

THE FIBONACCI CONFERENCE IN PULLMAN

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Sponsored and supported by the Office of the President, of the Provost, of the Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, the Office of the Dean of the College of Science, and the Department of Pure and Applied Mathematics, the Sixth International Research Conference on Fibonacci Numbers and Their Applications convened at Washington State University from July 18-22, 1994.

We had our UPS and DOWNS. But they were due solely to the contours of the beautiful campus of Washington State University as we walked between the buildings.

How richly international we were! We had the pleasure of hearing 55 papers, 24 of them presented by mathematicians from America; Australia, Italy, and Japan tied by each having five representatives, closely followed by Germany's four. As usual, two New Zealanders enriched our sessions. There was one speaker from each of the other countries, one of them even coming from Brunei, almost all of them traveling long distances to serve the magnet of Fibonacci-related mathematics. Seven speakers were female.

The papers themselves were as remarkably diverse as the nationalities of the group, attesting to the richness of our discipline and the creative imagination of mathematicians. Those who had the misfortune of being unable to attend the Conference will concur in this estimate by studying *The Proceedings*. We did work hard. On our full-day sessions we heard 13 papers, and—on one of them—even 14. On the last day there were nine. Even with a shortened program on the day of the excursion we were yet enchanted by six papers.

The planned trip was wedged into our schedule in the middle of our sessions to provide an "intermission" in our work. Not only did it deepen the "up-and-down-skills" of the Conference participants, it also gave them beautiful vistas of the three waterfalls at the Elk River. The resulting ferocious appetites were befittingly satisfied by a romantic dinner. It was such by virtue of being in the midst of tall, densely-needed trees with the sun saying farewell for the day.

In our sessions, the atmosphere was scholarly and excitedly tense. The common magnetism of our Fibonacci specialty forged—as always—an international union. Mindstretching, indeed, was the Conference, but it was even more than that. "Heart-warming" would be my description, as friendships were deepened, and new ones developed. Indeed, many of the papers resulted from mathematicians infecting each other with ideas and collaborating as a result. To create such an atmosphere cannot be attributed to random constellations. It was indeed promoted by those outstanding and delightful Committee members, under the remarkable leadership of Calvin T. Long and William A. Webb, co-chairmen of the Local Committee, and A. F. Horadam (Australia) and A. M. Philippou (Cyprus), co-chairmen of the International Committee. We cannot help but think, too, of Verner E. Hoggatt, Jr., the founder of The Fibonacci Association and of *The Fibonacci Quarterly*, and to realize that it was Andreas N. Philippou, at the time Rector at Patras University, Greece, who gave birth to the idea of an international Fibonacci-related research conference. And we all deeply appreciate our highly esteemed and affectionately treasured editor, the mind and soul of our Conferences, Gerald E. Bergum.

However, the arts were represented, too, and to paraphrase E. T. Bell's words: It all goes to show that mathematicians are also human beings, sometimes DELIGHTFULLY more so! We were charmed by the artistic renderings of finite parts of hyperbolic tessellations (Heike Harborth), heard Fibonacci music (Peter G. Anderson), and, yes, we co-felt deeply with George M. Philipps when he gave us his own version of words to music by Leonard Bernstein:

North West Story

Everything's nice here in Pullman,
We can keep cool in the pool, man.
Even more cool is the math here—
Old Fibonacci makes us cheer!

Thanks to Bill Webb and dear Cal Long
To whom we dedicate this song
And to our friend Jerry Bergum
All of whom make us so welcome!

It was hard to say good-bye at our final get-together, the beautiful banquet at the Compton Union Building, but now it is

"Auf Wiedersehen"

in Graz, Austria (!) in 1996.