

Rotary
 Rotary Club of Seymour
Connecting with our community

Contact us at PO Box 80 Seymour 3661, online at rotaryseymour.org or call Secretary Bonnie on 0414 068 373

President: **Bill Dwyer** Secretary: **Bonnie Williams** Treasurer: **Peter Holland**

No 2. 13 July 2026

Coming Meetings

Unless otherwise noted, we meet at 6.30pm for 7pm

DATE / VENUE	20 July Royal Hotel	27 July Royal Hotel	3 August Seymour Bowls Club
GUEST SPEAKER/ EVENT	The importance of books: John Stares	TBC: Real Estate trends in Seymour	Cluster Meeting with DG Paul Miegel
CHAIRPERSON	Dave Palmer	Alison Hall	TBA
TOAST	Catriona Jarman	Ron Halicki	TBA
CASHIER / RAFFLE	Kathy Mills	Dave Freeman	TBA
GREETER	John Keeffe	Fred Sartori	TBA

If you cannot perform your duties, please arrange someone else to do so and advise
President Bill, Ann Holland, Catriona Jarman or Alison Hall.

All Members: Please respond to meeting invitations to allow for easier catering.

SAVE THESE DATES

30 July
3 August

Mitchell Shire BBQ
Cluster Meeting – Seymour Bowls Club

Trevor Harmes
Bill Dwyer

Chairman Hugh Lawrence commenced the meeting by welcoming all in attendance. Our guests for the evening included IJ Halicki and Junior Community Awards participant Harry Lorraine who was accompanied by his father Glen. Formal apologies were received from Greg and Ruth Byers, Trevor Harmes, Peter and Ann Holland, Liam Jones and Tony Lee.

TOAST TO THE ROTARY CLUB OF TAHITI – LEANNE CHAPMAN



The Rotary International toast for the evening very appropriately went to the Rotary Club of Tahiti. Located in District 9920, members meet on Monday nights and projects involving youth development, health awareness and disaster relief are the Club's focus. Events hosted by the Rotary Club of Tahiti include disease prevention campaigns e.g.: diabetes awareness, Christmas holiday programs that target disadvantaged children, the Tahiti Freeride Cup – a popular international surfing competition, a charity golf tournament and donation drives following natural disasters.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – BILL DWYER

President Bill announced to the Club that he had attended the District 9790 Changeover in Wangaratta on 12th July. He displayed the Silver Award Membership Action Plan Plaque that he had received in recognition of Seymour Rotary's successful 2025-26 membership drive.

Newly inducted District Governor Paul Miegel's speech resonated with President Bill describing leadership requirements: "You don't have to be extraordinary, you bring what you've got and you have to give it."



FROM CLUB MEMBERS



- Public Image Chair **Jane Challis** showed to members an article in the local Telegraph newspaper covering our recent Rotary Club Changeover
- **Ian Chapman** reported that his wife **Chris** is doing very well with the management of her illness
- Youth Director **Fiona McCarthy** announced that she will be attending past youth exchange student **Emilja Fihlman's** wedding in Finland next Monday. A card was circulated for members to sign.

Fiona also reintroduced **Harry Lorraine** and his father **Glen** (right) who attended the meeting as part of a requirement for Harry's participation in the Rotary Junior Community Award. Harry's sister Charlotte has also previously received this award.



RAFFLE WINNERS



Dual winner - publican Paul:
chocolates and wine



Viv Beaumont – Joker
Poker: 5 of Diamonds

LIVING IN TAHITI: CATHY GOURBAULT-LAWRENCE

Cathy was born in Paris and grew up in the south of France. A keen swimmer and former firefighter, her first visit to Tahiti was in 1990. In 1994, Cathy resigned from her position as managing director of the Chamber of Commerce and returned there to live. She holds 2 university degrees and her work involves training and coaching business managers. Cathy currently divides her time between living in Nagambie and Tahiti, for 8 months and 4 months of the year respectively.



Location:

Tahiti lies in the centre of the South Pacific Ocean. It is approximately 6,000 kms from Australia and an 8 hour flight from Melbourne. It is home to 4 Rotary Clubs.

