Paul Allen, co-founder of Microsoft, dies aged 65

Notes & Cues:

Article:

Paul Allen, who co-founded Microsoft with his childhood friend Bill Gates, has died. He was 65.

Earlier this month Allen said the cancer he was treated for in 2009, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, had returned.

Allen and his high school friend Gates founded Microsoft in 1975. He served as the company's executive vice-president of research and new product development until 1983, when he left for health reasons. He stayed as a major shareholder and member of the board.

"I am heartbroken by the passing of one of my oldest and dearest friends, Paul Allen, " said Bill Gates in a statement on Monday. Despite being less well-known than Bill Gates, Allen played a critical role in developing the personal computer at a time when the typical computer was the size of a room and far too expensive for most people or businesses to own.

It was Allen who came up with the name Microsoft and, according to his memoir Idea Man, it was he who came up with the idea to write a software program for the world's first micro-computer.

Microsoft's big break came in 1980, when IBM decided to move into personal computers. IBM asked Microsoft to provide the operating system.

The decision thrust Microsoft onto the throne of technology and the two Seattle natives became billionaires. Both later dedicated themselves to philanthropy.

Over the course of several decades, Allen gave more than $2bn to a wide range of interests, including ocean health, homelessness and advancing scientific research.

Summary: