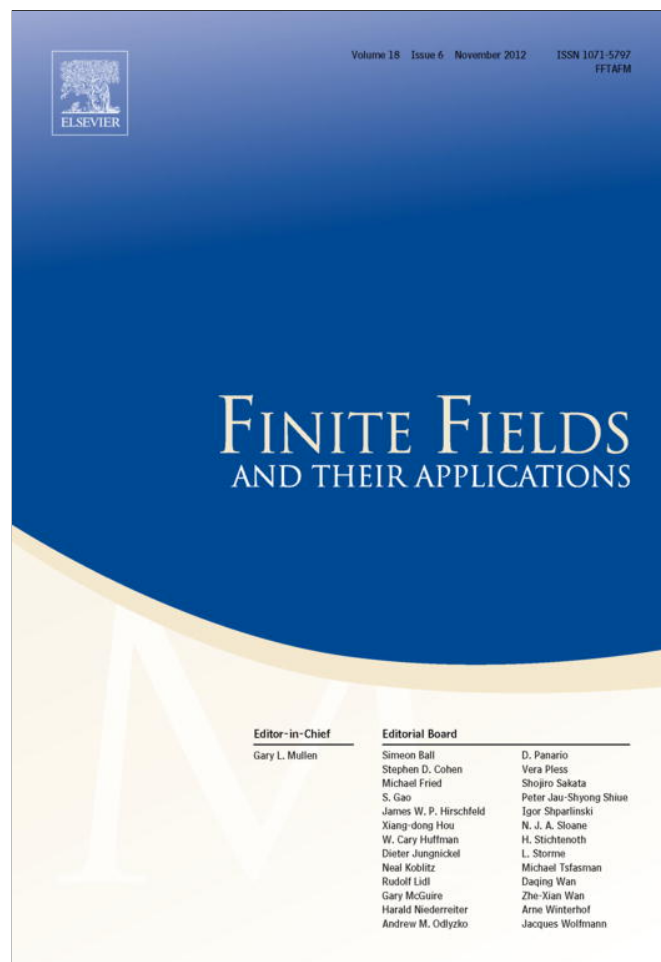


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## Finite Fields and Their Applications

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## What is your “birthday elliptic curve”?

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### ABSTRACT

In this article, Ramanujan–Weber class invariants and its analogue are used to derive *birthday elliptic curves*.

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## 1. Introduction

In 2009 at *Max Planck Institut für Mathematik (Bonn)*, P. Stevenhagen asked the following question:

“Given any  $N$ , can one find a variety and a prime  $p$  such that the number of points over the finite field  $\mathbb{F}_p$  is  $N$ ?”

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In the case when the variety is of genus 1, we are looking for elliptic curves and a prime number  $p$  for which the number of points on the elliptic curves over the finite field  $\mathbf{F}_p$  is  $N$ . Stevnhagen highlighted a method which allowed him to produce an elliptic curve rapidly if  $N$  (more than 60 digits) is given. For more details, see his work with R. Bröker [4].

As an “application” of this work, Stevnhagen mentioned that when  $N$  is a birthdate, written as an eight-digit number in the form DDMMYYYY, one can construct an elliptic curve and a prime  $p$  such that the number of points of the curve over  $\mathbf{F}_p$  is exactly  $N$ . For example, S. Ramanujan’s birthdate is 22 December 1887 and the curve

$$y^2 = x^3 + 5887973x + 11302155$$

has exactly 22 121 887 solutions over  $\mathbf{F}_{22130519}$ . We shall call an elliptic curve attached to a birthdate a “*birthday elliptic curve*”.

Stevnhagen’s constructions of such curves require the computations of Hilbert polynomials satisfied by certain special values of the  $j$ -invariant. In this article, we illustrate how “*birthday elliptic curves*” can be constructed with the aid of computer algebra and the Ramanujan–Weber class invariants and their analogues. We *emphasize* here that our method is unlikely to be as powerful as that of Bröker and Stevnhagen. However, the main purpose of this article is to connect Ramanujan’s work to the constructions of “*birthday elliptic curves*” by computing the values of the  $j$ -invariant (instead of its minimal polynomials) explicitly using various class invariants.

## 2. Class invariants

Suppose  $n > 4$  is a squarefree integer. Let  $K_n$  be the imaginary quadratic field  $\mathbf{Q}(\sqrt{-n})$  and  $C_n$  be the corresponding ideal class group. It is known, via class field theory, that there exists a maximal unramified abelian extension of  $K_n$ , say  $H_n$ , such that the Galois group  $\text{Gal}(H_n|K_n)$  is isomorphic to  $C_n$ . The field  $H_n$  is called the *Hilbert class field* of  $K_n$ .

