

OUTLINE

NUMBER 543

BODLEIAN LIBRARIES STAFF NEWSLETTER

20 July 2012

Excerpt

Bibliography and the study of paper



The first ever Centre for the Study of the Book summer school course – ‘Bibliography and the study of paper’ – took place this month from 9 July to 13 July. Ten participants from seven different countries spent five intensive days exploring the evidence that paper can provide and how that evidence can be used to date and investigate manuscripts and early printed books.

paper in manuscripts and books during that period. We investigated various physical features of paper, such as watermarks, chain lines and papermaker’s tears. By the end of the course we had our own little ‘dating toolkit’ consisting of measuring tools, LED lamps and watermarks records.

Specially arranged access to the Bodleian library and archive collections and the Oxford college libraries afforded a great opportunity to study rare and unique research materials in a beautiful and historical setting.

The five days were both thoroughly enjoyable and extremely educational; particularly worthy of mention was the holistic approach of the course, always relating individual elements to the field as a whole, as proposed by the late Professor Donald McKenzie. In conclusion the course proved highly recommendable, consisting of a very well-rounded combination of instruction, illustration and application.

Lydia Lantzsch
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Lydia Lantzsch and Angela Craft confer over a manuscript in a practical session

Run by Andrew Honey, Bodleian book conservator, Mark Bland, researcher in early modern English typography and book-trade, and Alex Franklin, CSB Project Coordinator, the seminar consisted of varied lectures, case studies and hands-on practice time.

The course focused on methods for identifying and recording paper, particularly of the hand press period. We learned how to establish size, format and quality of