

A home for innovation

The HP Garage —
the Birthplace of Silicon Valley

367 Addison Avenue, Palo Alto, California



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Tucked away on a quiet, tree-lined residential street near Stanford University, the HP Garage stands today as the enduring symbol of innovation and the entrepreneurial spirit. It was in this humble 12x18-foot building that college friends Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard first pursued the dream of a company of their own. Guided by an unwavering desire to develop innovative and useful products, the two men went on to blaze a trail at the forefront of the electronics revolution.

The history of the HP Garage

The garage stands behind a two-story Shingle Style home built for Dr. John C. Spencer about 1905. The exact construction date of the garage is unknown, but while there is no evidence of its presence on insurance maps dated 1908, by 1924 it is clearly denoted on updated documents as a private garage.

In 1938, Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard decided to “make a run for it” in business. Dave left his job at General Electric in Schenectady, New York, and returned to Palo Alto while Bill scouted rentals.

He found one perfect for their needs on Addison Avenue. Chosen specifically because of a garage he and Dave could use as their workshop, the property also offered a three-room, ground-floor flat for Dave and his new wife Lucile and an 8x18-foot shed for Bill. They shared the \$45 per month rent.

The garage served as research lab, development workshop, and manufacturing facility for early products, including the Model 200A audio oscillator. The company, founded in 1939, was named with a coin toss. The garage was soon outgrown, and in 1940 HP moved into larger quarters nearby on Page Mill Road.

The garage was dedicated as the Birthplace of Silicon Valley in 1989, and HP acquired the property in 2000. HP is proud to have worked closely with the City of Palo Alto to return the house, garage, and shed to conditions much as they were in 1939. The heritage project was completed in 2005. In 2007, the property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

While the HP Garage is not open for public tours, individual visitors and small groups may view and photograph the property and landmark from the sidewalk. Addison Avenue remains a quiet residential neighborhood, so if you decide to visit, please respect the privacy of our neighbors.

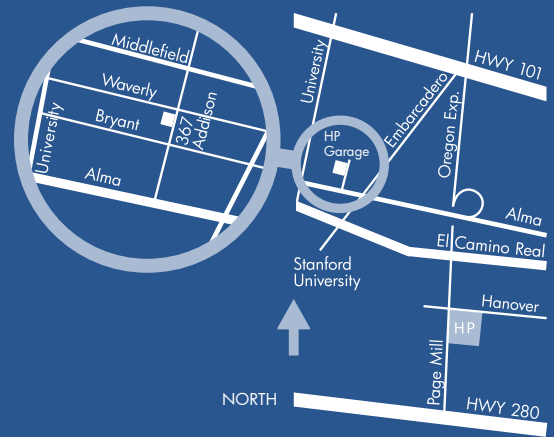


Cover: Dave (left) and Bill in the garage workshop, 1938.

The HP garage in 1939 (left) and restored in 2005 (above).

Back cover: Dave (left) and Bill at the 1989 dedication of the garage as California Landmark No. 976, the Birthplace of Silicon Valley.

HP Garage and Corporate Headquarters



Garage timeline

c.1905

House at 367 (then numbered 369) Addison Ave. is built for Dr. John Spencer, a physician and early mayor of Palo Alto.

1919–1920

The house is divided into two apartments numbered 367 and 369.

1924

The 12x18-foot garage first appears on Sanborn Insurance maps of Palo Alto.

1934

Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard graduate from Stanford University.

1935

Dave moves to Schenectady, New York, to work for General Electric. Bill remains at Stanford to prepare for graduate work at MIT.

1936

Bill completes grad work at MIT and returns to Palo Alto.

1937

Dave visits Bill in Palo Alto; they have their first official business meeting.

1938

Dave takes a leave of absence from GE and moves back to Palo Alto with his new wife, Lucile. The Addison Avenue rental is specifically chosen because it has a garage.

Dave and Lucile move into the three-room apartment on the first floor (#367) and Bill moves into the shed in the back. The landlady, Mrs. Ione Spencer, lives in the upstairs flat at #369. Bill and Dave begin

part-time work in the garage with \$538 in working capital, including the value of Dave's used Craftsman drill press. They develop numerous products, including HP's first product, the Model 200A audio oscillator.



Dave (left) and Bill in the garage workshop.

1939

January 1, Bill and Dave formalize their partnership. They decide the company's name with a coin toss. After Bill and Flora's marriage, the small shed becomes the HP business office.

1940

Hewlett-Packard Company moves to a larger rented building on Page Mill Road. Dave and Lucile move to the Palo Alto neighborhood of Barron Park.

1985

The garage is designated a City of Palo Alto landmark.

1987

The garage becomes California Historical Landmark No. 976.

1989

Dedication ceremonies are held for the "Birthplace of Silicon Valley."



Bill (left) and Dave at the garage dedication.

2000

HP acquires the Addison Avenue property.

2005

HP restores the garage, house, and shed at 367 Addison Ave.

2007

The property is listed on the National Register of Historic places.



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