Let

$$j(\tau) = 1728 \frac{g_2^3(\tau)}{\Delta(\tau)}, \quad \text{Im } \tau > 0,$$

where

$$g_2(\tau) = 1 + 240 \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{k^3 e^{2\pi i \tau k}}{1 - e^{2\pi i \tau k}}$$

and

$$\Delta = e^{2\pi i \tau} \prod_{k=1}^{\infty} (1 - e^{2\pi i \tau k})^{24}.$$

It is known that the Hilbert class field  $H_n$  of  $K_n$  can be generated by special values of the  $j$ -invariant over  $K_n$  [7, Theorem 11.1].

The use of special values of the  $j$ -invariant to generate  $H_n$  is far from satisfactory as their absolute values are often very large. Computing the minimal polynomials satisfied by these values also involved large integers. As such, other class invariants are more desirable. For more details about the disadvantage of using  $j$ -invariants, see the paper by Gee and Stevnhagen [8] and the references there.

We collect here a list of class invariants  $g_n, G_n, t_n$  and  $\lambda_n$  used to replace  $j$ -invariants as functions that generate the Hilbert class fields.

(a) Let  $n \equiv 2 \pmod{4}$  and

$$g_n = 2^{-1/4} e^{\pi \sqrt{n}/24} \prod_{k=1}^{\infty} (1 - e^{-\pi \sqrt{n}(2k-1)}).$$

Then

$$H_n = \begin{cases} K_n(g_n^{12}) & \text{if } 3|n, \\ K_n(g_n^4) & \text{if } 3 \nmid n. \end{cases}$$

(b) Let  $n \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$  and

$$G_n = 2^{-1/4} e^{\pi \sqrt{n}/24} \prod_{k=1}^{\infty} (1 + e^{-\pi \sqrt{n}(2k-1)}).$$

Then

$$H_n = \begin{cases} K_n(G_n^{12}) & \text{if } 3|n, \\ K_n(G_n^4) & \text{if } 3 \nmid n. \end{cases}$$

(c) Let  $n \equiv 7 \pmod{8}$ . Then

$$H_n = \begin{cases} K_n(2^{-3} G_n^{12}) & \text{if } 3|n, \\ K_n(2^{-1} G_n^4) & \text{if } 3 \nmid n. \end{cases}$$

(d) Let  $n \equiv 3 \pmod{24}$  and

$$\lambda_n = \frac{e^{\pi \sqrt{n}/3/2}}{3\sqrt{3}} \prod_{k=1}^{\infty} \left( \frac{1 - (-1)^k e^{-\pi \sqrt{n}/3k}}{1 - (-1)^k e^{-\pi \sqrt{3}nk}} \right)^6.$$

Then

$$H_n = K_n(\lambda_n^2/3).$$

(e) Let  $n \equiv 11 \pmod{24}$  and

$$t_n = \sqrt{3} e^{-\pi \sqrt{n}/18} \prod_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{(1 - (-1)^k e^{-\pi \sqrt{n}k/3})(1 - (-1)^k e^{-3\pi \sqrt{n}k})}{(1 - (-1)^k e^{-\pi \sqrt{n}k})^2}.$$

Then

$$H_n = K_n(t_n).$$

(f) Let  $n \equiv 19 \pmod{24}$ . In this case, we compute  $\sqrt{27}/t_n^{12}$  and derive  $H_n$  as

$$H_n = K_n\left(t_n^6 - 6 - \frac{27}{t_n^6}\right).$$

For more details about  $G_n, \lambda_n$  and  $t_n$ , we refer the readers to [5,6,1,9].

Readers might wonder why we write  $H_n = K_n(2^{-1}G_n^4)$  instead of  $H_n = K_n(G_n)$  when  $n \equiv 7 \pmod{24}$  and  $3 \nmid n$  even though both fields are the same. The reason being that  $2^{-1}G_n^4$  is a unit in this case while  $G_n$  is not. Evaluating units is easier than evaluating algebraic integers. We use extensively the fact that if  $\sigma \in \text{Gal}(H_n|K_n)$  then  $\sigma(u)$  is a unit if and only if  $u$  is a unit. For more details of such computations, see [5].

The use of units such as  $2^{-1}G_n^4$  (when  $n \equiv 7 \pmod{8}$  and  $3 \nmid n$ ) and  $t_n$  (when  $n \equiv 11 \pmod{24}$ ) allow us to compute explicitly the values of these class invariants when  $C_n$  is of the form

$$C_n \cong (\mathbf{Z}/2\mathbf{Z})^r \oplus \mathbf{Z}/s\mathbf{Z}, \tag{2.1}$$

where  $s = 3, 4, 8$ . The restriction on the values of  $s$  is due to the fact that we can solve polynomial equation with degree of the polynomial less than 5.

