

Association of Business and Professional Members, South Pacific Division

A. BARRY GANE

A. Barry Gane, Ph.D., has served the church on three continents over a period of 45 years. He has been a youth director at union and division levels, a university professor, chaplain, and pastor. Gane has earned two doctorates, both in the area of Youth Ministry and Leadership. He is married to Marilyn and they have two adult children, Daniel and Kymberley, and are blessed to have five grandchildren. He retired in 2015 as the head of the School of Ministry and Theology at Avondale College of Higher Education. Gane continues serving as an advisor to doctoral students and teaches in the areas of both Leadership and Youth Ministry.



Lyn Knight, convener of the founding meeting of the Association of Business and Professional Men, 1961.

Photo courtesy of Adventist Heritage Centre, Australia.

The Association of Business and Professional Men (ABPM) was formed following discussions that took place between laymen in Sydney, Australia, in the late 1950s. Incorporation took place in February 1961.¹ Some prominent lay leaders in Sydney were convinced that they could offer more than financial support for mission projects. They wanted to offer their talents, resources, and expertise in many areas of church life, and to work in a complimentary way to the salaried employees of the church.² They were not a political lobby group, but men who were supportive of the Church and its mission. Within a very short time of the incorporation, a President's Manual was produced that outlined the steps one should take to set up a chapter of the association.³ This included a detailed mission statement that spelled out the objectives of the group.⁴ Robert Parr, an early member of the association, described the Association of Business and Professional Men, as "an organization of enthusiastic Seventh-day Adventist professional and business laymen who ... banded together to pool their resources, knowledge, abilities, and experience for the greater service of God, their church, and their fellow men. It [was] not a social club, but a service organization."⁵

The original group, which drew up a list of possible members and sent invitations to join the fledgling organization, were Lyn Knight, a business man; Sid Smith, an architect; Brian Reynolds, a medical practitioner; Esmond Stockton, an engineer; and Harry Richardson, a builder. "Business and professional" clearly described the type of people they wished to attract into membership and ultimately led to the name Association of Business and Professional Men. Membership was open to those in positions of leadership as well as those with special expertise gained through tertiary education.⁶

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There were a number of reasons why "men" was used in the name. At the time, single gender clubs and organizations—such as the Rotary and Lions clubs—were common. But as time passed the move to include women who had business and professional qualifications increased. The membership rules were revised to be inclusive and the name was changed to the Association of Business and Professional Members. Within 20 years of its inauguration the association had chapters in all the states of Australia and in New Zealand as well as island nations in the Pacific.⁷

The ABPM undertook many projects to improve Church-owned facilities. Projects included the married students' accommodations at Avondale College,⁸ village accommodation for the elderly,⁹ new buildings on the campus of Avondale College such as the church, auditorium and dormitories. The Adventist Alpine Village developed out of the vision of several of the ABPM members. The association also sponsored and built churches throughout the Pacific Islands,¹⁰ and a child care center on Sydney's northern beaches.¹¹

To help support the ABPM's organization and projects, several businesses were opened. These included a health food shop in Cabramatta, Sydney; Avondale Nurseries; and Avondale College Foundation Investments. By 2006, one

of the ABPM initiatives—Avondale College Foundation—had given over A\$5,000,000 to Avondale College:¹²

Over time, and with changes in leadership, the association lost much of the early impetus that brought it into existence and it ceased operation in 2010.

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NOTES

1. Trevor Lloyd, “An Interview with Lyn Knight, Foundation President, Association of Business and Professional Men.” *Adventist Professional*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1989, 27-30.?

2. *Ibid.*?

3. *Ibid.*?

4. “ABPM Mission Statement,” *Adventist Professional*, vol. 9, no. 4, 1997, 33.?

5. Robert H, Parr, “A.B.P.M. Means Laymen in Action,” *Australasian Record*, June 25, 1962, 1.?

6.

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7. For example, "Flash Point," *Australasian Record*, May 12, 1980, 16.?
8. Eric Magnusson, "A Village for Married Students and Avondale College – How It All Began," *Australasian Record*, July 15, 1974, 7.?
9. J. F. Knight, "A.B.P.M. Officially Opens 'Camellia Court' New Home for Senior Citizens in Sydney," *Australasian Record*, June 7, 1965, 4-5; J. B. Bagnall, "Azalea Court Opened," *Australasian Record*, March 29, 1982, 12.?
10. "Sydney Members Donate Centre," *Australasian Record*, August 25, 1990, 11; "ABPM Erects Church near Suva Fiji," *Australasian Record*, September 15, 1990, 14; Wal Simmonds, "Who Runs This Magazine?" *Adventist Professional* vol. 3, no. 3, 1991, 31-32.?
11. "ABPM News Items," *Adventist Professional*, vol. 8, no. 3, 1996, 33.?
12. "Foundation Gives Funding to College," *Australasian Record*, January 21, 2006, 4.?

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