

Knight, Arthur Lyndon (1926–2012)

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.

Arthur Lyndon (Lyn) Knight was widely known within the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church for his business acumen and philanthropy. He was the founding member of the Association of Business and Professional Men,¹ (which became the Association of Business and Professional Members in 1990 when it admitted women for the first time);² the driving force behind the journal *Adventist Professional*; founder of the Avondale College Foundation; fundraiser for Sydney Adventist Hospital; and pioneer of the “Carols by Candle” light program in Sydney as both the coordinator of the program and conductor of the choirs and orchestras. He was widely known and respected outside the SDA Church for his role in the Rotary Club of Sydney, as its president (1970–1971) and later District Governor (1982–1983).³ During this period his wife Audrey was first Adventist president of Inner Wheel (the women’s branch of Rotary)⁴ from 1987 to 1988.⁵ Lyn was made a Paul Harris Fellow in 1983.⁶

Early Years (1926–1958)

Lyn Knight was born on March 15, 1926 in the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital, Wahroonga the second son of Pastor Arthur and Mrs Myrtle Knight.⁷ He was a very conscientious and capable student but while still in the early years of high school in 1940, he was involved in an accident that was to forever change his life.⁸ After a fall



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

Photo courtesy of Adventist Heritage Centre, Australia.

from some exercise equipment at home he broke his left arm, a compound fracture just above the wrist. The broken bones pierced the ground and the result was gas-gangrene. His arm was amputated to prevent the spread of the infection. He and the family believe his life was spared through intercessory prayer.⁹ After finishing high school he attended Sydney University and completed a BA in 1947.¹⁰

He became a teacher at the Sydney Grammar School in 1948 and taught there for ten years. It was during these years that Lyn's passion for music led him to set up a choir with more than 60 teenage members. They sang at concerts in the Sydney Town Hall and other sites throughout the city.¹¹ Lyn with his "North Shore Youth Choir and Orchestra," started the "Carols by Candlelight" program on the lawns of Sydney Adventist Hospital in 1951 – an event that has continued ever since. The Choir¹² was such a success that in 1953 they were invited to be the official choir for the major Christmas carols program in Sydney's Hyde Park. Lyn became one of the driving forces for the program for the next ten years. The choir performed at many of the major events in the city such as official ANZAC Day services.

Lyn met Audrey Gilchrist as he was completing university studies, and they married by the groom's father in the Wahroonga Church on March 24, 1948.¹³ She had most recently been working in the treasury at the Australian Union Conference Headquarters at Wahroonga.¹⁴ They partnered together in local church ministries. They took a particular interest in young adults and began to sponsor a 20/30 club and held many meetings in their home. Lyn sponsored youth Sabbath School at Wahroonga church for a number of decades.

Two children were born into their home: Marilyn and Tony. Marilyn, a librarian who served at both Andrews University and Avondale College is married to Barry Gane, and Tony who has spent most of his ministry in youth work and is married to Jacqui Weekes.

The Business Years (1958–1993)

In his final year of teaching, Lyn Knight became involved in raising funds for a new building at the Sydney Grammar School. It was a successful campaign raising money for a new science block in just eight weeks. It also opened the door to a new career for Lyn. Other schools soon heard of this remarkable achievement and asked how they could do likewise. All Schools were struggling financially after the Second World War and many had building needs or renovations that were urgent. Lyn, and his business partner Bill Howard, set up a new company to offer fund-raising consultancy services to other non-government schools that needed capital funds. After ten years, Lyn resigned his teaching position at Grammar, and went into business providing a unique type of service to other schools throughout Australia.¹⁵ This activity continued for the next 35 years.

During this period, the company conducted and directed more than 3000 capital appeals for more than 900 of the 1000 independent secondary schools in Australia and New Zealand. Its operations expanded to also include Southern Africa. His company's school fund-raising results at the end of 1991 totaled more than \$6.25 billion in donations. This fund-raising expertise spilled over to projects as diverse as the Sydney Opera House, The

Winston Churchill Foundation, The Royal Flying Doctor Service, the National Heart Foundation, and the Freedom from Hunger appeal for Australia.¹⁶

Knight set up Australia's first education consulting business to meet a growing demand, ranging from establishing new schools, to redesigning school facilities, to marketing school services and to finding new school principals and staff. In this latter area up to 3,000 staff appointments were handled annually.¹⁷

In the early 1980s his organization developed a new approach to fund-raising—offering opportunities to well-wishers to support their old schools—through Foundations. This was an original concept, totally new to Australian education. Over the next 20 years no fewer than 119 education foundations were set up.¹⁸ Avondale College had a foundation that raised many millions of dollars to support, for example, housing for married students, a new Chapel/church, and a new women's dormitory as well as a 22-seat bus.¹⁹

Knight offered considerable support to his church. He served as a member of the Greater Sydney Conference Executive Committee,²⁰ and also as a member of the Board of Management of the Sydney Adventist Hospital for eleven years. He not only did fund raising for the hospital but also chaired the building committee.²¹ He was one of the founders and Charter President of the Association of Business and Professional Members, a service organization of SDA laymen and women who were interested in community service projects. He raised the money to build the Saigon Adventist Hospital.²² He developed and was the first Chairman of the Avondale College Foundation²³ which raised many millions of dollars for the benefit of Avondale College.²⁴

Lyn Knight received many honors throughout his life. These included the Paul Harris Fellowship from Rotary Club International,²⁵ and being granted life membership of the Australian College of Educators.²⁶ In 1987, Avondale Student and Faculty Association gave Lyn and Audrey an Award of Honour for the work he did for the College. He took much pleasure from having both his son, Tony and son-in-law Barry in full time ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist church. He passed away on November 27, 2012.

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7. A. W. Knight, "As I Remember It," unpublished manuscript held in the personal collection of the author, 42-47; Chatswood, Willoughby District, Birth Certificate Registration #432, Arthur Lyndon Knight, March 15, 1926, held in the personal collection of his daughter Marilyn Gane.
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24. Laurence Gilmore, "Avondale College Church," *South Pacific Record and Advent World Survey*. March 8, 1986, 1.

25. Plaque, medallion and pin held in the personal collection of daughter, Marilyn Gane.

26. Life Membership Certificate held in the personal collection of daughter Marilyn Gane.

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