With the explicit values of the various class invariants, we could evaluate special values of  $j$ -invariants that generate  $H_n$  (see [7, p. 264], [6,1]). We have

$$j(\sqrt{-n}) = \left( \frac{2^4}{g_n^{16}} + 2^2 g_n^8 \right)^3,$$

$$j\left(\frac{1 + \sqrt{-n}}{2}\right) = \left( \frac{2^4}{G_n^{16}} - 2^2 G_n^8 \right)^3,$$

$$j(\sqrt{-n/3}) = -27 \frac{(\lambda_{n/3}^2 - 1)(9\lambda_{n/3}^2 - 1)^3}{\lambda_{n/3}^2}$$

and

$$j\left(\frac{1 + \sqrt{-n}}{2}\right) = \left( t_n^6 - 6 - \frac{27}{t_n^6} \right)^3.$$

These relations are derived from the facts that  $g_n^{12}$  and  $G_n^{12}$  are special values of a modular function of level 2,  $\lambda_n^{12}$  is a special value of a modular function of level 3 and  $t_n^{12}$  is a modular function of level 9.

We next show that the number of integers satisfying (2.1) is finite. We need the following theorem:

**Theorem 2.1.** *Let  $h(d)$  denote the class number of the imaginary quadratic field with discriminant  $d$  and let  $g(d)$  denote the order of the group of genera. Then*

$$\lim_{d \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{g(d)}{h(d)} = 0.$$

For a proof of Theorem 2.1, see [10, p. 458, Proposition 8.8].

**Corollary 2.2.** *The class group cannot be isomorphic to  $\mathbf{Z}/2\mathbf{Z}^r \times H$ , where  $H$  is a fixed finite group, for infinitely many discriminants.*

**Proof.** Indeed in this case  $g(d)/h(d)$  is constant and cannot tend to zero.  $\square$

We have done an extensive computer search using magma [3] for discriminants of value  $\leq 7 \times 10^5$  and we list them in Tables 1, 2 and 3 for  $s = 3, 4$  and 8 respectively.

**Table 1**  
Discriminants of the form (2.1) with  $s = 3$ .

26	29	38	53	61	87	106	109	110	118	129	157	170
174	182	186	201	202	214	222	231	237	246	247	249	255
262	277	286	298	309	318	339	358	366	370	393	397	411
417	430	451	453	473	493	515	517	533	537	546	565	597
606	610	618	665	669	670	682	685	705	707	714	730	741
753	762	771	813	814	817	826	835	843	861	885	913	930
942	949	966	969	970	973	993	1030	1038	1059	1090	1099	1147
1162	1173	1177	1203	1218	1219	1222	1230	1235	1254	1258	1267	1281
1285	1309	1315	1330	1347	1363	1419	1482	1491	1515	1518	1533	1545
1547	1554	1558	1563	1603	1722	1729	1830	1833	1843	1905	1915	1955
1963	1978	2037	2065	2091	2185	2190	2193	2227	2235	2262	2283	2346
2355	2370	2373	2387	2418	2443	2485	2515	2530	2553	2555	2562	2563
2590	2595	2613	2622	2635	2685	2697	2787	2795	2805	2905	2923	2937
2955	2982	3094	3102	3115	3157	3190	3235	3270	3417	3427	3445	3451
3523	3553	3565	3619	3633	3723	3738	3745	3763	3835	3885	3910	3913
3955	3990	4035	4147	4155	4218	4290	4389	4485	4510	4522	4585	4587
4755	4785	4795	4947	5035	5278	5307	5313	5395	5523	5565	5595	5610
5763	5797	5811	5835	6045	6090	6097	6105	6235	6510	6555	6603	6630
6643	6699	6715	6765	6955	6963	6987	7107	7161	7293	7410	7590	7665
7683	7905	8155	8211	8265	8323	8395	8745	8778	8787	8827	9030	9139
9177	9282	9570	9843	9870	9933	10353	10465	10707	10795	10857	10915	11155
11235	11305	11685	11803	12243	12597	13035	13090	13395	14235	14443	14595	14835
15283	15555	15873	16107	17043	18795	18915	19803	20355	20955	20995	21945	23115
24115	24123	24915	24955	25347	25707	25755	25795	26187	26565	27115	27435	34827
36465	37555	42315	42427	47355	51051	64155	70035	86955	94395			







