

Special stamp White stork

**The bill-clattering stork**

Special stamp Faces Switzerland

**20 cm<sup>2</sup> with 111 faces**

Special stamps Europa – Postal vehicles

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2/2013

**Focus on  
stamps**

The Collector's Magazine

**SWISS POST** 

# Regional and local museums

## Small museums – big history content

Special stamps with surcharge

### Pro Patria – Village museums

**Sales**

Philately: From 30.4.2013 until 31.12.2013, while stocks last  
Post offices: From 7.5.2013 until 31.8.2013, while stocks last

**Validity**

Unlimited from 7.5.2013

**Printing**

Offset, 4-colour; Cartor Security Printing, La Loupe, France

**Sizes**

Stamps: 33x28 mm  
Sheets: 195x140 mm (4 rows of 5 stamps)

**Paper**

White stamp paper, with optical brightener, mat gummed, 110 gm<sup>2</sup>

**Perforation**

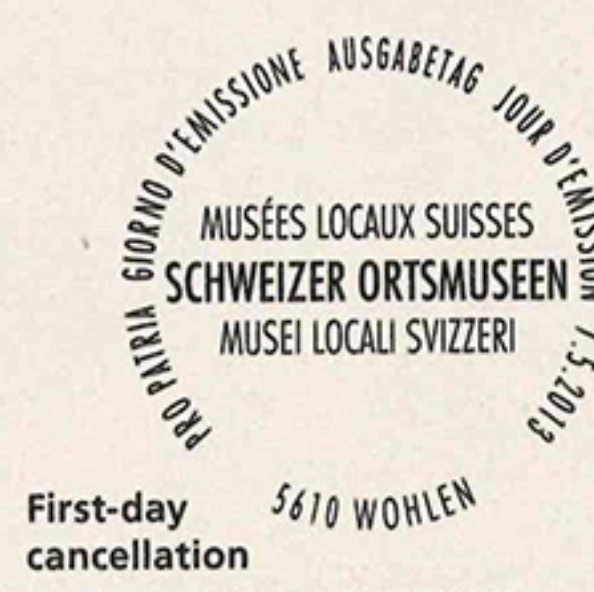
13½:13½

**Designer**

Vito Noto, Lugano



First-day cover motif



First-day cancellation

Though Switzerland may be small, it's big on museums, with more than 1,000 of them championing the preservation, display, study and dissemination of Swiss heritage day in, day out. No fewer than 400 museums throughout the country are dedicated to regional and local history, showcasing Switzerland's cultural variety and helping us to question and find our identity in today's globalized world.

Pro Patria has decided to launch a stamp set whose proceeds are to go to regional and local museums in Switzerland. In cooperation with the Swiss Museums Association, Pro Patria plans to support projects designed to enhance the profile of local cultural heritage. Most regional and local museums are "small but beautiful" cooperative organizations whose exhibits tell an important story. The 2013 set features a straw hat, representing fashion in Switzerland and worldwide, the wax talisman as the symbol of prevalent popular

beliefs, a plane standing for crafts and trades, and a carved cow inviting us to imagine how farmers lived and worked in days gone by.

In buying these stamps, you'll also be collecting virtual witnesses to local history and supporting the remembrance mission of regional and local museums. Swiss Post, Pro Patria and the Swiss Museums Association would greatly appreciate your contribution!

**David Vuillaume**  
General Secretary, Swiss Museums Association



Photos: Swiss Museums Association



Straw hat, around 1920. Strohmuseum, Wohlen

### Straw hat

Straw hats go by many names – you only have to think of boater, Panama or skimmer, for instance – and have always been very popular.

In the Freiamt area of Switzerland's Canton Aargau, they were called "Röhrlihut" or "Spitzhut", the first referring to the tubular shape (Rohr) of the straw and the second to the fact that hats were made by inserting the tip (Spitze) of one piece of straw into the next. Bleached, dampened wheat or rye straw was woven around a wooden form on a hat block using waxed cotton thread. Hats like this were already being made for men, women and children in the early 19th century, and later the technique was used mainly for men's hats. Straw hats became an important export for this area of Canton Aargau, with generations of home workers weaving these popular hats. Up to 2,700 knots are required for every model.

The straw hat industry experienced its last major boom in 1925 when more than one million straw hats were exported to the USA in a single season.



### Stamp booklet

A stamp booklet with the current Pro Patria special stamps contains ten mixed stamps: six stamps featuring the straw hat with face values of CHF 0.85 and CHF 0.40 and four stamps depicting the plane with face values of CHF 1.00 and CHF 0.50. The booklet is available for CHF 14.50 (incl. CHF 1.00 for the envelope) from the Swiss Pro Patria Foundation, Clausiusstrasse 45, 8006 Zurich, the Philashop [www.swisspost.ch/philashop](http://www.swisspost.ch/philashop) and from Swiss Post philatelic salespoints.



Wax toad, Museum Fram, Einsiedeln



### Wax toad

For centuries, people in distress have sought help and consolation from the Black Madonna of Einsiedeln, and the popular custom developed of offering the Mother of God a gift in gratitude for her assistance. Such gifts – and this toad is one of them – are called votive offerings.

From time immemorial, the toad has symbolized the womb. Toad votive offerings were made in thanks for the birth of a healthy child. A particularly large number of these wax toads were produced in Einsiedeln and sold to believers, perhaps because women felt that the Mother of God would better understand their situation.

Wax toads were also used as magic talismans intended to safeguard the health of mother and child. Red wax was used because, in the Middle Ages, people believed that the colour red would protect them from the Devil.



Photo: Robert Hofer



Carpenter's plane, early 20th century, Bagnes Museum, former residence, Villette



### Plane

The plane is much more than just a tool. It stands for all ways of working wood, be it as carpenter or joiner, cooper or cabinet-maker, cartwright or luthier, to name but a few professions, all of which use special planes. The plane's rear handle and pull rod shown on the stamp make it possible for two people to work it. The craftsman guides the tool and his assistant moves it by pulling the crosspiece. This plane was probably made by the craftsman who used it because its rough-and-ready shape does not match any industrial model.

The plane was probably invented in Greece in the 4th century BC. The oldest planes that have come down to us date from Roman times, and the shape of planes remained much the same until the early 20th century. After the Second World War, manual plane-makers came under growing pressure from the machine industry and were gradually driven out of business.



Carved wooden cow painted with "Gort" markings, early 20th century, Toggenburger Museum, Lichtensteig

### "Gort"

Anybody who's ever gone walking near the Säntis will be familiar with this stoic wooden cow that seems to stand there gazing placidly after them. This traditional Toggenburg Braunvieh is the basis of the local farmers' existence and their pride and joy. Cows with special colouring are particularly prized. On rare occasions, Braunvieh have calves with white spots on their back or a white belt round their bellies. These rarities go by the name of "Gort" and are put on public show by their owner. A "Gort" is an attractive feature in any procession up to summer pastures and is said to bring good luck.

From early times, farm labourers, shepherds and farmers have carved wooden cows during the long winter months. Simple carved cows served as children's toys, while more artistic ones (like the stamp motif) adorned the farmhouse parlour. The cow's full udder promised plentiful milk production, cheering the farmer every time he looked at it.

