure 8) left Zürich on May 22, 1939, and flew to capitals to the west of Switzerland – Rotterdam, The Netherlands; Brussels, Belgium; Antwerp, Belgium (Figure 9); London, England; Paris, France; Barcelona, Spain; returning to Zürich on May 28, 1939. The two landings in Belgium reflect the Swiss sensitivity to linguistic divisions, Antwerp for the Dutch-speaking Belgians and Brussels for the French-speaking. More interesting is the selection of Barcelona rather than Madrid for the Spanish landing. To understand this one must remember that Spain was in the throes of a civil war in 1939. Barcelona had fallen to Franco’s troops on January 26, 1939, but Madrid held out until March 28. Planning for the flight undoubtedly was completed well before March and the situation in Madrid was too uncertain to risk a stop there. The civil war probably also explains why Lisbon, Portugal, was omitted. Overflights of Spain were an iffy venture with the German-sponsored warplanes of the Condor Legion patrolling the Spanish air space. For this flight the number of covers flown ranges from a low of 2,106 to Antwerp to a high of 8,865 to Barcelona (14,506 covers made the round trip).

As mentioned above, the Exposition opened on May 6, 1939, to great pomp and ceremony. A parade was held in downtown Zürich, headed by the Federal Cabinet (Figure 10). The official flag raising took place at the Bürkliplatz on the banks of the Lake of Zürich between the two venues (Figure 11).

To help celebrate the occasion, eleven small planes flew from Zürich to the capitals of each of the other 24 cantons. For these flights (Meldeflug) the number of covers flown ranges from a low of 913 to Stans, the capital of Canton Nidwalden (Figure 12), to a high of 8,097 to Bern, the capital of Canton Bern (as well as the capital of the nation) (7,229 covers made the round trip).

On the opening day of the Exposition a set of four stamps of identical design was issued (Figure 13), again in each of the three official languages (Zumstein 228-239; Scott 256-267). However, in this case the stamps, except for 30c value, were issued in two formats – sheets and coils. The coil stamps were issued in repeating groups of the three language versions – German, French, Italian, German, etc. This format has led collectors to seek out the three possible pairs and the three
possible arrangements of the strips of three (Figure 14). The design of the stamp shows a crossbow and a flowering branch. The design implies that Swiss quality as symbolized by the crossbow will produce a flowering of Swiss industry and commerce.

The sheet and coil versions are distinguishable by the presence or absence of “grilling” of the gum. This “grilling” is a light, waffle-like impression into the gum and paper as contrasted with the grilling of early United States stamps which actually damaged the paper. The sheet stamps were issued on grilled paper and the coil stamps on smooth paper. Again, the 30c value was an exception, being printed on smooth paper. But the 10c German sheet stamp was also printed by exception on smooth paper. One might think, therefore, that the 10c German sheet and coil stamps are indistinguishable. This is not the case, as there is a subtle difference in the length of the printer’s name at the bottom of the stamp. It is slightly longer on the sheet stamp with the result that the “A” of “COURVOISIER S.A.” is to the right of the “V” of “HELVETIA”. For the coil stamp the “A” is to the left of the “V” (Figure 15).

In addition to the stamps issued on the opening day of the Exposition, a series of illustrated postal cards (Zumstein P 145-150, Figure 16) in two denominations – 10c and 20c, corresponding to the domestic and foreign postal rates – and letter sheets (Zumstein AuB 5-7, Figure 17) in a single denomination, 20c, were issued. Both the postal cards and the letter sheets were issued in the three languages. There were 37 different illustrations on the postal cards, fortunately only one language per illustration. But 15 of the illustrations on the 10c denomination postal cards occur in two different colors – gray brown and lilac.
brown. There were 18 different illustrations on the letter sheets, again only one language per illustration. An unstamped version of the lettersheets was also issued and given away by the postal service as publicity. The unstamped version repeated the 18 illustrations of the stamped version but added an additional 16 different illustrations.

At the beginning of the second week of the Exposition, on May 14, 1939, an international balloon race was held from the Exposition grounds to Bäretswil, a distance of about 24 km (15 miles) (Figure 18). A total of 47,092 covers were carried on the balloon flight, of which 42,562 were franked with Swiss stamps (the balance were franked with Liechtenstein or Belgian stamps).