### 3. Finding birthday elliptic curves

It is known that [2, Chapter 8] if

$$4p = x^2 + ny^2,$$

then the number of solutions  $N_p$  of  $\mathcal{E}_n$  over  $\mathbf{F}_p$  is given by

$$p + 1 + \delta$$

where  $\delta = \pm x$ . In order to construct a birthday curve for a given birthdate  $b$ , we set  $N_p = b$ . Suppose that

$$b = p + 1 - x$$

with  $4p = x^2 + ny^2$ . Then we must have

$$-ny^2 = (p - 1)^2 + b^2 - 2(p + 1)b. \tag{3.1}$$

We search for primes  $p \in (b + 1 - 2\sqrt{b}, b + 1 + 2\sqrt{b})$  such that the expression

$$(p - 1)^2 + b^2 - 2(p + 1)b$$

factors into  $-ny^2$  with  $y$  as large as possible so that we have an integer  $n$  such that the class group associated with  $K_n$  is as in (2.1). The key point here is that the suitable values of  $n$  are somehow rare but we have many choices of pairs  $(p, n)$  that solve (3.1).

We then compute a special value of  $j$ -invariant, say  $j_n$ ,<sup>1</sup> that generates  $H_n$  and construct the elliptic curve  $\mathcal{E}_n$  be

$$y^2 = x^3 - 3c_nx - 2c_n$$

where

$$c_n = \frac{j_n}{j_n - 1728}.$$

The curve  $\mathcal{E}_n$  may or may not have  $N_p = b$ . When  $N_p \neq b$ , we search for an  $\ell$  such that

$$\left(\frac{\ell}{p}\right) \neq 1$$

and replace  $\mathcal{E}_n$  by the “twist” of  $\mathcal{E}_n$ , say  $\mathcal{E}_{\ell,n}$  given by

$$y^2 = x^3 - 3\ell^2c_nx - 2\ell^3c_n.$$

---

<sup>1</sup> There are  $h(n)$  such values where  $h(n) = |C_n|$  but we only need one such value. We obtain this value from Section 2.

#### 4. Examples

We first discuss Ramanujan's birthday curve mentioned in Section 1. In this case, we find that

$$(p - 1)^2 + b^2 - 2(p + 1)b = -163 \cdot 293^2,$$

where  $p = 22\,130\,519$  and  $b = 22\,121\,887$ . The corresponding field is  $K_{163}$ , which has class number 1. The  $j_n$  that we used is then the well-known value

$$j\left(\frac{1 + \sqrt{-163}}{2}\right) = -640\,320^3$$

and this value is all we need to construct Ramanujan's birthday elliptic curve.

We now discuss a more "complicated" birthday curve. We shall use the birthdate of Tom Osler, a mathematician at Rowan University. The birthdate is 26 April 1940. It turns out that with  $b = 26\,041\,940$  and  $p = 26\,031\,737$

$$(p - 1)^2 + b^2 - 2(p + 1)b = -2^6 \cdot 7 \cdot 103.$$

The class number of  $K_{721}$  is 16 and

$$C_{721} \simeq \mathbf{Z}/2\mathbf{Z} \oplus \mathbf{Z}/8\mathbf{Z}.$$

If we were to use the Hilbert class polynomial, then we would need to construct a polynomial of degree 16. Instead of deriving the Hilbert class polynomial, we compute  $G_{721}$  since  $721 \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$ . This is obtained by computing the following identities (see [5] for examples of such computations):

$$\left(\frac{G_{721}}{G_{103/7}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{G_{103/7}}{G_{721}}\right)^2 = 104 + 39\sqrt{7} + 2\sqrt{5336 + 2018\sqrt{7}} \tag{4.1}$$

and

$$(G_{721}G_{103/7})^2 + \left(\frac{1}{G_{103/7}G_{721}}\right)^2 = 384 + 146\sqrt{7} + \sqrt{297\,731 + 112\,532\sqrt{7}}. \tag{4.2}$$

We can compute (4.1) and (4.2) because we know that the values on the left hand sides are algebraic integers in a degree 4 extension over  $\mathbf{Q}$  (see [5] for more details).

From (4.1) and (4.2), it is clear that we can determine  $G_{721}^4$ . We then determine  $G_{721}^4$  modulo  $p$  by solving the congruence

$$x^2 \equiv 7 \pmod{p}$$

and using this to derive values of radicals such as  $\sqrt{297\,731 + 112\,532\sqrt{7}}$  in  $\mathbf{F}_p$ . This will allow us to determine a value of  $G_{721}^4$  modulo  $p$ .

Using the relation between  $j_{721}$  and  $G_{721}$ , we conclude that over  $\mathbf{F}_p$ , one of the two curves

$$y^2 = x^3 + 25\,598\,199x + 17\,065\,466$$

and

$$y^2 = x^3 + 15\,193\,287x + 24\,612\,553$$

has exactly 26 041 940 solutions. It turns out that the latter yields the correct number of solutions.

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