



AMERICAN TOBY JUG MUSEUM

910 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, Illinois 60202, 1-877-TOBYMUSEUM, (1-877-862-9687)

MAJOLICA AND FAIENCE FIGURAL PITCHERS

In this section you are viewing one of the true highlights of the American Toby Jug Museum. Highlighted by the Majolica International Society as a must visit for all dedicated Majolica enthusiasts, this collection is probably the largest and finest of Majolica and Faience figural pitchers (jugs) in the World. (“Figural” means any piece having a three-dimensional, high relief figure of a human or animal.) These, of course, are France’s close cousins to the British Toby and Character Jugs.

The two cabinets to your left feature a representative collection of French Faience pitchers. FAIENCE, generally considered the predecessor to Majolica, consists of finer clay with tin-oxide glaze, followed by a clear over-glaze. Not considered as much in demand or collectible as Majolica, Faience pieces still make an interesting collection.

MAJOLICA refers to pieces made from a soft, porous clay, fired to a biscuit stage, and covered with a tin or lead glaze before re-firing. The heyday of Majolica production was during the Art Nouveau period of roughly 1880-1910, after which garishness of all things began to give way to 20th Century Modernism. The cabinets behind you feature perhaps 90% of all Majolica pitchers produced by English and Portuguese manufacturers, as well as a collection of generally un-attributed French jugs. Curiously, although England excelled in the general production of Majolica, that country’s production of Majolica figural jugs was quite limited.

The six cabinets in the alcove in front of you feature pitchers produced by the most well known French Majolica manufacturers. We know of no other collection in the World that features the number and quality of this collection. The most prolific and well known among these potteries is Sarreguemines, located in the Alsace region between France and Germany. Other potteries featured include the full productions from Onnaing, Orchies, Nimy-les-Mons, Desvres, Fives-Lille, St. Clement and Malicorne. In addition to the renditions of political and other well known personages, the French excelled in the production of droll, imaginative and humorous characters, often based on well known French songs, stories or myths.

Note that the labels under each pitcher are the names in French given to the characters, either by the factory or by collectors over the years, with the English translation beneath. Descriptive information of the character is added where appropriate.