References
4. The “officially-sanctioned” postcards illustrated in this piece are identified by their “L.A.” number. These numbers were evidently assigned in blocks to the major postcard publishers, based on items in the author’s collection – 1-102 to Photoglob of Zürich; 301-388 to J. Gaberell of Thalwil; 601-681 to Photo-Rotation W. Pleyer of Zürich. Other publishers were assigned small blocks of numbers outside the range (usually) of these three major publishers. Other postcards were available without the logo and “L.A.” number. These are identified as “privately-published”.
6. All details of the facilities, statistics, and Exposition layout are taken from the massive two-volume official report: Die Schweiz im Spiegel der Landesausstellung 1939, Atlantis-Verlag AG, Zürich, Switzerland, 1940.

(To be continued)
Landi ’39: Part II
Unifying the Swiss with War Looming

by Richard T. Hall

Part I of this article was published in the September 2010 TELL. It traced some of the rationale behind the Swiss National Exhibition of 1939, and recounted special stamps and flights in conjunction with the Exposition.

The Exposition came to be popularly known as the “Landi” which is a shortened version of the German title Schweizerische Landesausstellung, quite a mouthful!

Given all this publicity what did the visitor to the Landi see and experience? To answer this question let’s look at the postcards sold there. There were two classes of postcards sold at the Landi. The first were those with apparent official sanction based on the use of the wing and four-ring logo (Figure 19) with three-language text and a numbering system apparently assigned in blocks to the various publishers (Figure 20). These numbers were prefixed by “L.A.” (LandesAusstellung). The other class included postcards prefixed “L.A.” (LandesAusstellung). The other class included postcards for restaurants on the grounds of the Landi, cards produced by companies whose wares were on display, souvenir photographs, and other privately-produced cards.

The Landi was located on opposite banks of the Lake of Zürich just above its outflow to form the Limmat River. The left bank area is known as Enge, the right Riesbach (Figures 21 and 22 respectively, taken from the official visitor’s guide to the Exposition). The two venues had two distinctive themes. The

We congratulate Dick Hall on the publication in the April American Philatelist – as the cover story, no less! – of a similar article. That printed article is supplemented by a web-based tour of the Landi; see www.stamps.org/AP-Albums!
The visitor to the Landi could get off a streetcar, bus, or taxi right at the Enge entrance. As he approached the ticket booth he could see a large tower with an aerial cable car crossing the lake (Figure 26). After purchasing his ticket and passing through the entrance gates, he could check his coat, buy some souvenirs, or ask for information. Just inside the Enge entrance gate was located one of four post offices operating during the Landi. Figure 27 shows a cover (cropped) stamped with the special Eingang Enge postmark. Figure 28 shows a picture of the Eingang Enge post office taken from a special presentation album produced by the Swiss P.T.T. and given to officials associated with the Exposition.

Upon entering the main grounds of the Landi, a ramp led up to the Höhenstrasse (High Street), a half-mile-long elevated walkway traversing the entire length (continued on page 8)
Landi ’39: Part II

(continued from page 2) of the Enge venue (see Figure 24, the Höhenstrasse is the structure at the bottom center). The walkway passed through several buildings along its path, the first of which was grouping called the Heimat und Volk (Homeland and the People) buildings. The theme of this grouping was Our Land, Our People, Social Welfare, the Living Confederation, Defense, Work and Industry, Honor, and The Oath. This sequence of exhibits set the stage for the Landi by reminding the visitor of his heritage and duty.

The first exhibit the visitor encountered was a 150-foot-long mural entitled “In Labore Pax” (In Hardship Peace) by Otto Baumburger (Figure 29). This mural traced the history of Swiss Confederation from its inception in 1291 to the present day.

The Wehrwille (Defense) exhibit confronted the visitor with a larger-than-life statue of a Swiss man donning his army uniform in front of a simple statement “650 Jahre” (650 Years), reminding the visitor that the defense of the Confederation has been a way of life for 650 years (Figure 30). On the wall on either side of the statue were statements from 1291 – “With all our might and effort against all aggressors” – and 1939 – “Every Swiss is liable for military service”.

Fig. 23. The Enge venue, looking north. (Z 6087, Photo Swissair)

Fig. 24. The Enge venue, looking south. (L.A. 83, Photoglob)

Fig. 25. The Riesbach venue looking north. (Z 6077, Photo Swissair)

Fig. 26. Enge entrance plaza – note cable car (L.A. 310, J. Gaberell).

