



John Borgsteadt

35-Year HP Veteran Reminisces

"It always feels good to reminisce about the early days of the company," says John Borgsteadt, who received a 35-year HP service award. "The Awards Luncheon gave us a chance to recall those times when HP consisted of two buildings and 150 employees," he adds. "Some people may feel that they missed something because they weren't around back in 'the good old days,' but I think that the flavor and spirit of the company carries on even today. We're still creating 'the good old days!'"

"We didn't need management formulas back then. We just wanted to do a good job and make a better product, and Bill and Dave were right there with us with their shirt sleeves rolled up.

"I'm sure you've heard this many times, but Bill and Dave really did create an environment where you felt good about what you were doing, and that you belonged to a special work family. They set the example and really lived their philosophy.

"We always thought of Bill and Dave as a unit. I'm sure they had different views on some things, but we weren't aware of them. If you had a question, you wouldn't say, 'I'm going to see what Bill thinks,' or 'I'm going to see what Dave thinks.' It was always, 'I'm going to see what Bill and Dave think!'"

"In those days, 'management by wandering around' was a way of life," notes John. "Plant Manager Ed Porter knew it to be THE way to solve current problems and avoid future production difficulties. He was always ready to help out, one way

or another, and there was no communication gap!"

When John left engineering school in Washington, D.C., Hewlett-Packard was described to him as "a little company getting started near San Francisco that he might find interesting." He did find it interesting enough to accept a position in the Production Test department in May of 1948. Later, he began writing instruction manuals for HP products (only about 50 at the time), specializing in military manuals for government agencies. These manuals set the stage for future HP manuals.

He then joined the Service department engaging in the development of HP's first automated order processing system, "a universal shipping container that would spend its life in the air, and a variety of other projects," notes John. He later joined Corporate Materials Engineering, again engaging in a variety of projects. He is now in Corporate Manufacturing Standards where he assists in the development of new Company Standards.

Looking back over his years at HP, he stresses the importance of teamwork. "There are few solos at HP," says John; "it's all teamwork and that is one of the most satisfying things of all. Everyone I've worked with to the present day has been very willing to share information and experience, and assist in idea development. I wish very much to thank them all, and say how important that kind of cooperation was to project development and to the HP Way. Keep it up!"

After 35 years at HP, John has a summary message: "Make the most of opportunities. They come and go, sometimes quickly and with little definition. But, if you are ready, there's no end to the adventure you can have!" □



Each service award recipient received a photocopy of the front page of the *Palo Alto Times* for the first day they worked at HP. Lee Seligson looks over the March 17, 1959 edition.

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