Geography and weather:

Tahiti is the largest island in French Polynesia. It is surrounded by numerous small islands and is known for its dramatic volcanic peaks on one side and beautiful beaches on the other. It has two seasons (wet and dry) and is humid all year round. During the current winter season, the daytime temperature averages 26 degrees celsius. It is free from tsunamis, earthquakes and venomous spiders and snakes.



The people:

The 260,000 population consists of people from Tahitian, French and Chinese backgrounds, 40% of whom are under 30 years of age. Tahiti is a French territory but has a culture that is Polynesian. French is the official language, however English is widely spoken. Intercultural relationships are good and the standard of living is high.

History:

Tahiti was 'discovered' by Captain Wallis in 1761 and claimed for France in 1768. Visits from both Captain Cook and Captain Bligh later followed. (Some of the mutineers from the Bounty settled in Tahiti – Ed.)



Economy:

Tahiti is a popular destination for tourists. Black pearls account for two thirds of export earnings with fish and Tahitian vanilla forming most of the remainder. The large majority of business owners in Tahiti are Chinese.

Culture:

Tahiti has been the inspiration for novelist Pierre Loti and artist Paul Gauguin. The island has a rich culture of music and dance. Historic sites include Point Venus (where Captain Cook observed the transit of Venus in 1769.) Visitors to the island may return home with a Tahitian tattoo (tatau) as a living record of one's spiritual journey in life.



Romance:

Cathy met Seymour Rotary Club member Hugh Lawrence in Thailand in 1997, and they became a couple after she asked him for a dance. They married in 2002 with ceremonies being held in both Tahiti and Nagambie.



Their home in Punaauia in the suburbs of Papeete is an idyllic location with beautiful views from Cathy's office.



Cathy's achievements:

- Joined the JCs organisation (network for young leaders) in 1988; became the world Vice President in charge of all South Pacific islands before being recognised as the outstanding World Vice President in 2001
- Joined the Rotary Club of Papeete in 2003; served as Club President, Assistant Governor, Assistant Zone Public Image Co-ordinator; Rotary Leadership Institute Facilitator; Recipient of 4 Paul Harris Fellows; Honorary member of the Rotary Club of Seymour
- Foreign Trade Advisor to the French Government in 2011
- Raised \$180,000 towards diabetes programs via annual long distance swimming competitions
- Co-organised the 2015 Centenary of Anzac Day memorial celebrations in Papeete in collaboration with the Australian consulate
- Community volunteer for 40 years
- Co-founder and board member since 2000 of a Tahitian wine club
- Awarded the French National Order of Merit (right) in 2015 for civil achievement (on par with the Medal of the Order of Australia – OAM)



Cathy concluded her overview of life in Tahiti by stating that the past 32 years had been a fantastic journey leaving her with a lifetime of memories. Her belief is that “serving the community is not a matter of time, it is a matter of being available.” She has embraced the Tahitian way of life which she described as “a beautiful experience”; the notion of time and money in Tahiti differs from that in Australia leading one to self-reflect and to contemplate life’s priorities.

Do you remember this advertisement from 1978



‘Tahiti looks nice.’



“Simon Tahiti!”



“Roger. Wilco.”

The Rotary Club of Seymour is hosting a cluster meeting of all Clubs in our immediate area (Alexandra, Kinglake Ranges, Mansfeld, Southern Mitchell and Yea) on Monday 3rd August – see below for details. For catering purposes, it is important that members provide Secretary Bonnie Williams with an **RSVP by 26th July**.



Rotary

Rotary Club of Seymour

District Governor Cluster Dinner

Hosted by the Rotary Club of Seymour



District Governor
Paul Miegel
Rotary Club of Corowa

Join us for an evening of fellowship as District Governor Paul Miegel provides an update on happenings within the district, shares plans for the year ahead, and discusses how you can help make a difference.



Monday 3 August 2026



6:30pm for 7:00pm



Seymour Bowls Club
41 Tallarook Street, Seymour



\$35 per person

Includes dinner

Drinks available at bar prices



RSVP to Bonnie Williams by 26 July 2026
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bonz_eyez@live.com.au



All Rotarians and guests welcome