

Definition: **Hewlett** from *The Macquarie Dictionary*

1.

1913--2001, US engineer and developer of computer technology.

Summary Article: **Hewlett, William (Redington)**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

US engineer, entrepreneur-inventor, and philanthropist who co-founded the Hewlett-Packard Company (HP) with university friend, David Packard, in 1939. The garage in Palo Alto, California, in which the company started was designated a state Historical Landmark in 1989, and celebrated as the birthplace of Silicon Valley. He was actively involved in the company until 1987.

The first product launched by Hewlett-Packard was an audio oscillator, based on research Hewlett had done at Stanford (which achieved some fame when US animator Walt Disney bought it for the *Fantasia* soundtrack in 1940). The company, which began by making test and measurement equipment, later diversified into computers, producing a handheld calculator in 1972 and becoming a household name when it launched the HP LaserJet printer in 1984.

Hewlett was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The family moved to California in 1916 when his father (who died when Hewlett was 12) joined the medical faculty at Stanford University. Hewlett was educated at Lowell High School and then at Stanford, graduating with a degree in electronics. Then he studied at Massachusetts Institute of Technology for a master's degree in electrical engineering before returning to Stanford (along with Packard) in 1939 to take a further degree in engineering. In that year Hewlett and Packard, persuaded by their mentor at Stanford, Frederick Terman, launched their partnership company, Hewlett-Packard (HP), with \$538 in borrowed capital, in a garage in Palo Alto, close to Stanford.

During World War II, Hewlett served in the Army Signals Corps and later headed the electronics section of the New Development Division of the War Department Special Staff. After the war, he was a member of a team inspecting Japanese industry.

Returning to California in 1947, Hewlett continued at HP, becoming vice-president in 1957, president in 1964, and chief executive officer in 1969.

Hewlett was an ardent supporter of US president Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930s. With Packard he pioneered a then radical 'HP way of management by walkabout' and later said that his proudest achievement had been to ensure that their employees received a fair share of the company's profits (HP being one of the first companies to introduce profit-sharing and employee benefits).

Continuing to maintain the close connection with Stanford, HP was the second company to move into the Stanford Industrial Park and set up a cooperative programme allowing employees to take higher degrees whilst still on full pay.

Hewlett retired in 1987, when he was named director emeritus. He was generous with the wealth accumulated from HP's success. With his first wife, he formed the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

in 1966, which has made numerous grants to education and medicine. Hewlett also supported the founding of the Public Policy Institute of California with a grant of \$70 million in 1995.

In his early career, Hewlett was active in the electrical trades association and was a trustee of numerous educational and medical institutions. He received many honours and awards, which included honorary degrees from 14 universities. He was also elected to the National Academies of Science and Engineering and made a trustee emeritus of the Carnegie Institute. In 1985 former US president Ronald Reagan presented him with the National Science Medal.

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Chicago

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