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>.

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. 25 January 1992, University of Puget Sound
    Jason Rush *Very dense packings of spheres and other shapes in Euclidean n-space*
    Jarek Nešetril *Dimension and boolean dimension*

14. 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*

15. 11 May 1996, Pacific Lutheran University
    Dick Karp *Error-Resilient Molecular Computation*
    Gene Luks *Algorithmic Applications of the Simple Groups Classifications*

16. 24 May 1997, Simon Fraser University (Harbour Centre)
    Gary MacGillivray *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*

17. 16 February 2002, University of Puget Sound,
    Brian Alspach, *Group Actions and Hamilton Decompositions of Complete Graphs*
    Brett Stevens, *On Universal Cycles of k-sets of an n-set*
    Jonathan Jedwab, *Combinatorial Design Theory and the IEEE 802.12 Transmission Code*

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.