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For Immediate Release

GEORGE TATE,

MICROSOFTWARE INDUSTRY PIONEER, DIES

George Tate, one of the pioneers of the microcomputer software industry, died Friday (August 10) apparently of a heart attack. At his death, Tate was chairman and co-founder of Culver City-based software publisher Ashton-Tate and co-founder and a principal of software distributor Softeam, Inc. and Softwaire Centres International, a franchisor of software-only retail stores. He was 40.

"Everyone who knew and worked with George is shocked and deeply saddened," said David Cole, Ashton-Tate president and chief executive officer. "He was a special friend and source of inspiration to people at Ashton-Tate and throughout the industry."

Born in Tennessee and reared in South Carolina, Tate was a born tinkerer with an interest in electronics. He moved to California in the mid-70s. His work and interest in microcomputers began in 1975 when few people realized the potential of the new technology. Tate worked with a number of computer and electronics companies and as an independent computer consultant.

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In 1980, Tate went into business with friend Hal Lashlee. With capitalization from its two founders of \$7,500, the new company focused on bringing scarce packaged software to the rapidly growing community of users. Tate and Lashlee's vision resulted in Softeam, Inc., one of the first distribution companies to serve as a link between software publishers and retailers.

Today, Softeam is one of the largest microcomputer software distributors in the country. Tate and Lashlee also pioneered the concept of the software-only outlet, with the opening of the first Softwaire Centre store in West Los Angeles in early 1982.

Tate's most prominent achievement, however, was Ashton-Tate, initially a division of the original company. The Company's instant success was triggered by a software program called dBASE II, which has shipped more than 280,000 units since its introduction in January 1981. Early in Ashton-Tate's history, Tate made a decision with Lashlee to build the professional management team that has helped make Ashton-Tate an industry leader.

In recent months, Tate had focused the majority of his efforts on the management of Softwaire Centres International and was preparing to direct his full-time attention to the affairs of this nationwide franchisor.

Tate had no known history of heart problems. He had been found unconscious in his office at Ashton-Tate at 10:40 a.m. Friday and was immediately taken to Brotman Memorial Medical Center in Culver City, where attempts to revive him failed. He was officially pronounced dead at 11:36 a.m. News of his death was held pending notification of his family.

Memorial services are scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, August 15, at the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, Calif. Tate is survived by his fiancée, Jill Weissman; their daughter, Michelle Nicole Tate; his parents, George and Irene Tate; four sisters and a brother.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be sent to the charity of one's choice.

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