

CH-Ascona

## Centro del bel libro

### History of Leather Bindings

The compact course 'History of leather bindings: Development of binding structures over the centuries' (workshop) will be held from 25 to 29 June 2012. Instructor will be Barbara Hassel. The languages of the 5 days course are German and English.

What are the characteristic features of leather bindings over the centuries? From a 3rd century Coptic codex to a 20th century leather binding many structural features have changed. We will be looking at the historic development of the Western codex from the Coptic, Byzantine and Islamic bindings to the specific features of Roman, Gothic and Renaissance bindings and the modern (French) bindings. The course will give an overview over the changes in the course of the centuries by looking at sewing structures, endpaper constructions, board attachments, backings, endbands, covering materials and furnishings.

The course is composed of a theoretical part with lectures and slides and a practical part with hands-on work, which will concentrate mainly on making model books. It is aimed at Restorers and interested persons with some experience in conservation. This is an introductory course, but participants need some previous experience working with leather and some basic bookbinding skills (fees: 1050.00 CHF, limited to 8 participants).

### Conservation of Leather Bindings (2-Part Course)

There are very few specialist courses available that focus on the theory and practice of the conservation of bookbinding leathers. This course will be taught by Karen Vidler, a true specialist in the conservation of leather bindings. She works in Northampton, near the British Leather School and sites of bookbinding leather manu-

facture. With more than 10 years experience as a book conservator and an intensive researcher into the manufacturing, deterioration and treatment of bookbinding leather, Karen offers the participants of this course a wide range of valuable knowledge and skills in both theory and practical applications of this complex and difficult subject.

Bookbinding leather is a complex material composed of skin collagen, tanning agents and other chemicals which undergo certain physical processes during the manufacturing process. Various processing stages are undertaken to produce the specific chemical and physical properties required for a leather to be suitable for bookbinding. In this course we will learn how to identify the various historic methods of production, the various types of leather and the damage that can occur related to these production methods. We will then learn to assess for ourselves, which conservation treatments are best suited for the different types of damages.

- > *Part 1—Introductory / Theory:* 18-20 July 2012 (instructor: Karen Vidler, Northampton, UK; language: English with German translations; fee: 630.00 CHF; admission policy: limited to 8 participants).

We will begin by exploring traditional and modern methods for making bookbinding leather and then learn to identify specific types of deterioration like; age hardening, water /

mould damage, mechanical damage, fire damage, acid decay, previous treatments and how this causes damage to the binding structure. Some simple examination and testing techniques will be presented to determine the leathers condition prior to determining the most suitable conservation treatment. Participants will work with samples and handouts provided by the instructor to better understand the theory and practice of analysis and treatment techniques which they can use for future reference.

The course is aimed at conservators and interested persons with previous experience in the restoration of books. Participants are required to have: previous experience in working with leather and bookbinding skills and some book restoration experience (or have equivalent knowledge and experience in conservation).

- > *Part 2—Practical Course:* 23-27 July 2012 (instructor: Karen Vidler, Northampton, UK; language: English with German translations; fee: 1050.00 CHF; admission policy: limited to 8 participants).

In the practical course will expand on the analysis and treatment techniques covered in the first part of the course and apply them to the participant's individual projects. The following practical applications will include: identifying leather species and tannins, cleaning and consolidation, humidification, Beva371 infills, paring and dyeing leather, rebacking, surface finishes and current treatment research. Demonstrations will include board reattachment techniques such as board slotting and cord extensions as well as the use of Japanese repair papers on damaged leather. Relevant samples and handouts of various techniques will be provided throughout the week by the instructor.

This course is aimed at restorers and interested persons with previous experience in the restoration of books. Participants are required to



View of the new conservation laboratory. | Blick in die neue Restaurierungswerkstatt. Photo: Cbl.

have: Attended the introductory courses 'Conservation of Leather Bindings 1' or have equivalent knowledge and experience in conservation.

For course registration contact our office: [info@cbl-ascona.ch](mailto:info@cbl-ascona.ch). And for specific information concerning the courses contact Franziska Richter <[f.richter@cbl-ascona.ch](mailto:f.richter@cbl-ascona.ch)>.

### **Accommodation**

Ascona is situated at the Lago Maggiore in the Southern part of Switzerland, famous for its beauty and its southern European charms and a popular vacation area, learn more about this area and about possibilities for accommodations under <[www.ascona-locarno.com](http://www.ascona-locarno.com)>. You also find a list of possible accommodations on <[www.cbl-ascona.ch](http://www.cbl-ascona.ch)>.

*Centro del bel libro, Head of Department Book and Paper Conservation, Via Collegio 6, 6612 Ascona, Switzerland, Tel +41-91-7918156, Fax +41-91-7918130, [f.richter@cbl-ascona.ch](mailto:f.richter@cbl-ascona.ch), [www.cbl-ascona.ch](http://www.cbl-ascona.ch)*