Fig. 27. Special cancel used at the Eingang Enge Post Office
The final room in the *Heimat und Volk* group was the *Gelöbnis* (Taking the Oath) exhibit (Figure 31). On the end wall was a drawing of the legendary three Swiss patriots taking their oath of confederation in the meadow at Rütli in 1291. The wall to the left bore a drawing of a Swiss family and a Christian cross. The flags of Switzerland and the Red Cross were draped next to the drawings.

Exiting the *Heimat und Volk* group the visitor came to a long, open stretch of the walkway called the *Fähnlistrasse* (Flag Street) decorated with cantonal flags on the sides and hundreds of flags of the various Swiss *Gemeinden* (communities) above (Figure 32).

At the end of the *Höhenstrasse* a ramp brought the visitor back to ground level at the *Festplatz* (Festival Plaza). The ramp was bordered by banners of the cantons and ended by passing under a large glockenspiel with 17 bells and a large clock (Figure 33).
To the left of the Höhenstrasse ramp was the Landi hotel, the Schweizerhof. The hotel had 200 beds on three floors plus a restaurant, dance floor, bar, and an outdoor dining terrace overlooking the lake. A tourist bureau was attached to the hotel and included an auditorium for presentations.

Around the Festplatz was a Conditorei (pastry shop) and a complex of buildings called the Zubereiten und Essen (Food Preparation and Dining). This complex included the Terrassenrestaurant, the Bierhaus, the Kaffee-Schiff, and the Alkoholfreies Restaurant (Terrace Restaurant, Beer Hall, Coffee Ship, and the Alcohol-free restaurant). In the center of the complex the visitor could find a tobacco exhibit and the Vergnügungs-Palais. Around the outside of the complex was a series of 11 demonstration food preparation areas, including bread making, butchers, canning, chocolate, and pastries.

The Terrace Restaurant had seating for 1,000 guests with a nice view across the Festplatz or the lake (Figure 34). The ferry dock was located between the Terrace Restaurant and the Beer Hall. The ferry can be seen leaving the dock in the figure. There was seating for 1,400 patrons in the Beer Hall.

The Coffee Ship (Figure 35) was docked on the opposite side of the Beer Hall from the ferry dock. Here the visitor could enjoy a cup of coffee while bobbing on the waters of the lake.

The Alcohol-free Restaurant was run by the Zürich Women’s Temperance League. It was a self-service cafeteria which could be accessed either from the Höhenstrasse or from the Festplatz.

The Vergnügungs-Palais (Pleasure Palace) was a dual-purpose building. One half of the building housed a festival area while the other half housed a night club called the Palais (Palace). The Palais featured a dance floor under a sliding roof so that the patrons could “dance under the stars” in good weather. The Palais was decorated in classic 1930s Art Deco style (Figure 36). Patronage totaled 468,700 during the Landi.

The references for the whole series of articles were published at the end of Part I. They will be repeated at the end of Part IV. (To be continued)
Landi ’39: Part III
Unifying the Swiss with War Looming

by Richard T. Hall

Part I of this article was published in the September 2010 TELL and Part II in the May 2011 TELL. Part I traced some of the rationale behind the Swiss National Exhibition of 1939 in Zürich, and recounted special stamps and flights in conjunction with the Exposition. Part II started a tour of the Exposition site; it is continued here.

Continuing along the path, next to the hotel were the Verkehr und Transport (Travel and Transportation) buildings, the first of which was the Flugwesen und Schiffahrt (Air and Ship Travel) building. Here were found displays of vehicles on an interesting figure-eight shaped ramp (see Figure 22 at lower left corner), airplanes and aerodynamic research, the Rhine Harbor at Basel, delivery companies, lake travel, street construction equipment, fire-fighting equipment, and transportation associations.

The other building of the Verkehr und Transport group was (continued on page 7)
Landi ’39: Part III

(continued from page 1) the Bahnverkehr (Rail Travel) building, located at the southern end of the Enge venue. The building showcased the Swiss rail system and included vintage and modern rolling stock. Just outside the grounds of the Landi was located the Wollishofen train station via which the Swiss Railway ran a special line into the Landi to the Ausstellungs-Bahnhof (Exposition Train Station).

