

A History of the Combinatorial Potlatches

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This is a brief history of the Combinatorial Potlatches and their speakers. It was maintained by Brian Alspach (BA) through November 2001, then by Robert Beezer (RAB). Send additions, clarifications and corrections to beezer@ups.edu. Copyright 2002, Licensed with a Creative Commons BY-SA License.

1. Combinatorial Potlatch One, 27 February 1982, University of Washington
Branko Grünbaum *Edge-transitive planar graphs*
C. C. Lindner *How to embed a partial Steiner triple system*
2. Combinatorial Potlatch Two, 27 November 1982, Simon Fraser University
Bill Kantor *Algorithms for graph isomorphism and other group theoretic problems*
Peter Kleinschmidt *Properties of simplicial complexes and Hilbert functions*
3. Combinatorial Potlatch Three
BA: I have no record, but I believe this was our first visit to Western Washington University.
4. Combinatorial Potlatch Four, 19 November 1983, University of Washington
Geoffrey Shephard *The theory of fabrics*
Richard Weiss *Some aspects of graph theory in the classification of finite simple groups*
5. Combinatorial Potlatch Five, 19 May 1984, Simon Fraser University
Richard Weiss *Some aspects of graph theory in the classification of finite simple groups*
Egan Schulte *A combinatorial theory of regular polytopes*

BA: At this point we have lost track of the numerical sequence, but perhaps we can reconstruct the other meetings.

6. 1 December 1984, Western Washington University
Peter Cameron
Random sum-free sets and cyclic automorphisms
Tudor Zamfirescu
Most stars are thin, most thick stars are not smooth
7. 14 December 1985, University of Washington
Richard Nowakowski
Pursuit and search games on graphs
Brian Alspach
Orthogonal factorizations of graphs

8. 5 April 1986, Western Washington University
Moshe Rosenfeld
Data allocation problem: Or how to divide a square into rectangles
Dave Kirkpatrick
Algorithms for finding maximal vectors
9. 13 December 1986, University of British Columbia
Bojan Mohar
Embeddings of infinite graphs
Peter Gritzman
Finite packing and covering
10. 9 May 1987, Pacific Lutheran University
Stan Wagon
Fourteen different (?) proofs of a result about tiling a rectangle
Don Chakerian
How to fit an elephant into a small cube
11. 28 November 1987, Simon Fraser University
J.-C. Bermond
DeBruijn-Kautz networks
H. S. Wilf
The exponential formula: Combinatorics' best kept secret
12. 9 December 1989, University of Washington
Joan P. Hutchinson
When does a graph contain a spanning tree with no vertex of degree 2? (And why would you want to know this?)
Charles J. Colburn
Intersections and supports of designs
13. 12 January 1991, Simon Fraser University
C.C. Chen, National University of Singapore
The edge-toughness of a graph and of its complement
Peter Horak, Bratislava
Transversals and matroids
14. 25 January 1992, University of Puget Sound
Jason Rush, University of Washington
Very dense packings of spheres and other shapes in Euclidean n -space
Jarek Nešetřil
Dimension and boolean dimension
15. 11 February 1995, Simon Fraser University
Mike Fellows
Coping with intractability: The parametric point of view
Anna Karlin
Randomized and multipointer paging with locality of reference

16. 11 May 1996, Pacific Lutheran University
 Dick Karp
Error-Resilient molecular computation
 Gene Luks, University of Oregon
Algorithmic applications of the simple groups classifications

17. 24 May 1997, Simon Fraser University (Harbour Centre Campus)
 Gary MacGillivray, University of Victoria
The achromatic number of graphs
 Kathie Cameron
Disjoint monotone paths in simple regions: Existence, uniqueness, min-max relations, algorithms and applications
 Peter Hamburger
A graph-theoretic approach to problems in elementary and combinatorial geometry

18. 16 February 2002, University of Puget Sound,
 Brian Alspach, University of Regina and Simon Fraser University
Group actions and hamilton decompositions of complete graphs
 Brett Stevens, Carleton University (Ottawa)
On universal cycles of k -sets of an n -set
 Jonathan Jedwab, Simon Fraser University
Combinatorial design theory and the IEEE 802.12 transmission code

19. 9 November 2002, University of Victoria, Main Campus
 Andrzej Proskurowski, University of Oregon
Width parameters of graphs and discrete optimization problems
 Branko Grunbaum, University of Washington
Polyhedra: Combinatorial and geometric
 Jozef Siran, Slovak University of Technology
Links between graph theory, group theory, geometry, Riemann surfaces, and Galois theory

20. 8 November 2003, University of Victoria, Downtown Campus
 Steph van Wilgenburg, University of British Columbia (Vancouver)
Enumerative properties of Ferrers graphs
 Peter Horak, University of Washington (Tacoma)
Graph theory as an integral part of mathematics
 Rick Brewster, University College of the Cariboo (Kamloops)
Categorical aspects of graph homomorphisms
 Zdenek Ryjacek, University of Western Bohemia (Czech Republic)
Closure concepts, contractible subgraphs and hamiltonian properties of line graphs

21. 20 November 2004, Simon Fraser University, Harbour Centre Campus
 John Gimbel, University of Alaska (Fairbanks)
The traveling sales rep gets into abelian groups
 Xuding Zhu, National Sun Yat-sen University (Taiwan)
The game chromatic number of a graph
 Jozsef Solymosi, University of British Columbia (Vancouver)
Bounds on incidences and problems from additive number theory

22. 19 November 2005, Seattle University
 Bojan Mohar, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia) and Simon Fraser University
Small separations in symmetric graphs
 Jenny Quinn, Occidental College and University of Puget Sound
Determinants via determined ants
 John Caughman, Portland State University
How distance-regular graphs got all tangled up with the theory of knots

23. 11 November 2006, Portland State University
 Richard A. Brualdi, University of Wisconsin at Madison
The Bruhat Order for $(0,1)$ -Matrices
 Gary Gordon, Lafayette College
Graph Polynomials For You; Graph Polynomials For Me
 Matt De Vos, Simon Fraser University
Sumsets and Subsequence Sums

24. 29 September 2007, University of Victoria
 Manley Perkel, University of Puget Sound
Antibandwidth and Cyclic Antibandwidth of Kneser Graphs
 John Moon, University of Alberta
On the Number of Proper Nodes in Rooted Trees
 Anthony Quas, University of Victoria
Distances in Positive Density Sets

25. 22 November 2008, University of Puget Sound
 Eric Fusy, University of British Columbia
Bijective Links on Planar Maps via Orientations
 Chuck Dunn, Linfield College
Complete Multipartite Graphs and the Relaxed Coloring Game
 Ioana Dumitriu, University of Washington
Path Counting and the Moment Method for Random Matrices OR Fun with Walter and Theo

26. 21 November 2009, Simon Fraser University
 Glencora Borradaile, Oregon State University
Graph constrained knapsack problems
 Louis Deaett, University of Victoria
New dimensions to graph coloring
 Omer Angel, University of British Columbia
Locally transitive graphs

BA: You will note that Richard Weiss is listed as giving the same talk at two consecutive potlatches. I vaguely recall that Richard had to cancel his appearance for the first of the two listed so that I think the later listing is correct. I undoubtedly have an early announcement in my files. It is certainly the case that he talked only once.