

# Club News

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## Clockarium Visit

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Jacques de Selliers was the perfect person to be our guide of the **Clockarium** -the Museum of Art Deco Ceramic Clocks, specialising in Art Deco faience clocks. This is his private collection and he was fortunate enough to buy an Art Deco-style house to tastefully display 1,300 clocks.



Like the Van Buuren Museum Area 4 visited previously, the rooms here are a nice, comfortable size and there is a homely feel about Boulevard Reyers 163. But why are 1,300 ceramic clocks all indicating ten past ten? Simply because this looks cheerful, just like a smiley!

Mr de Selliers' explanations, in perfect English, added a lot to the visit. He explained that after the industrial revolution, affordable clocks, flanked by two sidepieces, became a status symbol in many households and were therefore proudly displayed on the mantelpiece to be admired by all. Ceramic clocks became fashionable in Belgium and northern France in the 1920s. The Czechs also produced these clocks, but only for the export market.

Mr. de Selliers showed us how up to 1,000 ceramic clocks are produced from a mother mould, then decorated in a variety of styles. Ceramic clocks remain hollow and if you light a torch inside the clock, the light will shine through. Clocks were decorated in all styles, depicting landscapes, seascapes, wallpaper, Greek temples, art-deco motifs... Two identical clocks could end up looking quite different if the stencil was coloured in different ways. The most expensive piece in the collection is a clock acquired at the sale of SS Normandie memorabilia.

After WWII, wrist watches became affordable and the fashion for clocks declined. Mr. de Selliers, a passionate and knowledgeable collector, claims he has now been cured of the virus, but is still searching for information about some lesser-known factories. His questions can be found on the Clockarium's Website (that is in nine languages) <http://www.clockarium.info/> Inevitably, one member asked who cleans the clocks. A true gentleman, Mr de Selliers replied that the Clockarium is not looking for staff at the moment, so we did not leave a member behind; we all recommend you visit this hidden gem!



*Marguerite Johnson*