Adjoining the Bahnverkehr building was the P.T.T. Pavillon (Post, Telegraph, and Telephone Pavilion) (Figure 37). The Pavilion housed a fully-functioning post office with its own machine canceller. Figure 38 shows the special P.T.T. Pavilion hand and machine cancels. Figure 39 shows a picture of the interior of the Pavilion post office taken from the special presentation album.

The next complex of buildings the visitor came to was the Kleider machen Leute (Clothes make the Person) complex. Upon entering the complex the visitor first viewed a display of machinery associated with textiles – knitting machines, weaving machines, etc. Next were displays of artificial silk, tailoring, thread, linen, embroidery, and every-day clothing. Then followed displays of perfume, gloves, shoes and leatherware, and jewelry. Part of the complex was three oddly-shaped buildings (Modepavillon) (Figure 40) which housed displays of high-end clothing – men’s custom-made clothing, shoes, and haute couture. Finishing out the complex was a theater for fashion shows.

The next building was the Uhrenpavillon (Watch Pavilion) displaying the Swiss skill in timepieces. A giant watch illustrated the intricate parts which go into a fine watch. The pavilion was adjacent to the glockenspiel at the end of the Höhenstrasse.

The Elektrizität (Electricity Pavilion) was the next building along the path (Figure 41). On display were all aspects of electricity from research to production, low voltage to high frequency, and distribution. The Swiss Federal Technical Institute had a large model explaining hydroelectric power.

Three connected buildings grouped under the name Fabrik und Werkstatt (Factory and Workshop)
were next – Machinery, Aluminum (Figure 42), and Chemistry. Swiss companies used the Landi as a showcase of their products. They published cards given to clients and potential customers at the pavilions in which their products were on display. Figure 43 shows one such card from the Soreinfabrik company of Pfäffikon, makers of cleaning agents.

Following the Factory and Workplace complex was the Soll und Haben (Debit and Credit) building which highlighted the Swiss banking and insurance business.

Next was the Unser Holz (Our Timber) Pavilion in which were displayed wood products, the timber industry, and forestry.

Following the Timber Pavilion came the Bauen (Construction) complex. Here were showcased the various aspects and materials of construction – natural stone, ceramic tile and bricks, asbestos cement, plaster, cement. The centerpiece of the exhibit was a hyperbolic concrete shell designed by Robert Maillart (Figure 44). Maillart was a pioneer in reinforced concrete design. His bridges are recognized engineering masterpieces.

Adjacent to the Construction complex was a series of model homes in styles representing a cross section of the various regions of Switzerland. Called Wohnen (Living), the area also included exhibit spaces for the furniture industry and landscaping.

The Vorbeugen und Heilen (Prevention and Health) complex was composed of seven buildings around a landscaped garden. The seven buildings housed displays and demonstrations of anatomy, physiology, medical research, natural products, a hospital, and the pharmaceutical industry.

Fig. 42. The Aluminum Building (L.A. 203/227, Fot. Hermann König).

Fig. 43. Customer information card from the Soreinfabrik company.

Fig. 44. The Maillart concrete shell (L.A. 319, J. Gaberell).

Fig. 45. Anti-aircraft gun on display at the Wehrwesen exhibit (L.A. 91, Photoglob).

Fig. 46. Special cancel applied to mail from the Landi on the Swiss Independence Day – note Feldpost date stamp.
Across the Höhenstrasse from the Prevention and Health complex was the Blumenhalle (Hall of Flowers) where displays of flowers and shrubs were found. Adjacent to the Hall of Flowers was a display of cactus.

Between the Hall of Flowers and the lake was a complex of buildings called Sport, covering all aspects of sports from clothing to competitions. An interesting feature of the complex was a “slalom” trail with display areas for various sporting activities. On the shore of the lake was a building displaying various types of boats used in sports and leisure.

Along the lake was a display of the latest in Swiss weaponry in the Wehrwesen (Military Systems) exhibit. Various pieces of equipment such as anti-aircraft guns (Figure 45) and tanks were on display. On August 1, the Swiss Independence Day, a special cancel was applied to mail from the Landi marking the military demonstrations held that day (Figure 46).

