

FEATURES

# Changes came to Hewlett-Packard in Loveland

*Editor's note: This column is the second of a two-part series. See the first column at wp.me/paTVuP-PYT.*



**Ken Jessen**

Colorado History

What many employees remember the most about Hewlett-Packard were its company picnics.

On Sept. 17, 1960 the first picnic was held at Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch west of Loveland.

Company picnics were a tradition started by Bill and Dave in Palo Alto, and the Loveland facility picnic continued uninterrupted for many years.

At the first picnic, Bill and Dave along with two vice presidents helped prepare and serve the food. They stood in the sun over a hot charcoal pit cooking steaks and serving them. They considered their employees to be their greatest asset, and these founders viewed everyone as part of their corporate family.

Steaks were purchased locally and the corn was picked fresh that morning. The recipe for the sauce applied to the steaks was said to have been sent by an encrypted message directly from corporate headquarters.

A lot of the effort that went into an HP picnic centered on the children of the employees. There were clowns to entertain them and games to play. This included a penny hunt with coins buried in a large pile of sand.

Pony rides and live music were also part of the tradition. Prizes were handed out liberally.

Hewlett-Packard purchased a new recreation area 21 miles west of Loveland with its entrance off of U.S. 34 at Loveland Heights. Called Highland Park, it was beautifully situated on a 240-acre tract in a small, wooded valley well above the noise of traffic passing through the canyon.

The first picnic was held on Aug. 10, 1963. The Gay Nineties was the theme, and a treasure map was printed for the children. Rides on the whirlybird were the biggest attraction.

After everyone was finished eating, employees were treated to a melodrama titled "Ten Nights in a Bar Room or Ten Bar Rooms in One Night." The picnic ended with a dance.

As employee count reached into the thousands, a new area was needed.

In December 1966, 1,300-acre Hermit Park was purchased. The named dated back to when a hermit supposedly lived there alone in a cabin.

The company added a great deal to the park including shelters in case of rain and a number of fully equipped cabins for employees.

Its entrance is located along U.S. 36 about two miles from Estes Park and today, is part of Larimer County open space.

The first picnic was held in the summer of 1966 with its theme Hobo Days.

The Loveland Division spawned an excellent publication call HiPoints starting in December

Packard's management decided to split the company onto two parts: an independent company, with its focus on test and measurement, and the Hewlett-Packard Co., with its focus on computation and imaging products.

More splits and spinoffs followed, and today, the Hewlett-Packard Co. has precious little resemblance to the original company.

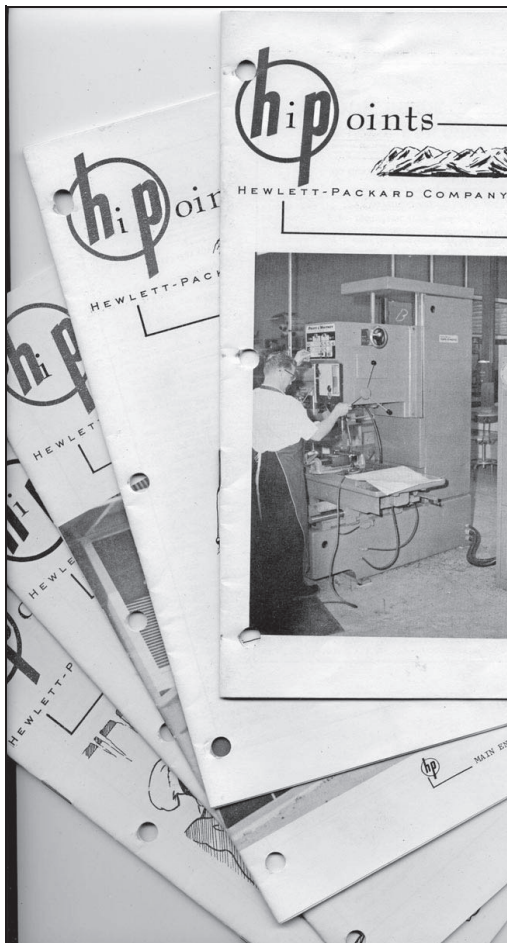
The employee population at the Loveland site dwindled over the years and many of the original buildings sat abandoned. New life, however, is being breathed into the site, now occupied by several companies.

Kenneth Jessen has lived in Loveland since 1965 and has contributed to area newspapers for more than four decades. He has written more than 2,000 illustrated articles published along with 20 books. Jessen is in his third year teaching adult education at Colorado State University (OSHER program) and has lectured in Northern Colorado.



Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard at HP Loveland picnic in 1962. How many companies have founders that cook and serve their employees steaks?

HEWLETT-PACKARD COLLECTION



KENNETH JESSEN COLLECTION

The Loveland Division started publishing HiPoints in December, 1961 featuring people, products and visitors.



Dave Packard, center, is serving food at the 1963 Loveland picnic. Other company officers worked side by side with Packard.

HEWLETT-PACKARD COLLECTION



HEWLETT-PACKARD COLLECTION

A lot of emphasis was placed on children at Hewlett-Packard picnics. Here, Jack Lieberman dresses as a clown to entertain youngsters at the 1965 picnic. Starting as a technical writer, Lieberman rose to division manager.

1961. It started as a booklet, featuring news about employees, products and visitors. It also listed new hires. Over the years it grew in size and stature and featured full length articles.

Hewlett-Packard has undergone many changes over the years.

Up until the late 1960s, its entire product line consisted of instruments designed to make fundamental electrical measurements.

The company's roots were based on the world's first practical low-cost audio oscillator, the 200A. It was designed by Bill Hewlett.

Hewlett-Packard rapidly expanded its product line through acquisitions and the development of new products by its own divisions.

The company entered the computational equipment field in the late 1960s in gradual steps with the introduction of a mainframe computer, a desktop computer and a pocket calculator.

The final development and manufacture of the desktop computer, the 9100A, was done at the Loveland site.

Printers and plotters along with a host of other instruments were added. In March 1999, Hewlett-



HEWLETT-PACKARD COLLECTION

Popular among the youngsters at Hewlett-Packard picnics was the penny hunt in a sand box.