

Goodbye friend!



Jean-Claude Soulier died on Saturday in his 84th year. (Photo: Christian Durocher).

Tahiti, December 13, 2020 - Jean-Claude Soulier passed away on Saturday in his 84th year. With his departure, a page in the history of the local daily written press turns. But he leaves as a legacy an iconographic monument of Tahiti from the 1960s to the 1990s.

Pioneer of fenua photojournalism, reporter, deputy editor of La Dépêche de Tahiti for twenty-two years, Jean-Claude Soulier accumulated between 1959 and 2001, a unique historical iconography. This Ch'ti stung by the tiara left us on Saturday morning, in his 84th year following an infection with Covid-19. He will be buried tomorrow morning in Papara cemetery.

Arrived in Tahiti in 1959 as an electrician for the airline company TAI, he will never leave the territory. Photo enthusiast, between two aircraft maintenances, he immortalizes the personalities and stars of passage. An activity from which he first earned additional income by collaborating with the daily Les Nouvelles de Tahiti, founded a few years earlier. He finally joined the small team formed around Alain Mottet, Gérard Pugin, Charles Pétras. In 1964, he moved to the competition, to the Journal de Tahiti directed by Philippe Mazellier. A year later, following a disagreement with the founder, Mazellier created his own newspaper, La Dépêche de Tahiti. Jean-Claude Soulier, still a freelance writer, follows him in this adventure.

During the years 1960 to 1980, it is of all the arrivals and departures. He will accumulate star shots: Tino Rossi, Jacques Dutronc, Rika Zarai, Sacha Distel, Joe Dassin, Brigitte Bardot, Gilbert Bécaud, Louison Bobet, Adamo, Johnny Hallyday, Gérard Depardieu, Caroline de Monaco, Gérard Jugnot, Richard Antony, Dalida, Fernand Raynaud, Carlos, Zanini, Alfred Hitchcock, Marlon Brando, Charles Aznavour, Alain Barrière, John

Travolta, Éric Tabarly, etc.

A bank of images of Tahiti "belle époque"

At the same time, since 1964 he has owned a photo store in Papeete which he will run until 1979: the Tiare Photo Agency. Private evenings, sports clubs, friendships, folklore events, official visits by personalities, current affairs photos, Jean-Claude Soulier is everywhere with his Kodak box or his 24x36 Minolta. During these fifteen years, he accumulated an unprecedented image bank which today bears witness to what some consider to be Tahiti "beautiful time".

Jean-Claude Soulier finally pursued his adventure at La Dépêche de Tahiti, from 1979 to 2001. It was there that he ended his career as deputy editor-in-chief of the Fautaua newspaper. His good humor, full of humor, his great benevolence, his professionalism and his dedication will make him one of the preferred executives of the reporters and journalists of the editorial staff.

From this life of photojournalist, Jean-Claude Soulier leaves a legacy of thousands of period photographs. Those who were lucky enough to know him will remember a faithful friend. A man to whom we want to be able to say: goodbye friend!

[Written by Christian Durocher and Jean-Pierre Viatge on Sunday December 13, 2020 at 6:48 PM | Read 2697 times](#)