Across the Höhenstrasse from the military display was a building called Lernen und Wissen (Learning and Knowledge). Here were found displays (continued on page 15)
Landi ’39: Part III

(continued from page 9) of public and private educational facilities from kindergarten to university.

The final area of buildings and activities of the Enge venue of the Landi was centered around the grounds of the Belvoir Park. The largest attraction in this area was the *Kinderparadies* (Children’s Paradise), a play area sponsored by Nestlé (Figure 47). It included the usual monkey bars and swings, but probably the most popular activity was a ride in little cars, somewhat like our soapbox racers, on a special track.

For the older children there was a *Haus der Jugend* (Youth House) which housed exhibits from various youth organizations. One notable piece of art was a large painting by Willy Fries called “Christophorus”.

The centerpiece of the park was the Landi theater which included both an open-air section and an enclosed theater on opposite sides of the same stage. The enclosed theater could seat 400 patrons.

One of the smaller exhibits was an alpine hiker’s shelter that was later relocated at an altitude of 7350 feet to become the *Leutschachhütte* on the slopes of the Spanort above Amsteg in Canton Uri.

For model train enthusiasts there was a model train layout depicting the Lötschberg portion of the B.L.S. (Bern-Lötschberg-Simplon) Railway with its many tunnels and bridges on its path over and through the Bernese Alps.

Adjacent to the entrance to the Enge venue were groups of buildings including the *Denken und Dichten* (Thought and Writing) group which had displays of photography, cinema, surveying, graphic arts, the paper industry, music, books, and publishing. Tucked in a corner of the exposition grounds behind the Thought and Composition group was the *Künstlerdörfli* (Artists’ Village) and a exhibit of religious art and the Bible.

What has been described thus far has assumed the visitor walked through the exhibits. There was, however, another way to tour the Enge venue on an overview basis and that was on the *Schifflibach* (Stream for Little Boats). The little boats made a 15-minute circuit of the venue in a clockwise direction beginning a short distance inside the exposition grounds. The boats were propelled along the path by water flowing from a huge 35 horsepower pump located between the end and start of the ride. The little boats

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![Fig. 48: Beginning the ride (L.A. 64, Photoglob).](image1)

![Passing through the Electricity exhibit (L.A. 323, J. Gaberell).](image2)

![Along the way (L.A. 62, Photoglob).](image3)
held six passengers. The first part of the ride ran parallel to the Höhenstrasse as far as the Festplatz. At that point the ride turned and ran through the buildings on the west side of the grounds, then through the gardens of the model homes in the Living and the Prevention and Health complexes, through the Belvoir Park, and ending at the Thought and Writing group. A total of 1,770,000 people rode the Schifflibach during the Landi. Figure 48 gives a few views of the Schifflibach on its circuit around the Enge venue. Of course, like any attraction, photographers were there to take your picture. Figure 49 shows one such souvenir.

Having completed the tour of the left bank of the Landi, the visitor now had four choices to get across the lake to the Riesbach or right bank venue. These transfer choices and a tour of the right side will be the topics of Part IV, the conclusion of this series.

(To be concluded in the September TELL)
Landi ’39: Part IV
Unifying the Swiss with War Looming
by Richard T. Hall

The first three parts of this series were published in the September 2010, May 2011, and July 2011 issues of TELL. Part I traced some of the rationale behind the Swiss National Exhibition of 1939, and recounted special stamps and flights in conjunction with the Exposition. Parts II and III described a tour of the left bank venue of the Exposition site.

Having completed the tour of the left bank of the Landi, the visitor now had four choices to get across the lake to the Riesbach or right bank venue. He could take the ferry boat from either of two locations, one at the Festplatz or one by the Enge entrance (Figure 50). He could exit the exposition grounds and take a bus or taxi up around the northern tip of the lake and re-enter the exposition grounds at the Riesbach entrance. Or he could take a four-minute aerial cable car ride across the lake. During the Landi 705,700 riders chose the last option while 5,094,900 opted for the ferry boats (Figure 51).

The cable of the aerial cable ride (the Schwebebahn) was supported by two 240-foot towers on opposite sides of the lake (Figures 52 and 53). The boarding platforms at the tops of the towers were each accessed by two high-speed elevators, purported to be the fastest elevators in Europe, travelling at 13.65 feet per second, taking 20 seconds to reach the top. The cable ride itself took four minutes to cross to the other side with up to 20 passengers.

The tower on the Enge side also housed a restaurant at the 80-foot level. The restaurant was called, appropriately, the Turmrestaurant (Tower Restaurant) (Figure 54) and could seat 180 patrons with panoramic views of the lake, the exposition, and downtown Zürich. Patrons could pick up a postcard at the restaurant (Figure 55).

While the left bank venue of the Landi celebrated the unity of the nation, the right bank celebrated its diversity. Figure 56 shows the Riesbach entrance plaza.

(Continued on page 9)
Immediately after entering the Riesbach or right bank venue of the Landi, the visitor came to a series of buildings devoted to topics which do not have specific products or equipment to display. The first building in this series was called Landwirtschaft in der Volkswirtschaft (Agriculture in the National Economy) emphasizing the importance of agriculture. After the war broke out this importance became critical as Switzerland was cut off from its usual foodstuff suppliers. A National Cultivation program would be instituted in 1941 to encourage planting of crops on every available plot of land.

Next was a display of techniques of plant culture (Kulturtechnik) followed by displays of internal migration (Innenkolonisation), marketing and advertising (Markt und Propaganda), and gardening (Pflanzenbau).

Following these buildings the visitor came to three buildings, two of which housed temporary exhibits of livestock and machinery (Temporäre Tier- und Maschinenausstellungen), a rather strange combination! The third building was used for temporary special exhibitions (Temporäre Sonderausstellungen).

The next series of buildings was devoted to wine and fruit juices – Kelterei-Süssmosterei (fruit and grape presses), Obst- und Weinbau (fruit juice and wine industry), and Weindegustation (wine tasting).
The final stop along this entry path was an area devoted to vegetable growing (Gemüsebau).

Behind the above-mentioned buildings associated with wine and vegetables was located the Landi’s Festival Hall (Festhalle) which could seat up to 5,000 spectators around an arena under a cylindrical sliding roof with a span of 146 feet and a center height of 58 feet. The roof was mounted on a roller track and could be opened or closed in five minutes. Of the 5,000 seats, 1,500 were in a grandstand (Tribüne) under a fixed roof. Depending on the event the 3,500 seats under the movable roof could be arranged around a flat festival area by removing some or all of the seats or left in place to view productions on the stage on the opposite end of the hall from the grandstand seats.

Along the street-side of the right bank venue beyond the Festhalle were several buildings dedicated to various aspects of farming – cattle breeding (Haus der Tierzucht), dairy (Milchwirtschaft), agricultural machinery (Landwirtschaft Hilfsstoffe und Maschinen).

The visitor, having reached the far end of the right bank venue of the Landi, now headed back through the area of the Exposition called the Dörfli (Little Village) (Figure 57). He first came to three farmhouses – Bergbauernhaus (mountain farmhouse), Grosses Bauernhaus (large farmhouse), and Kleines Bauernhaus (small farm-
The mountain farmhouse was built in the style of central Switzerland, the area around Einsiedeln in Canton Schwyz. There was a vineyard between the large farmhouse and the lake.

Attached to the dairy exhibit building but extending into the Dörfli area was a building housing a village cheese-making enterprise (Dorfläseret).

The visitor then entered the village square (Dorfplatz) which was bounded on three sides by the Landgasthof, the Gemeindehaus, and the Genossenschaftshaus with the Ostschweizerische Winzerstube. The fourth side of the square was lake front.

The Landgasthof (Inn) was a restaurant seating 1,200 patrons (Figure 58). It included a dining terrace over the lake, a garden dining area on the lakeside, and interior dining areas. There was also a bowling alley in the building.

The Genossenschaftshaus (co-op) housed exhibits explaining the co-op concept. Attached to the co-op was the Ostschweizerische Winzerstube (Eastern Swiss wine bar) called “zur Rebe” (House of the Vine) (Figure 59).

The Gemeindehaus (community center) housed the Dörfli post office on its ground floor. The upper floor was a large community auditorium. Figure 60 shows a cover stamped with the special Dörfli postmark. This cover is interesting as it shows a piece of postal stationery that would only be used during the duration of the Landi. Figure 61 shows a picture of the Dörfli post office taken from the special presentation album.

Attached to the community center was a building exhibiting folk costumes (Trachtenhof) (Figure 62) from all regions of Switzerland which then led to an area where regional handicrafts were demonstrated (Heimatwerk).

Clustered together around a small square were several wine bars, each highlighting the wines of their region, and, for the non-drinker, an apple cider bar (Mostwirtschaft) called “Zum rote Öpfel” (House of the Red Apple). The five wine bars served wines from their regions – Canton Vaud, Canton Neuchâtel, Canton Valais (Figure 63), Canton Ticino (Figure 64), and Cantons Geneva and Fribourg. The Ticino wine bar (Grotto Ticinese) was the largest of the wine bars and also included a bocce ball court.

Along the lake next to the wine bars was the Küchliwirtschaft (culinary arts) building which housed a 660 seat restaurant with a large dining terrace over the lake (Figure 65).

On either side of the dock for the ferry to the Festplatz on the left bank stood the last two restaurants in the Dörfli area – the Fischerstube (Fisherman’s Grotto) with the Fischerhütte (Fisherman’s Shack) (Figure 66) and the Jagd- und Bündnerstube (Hunting and Graubündener’s Grotto). The Fisherman’s Shack was a recreation of a typical fisherman’s work place, complete with fishing nets. The Fisherman’s Grotto housed a restaurant seating 120 guests. This building remained in
use after the Landi. In 1956 the straw roof caught fire. The building was rebuilt and serves as a restaurant to this day.

The other side of the ferry dock was the Hunting and Graubündener’s Grotto which served two functions – an exhibition of game hunting and a restaurant / wine bar featuring fare from Canton Graubünden and seating 400 people.

Now having completed the circuit of the exhibits of the Landi, the visitor could now have some fun in the attractions area. Like fairs everywhere, the Landi had an area set aside for rides, games, shooting galleries, and other such activities.

But the visitor might first have wanted to send a postcard to a friend or family member. The postal service had stationed a postal bus adjacent to the attractions area (Figure 67). Figure 68 shows a cover stamped with the special Automobil-Postbureau postmark. The Swiss postal service had outfitted regular postal buses as mobile post offices beginning in 1937. These mobile post offices were primarily used at special events. The last mobile post office bus was taken out of service in 2001.

The highlight, literally, of the attractions area was a large tower with two gondolas suspended from it called the Attraktionskran (Attractions Crane). The ride was called in Swiss-German “Lueg is Land” (“Look, it’s the country).
The Landi was impacted by the outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939. The Swiss Army mobilized on that day and the Exposition closed the following day. Officials decided to reopen the Landi on September 5, 1939, as an assertion of national resolve in the face of the crisis. The Swiss people responded with increased attendance in October, setting a one-day attendance record of 163,567 on October 15. Figure 69 shows a postcard commemorating the 10 millionth visitor at 4:48pm on October 24.

The Landi closed as originally planned on October 29, 1939, with a dramatic lowering of the flag at midnight on that date (Figure 70).

References


4. The "officially-sanctioned" postcards illustrated in this piece are identified by their "L.A." number. These numbers were evidently assigned in blocks to the major postcard publishers, based on items in the author's collection – 1-102 to Photoglob of Zürich; 301-388 to J. Gaberell of Thalwil; 601-681 to Photo-Rotation W. Pleyer of Zürich. Other publishers were assigned small blocks of numbers outside the range (usually) of these three major publishers. Other postcards were available without the logo and "L.A." number. These are identified as "privately-published".


6. All details of the facilities, statistics, and Exposition layout are taken from the massive two-volume official report: Die Schweiz im Spiegel der Landesaustellung 1939, Atlantis-Verlag AG, Zürich, Switzerland, 1940.

The fine article on the "LANDI '39" by Richard Hall brought back many pleasant memories of that great exposition which I visited as a school boy. The "Höhenstrasse" with the flags of all Swiss municipalities was most impressive and we kids competed with each other as to who could identify the most flags by name! Furthermore, the "Schiffli-bach" and the many restaurants which served local specialties are vivid in my mind.

Before the opening of the "Landi" there was a drawing competition in the schools among schoolchildren for having their drawing exhibited in the education pavilion. To my greatest surprise, since I never could draw, I found my drawing of a stylized Santa Claus in that exhibition. How that picture got chosen is still a puzzle to me today some 70+ years later!

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