

Nottingham, March 2026

Archiving is Activism!



Sparrow Artwork by Craig Humpston

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our latest newsletter!

Women in Punk



Congratulations to Nottingham's [New Rose project](#) on packing out the upstairs of Rough Trade for their Women in Punk event on March 6th. The subject matter ranged from historical perspectives on this

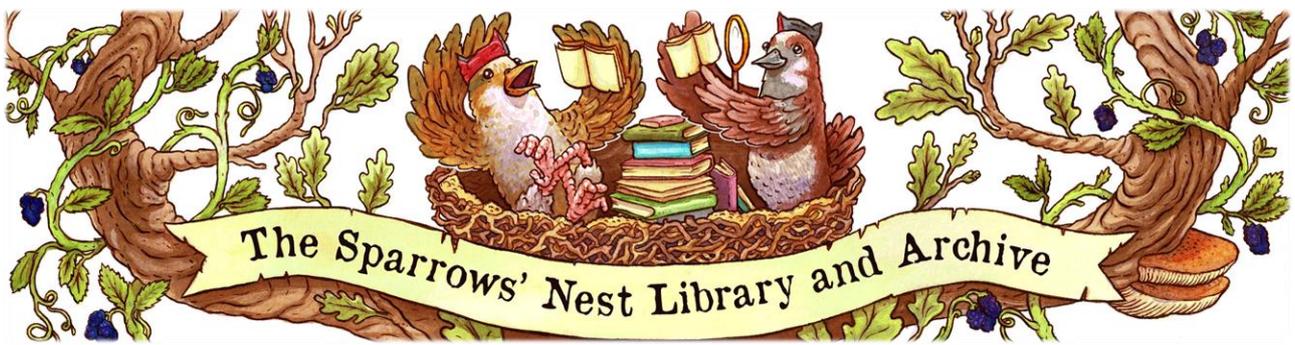
50 year-old movement to making zines and putting on gigs. All genders were welcomed and the atmosphere was energetic and empowering. The talks and films were amazing, and we were especially blown away by the [Loud Women](#) project. It was standing room only, so we are very grateful for being able to put up a big display on Anarcho-Punk fanzines and do a short talk contextualising it, alongside our friends the [East Midlands Feminist Collection](#). We very much hope that we can work with New Rose again – an inspiring outfit.

New and ongoing Projects

We have been **updating the Digital Library**. Many of the files are well over a decade old, and technology has come a long way since, especially when it comes to [OCR](#). A good example are [scans of *The Word* from the 1930s and early to mid-1940s](#), which were originally digitised well over a decade ago as a proof of concept, utilising a very Blue Peter like setup involving string, sofa cushions and other suboptimal equipment. We have rescanned and processed these documents with our current equipment and software, much improving results.

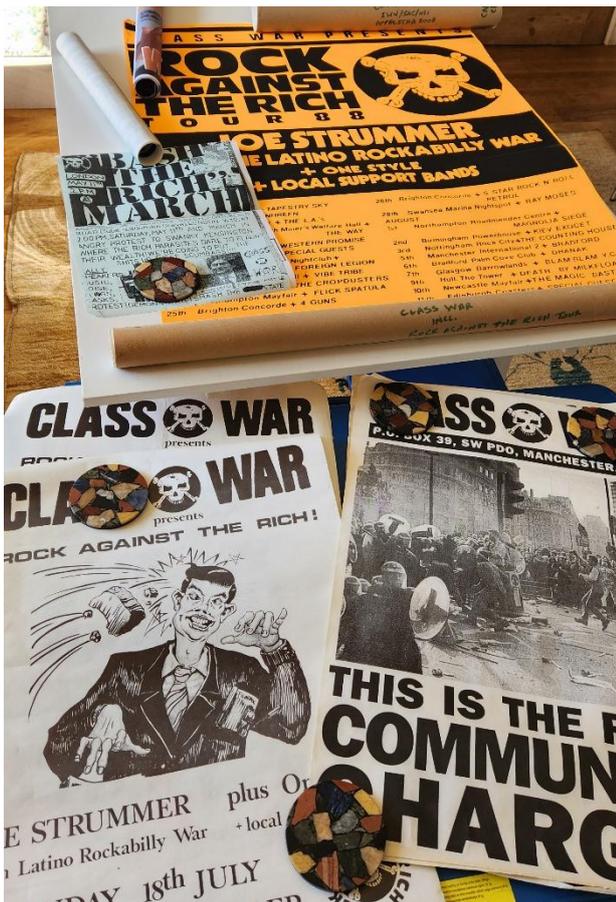
Overall we have already updated more than 600 files, but with another close to 8,000 items to check, this will continue to keep us busy.

We have finally found some time to **digitise a number of new items** and [add them to the Digital Library](#). We had almost forgotten how much fun that can be!



Over the last few years it has been our pleasure to support the [Nottingham Refugee Forum](#) processing their archive, documenting their impressive record of invaluable work over the course of almost three decades.

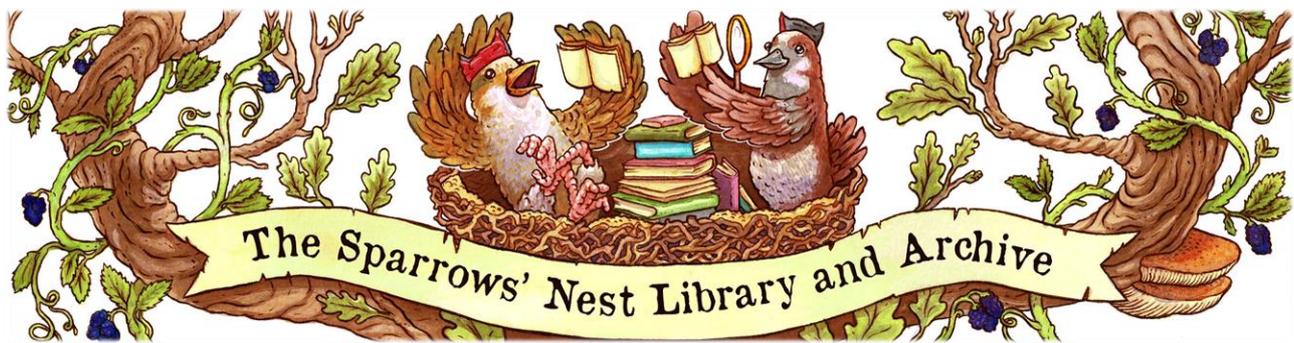
The NNRF materials are stored at [UoN's archive](#), but the collection is also listed in our catalogue and a number of periodicals (etc.) have been digitised by us and are hosted in our [Digital Library](#). The latest batch of materials close a hitherto most vexing gap, providing materials about the [founding of the Forum](#) and their activities during the early years. We were finally able to also include #01 and #02 of the *NNRF Newsletter*.



Our poster sort-out is underway. The first job is to take them out of the cardboard rolls they have lived in for decades and 'relax' them enough so that we can see what we actually have. Some of the first to emerge are pristine copies of 1980s Class War 'Bash the Rich' and 'Rock Against the Rich' events (see also our extensive [Class War collections in our Digital Library](#)), and our full collection of 1990s Bread and Puppet handmade art.



And we are really excited to be working with both a new volunteer and a founder member of Nottingham's own [Sumac Centre](#) to bring the [Sumac archive](#) to a wider audience. The collection originated in the library established by Sumac's predecessor, the Rainbow Centre on Mansfield Road, established in 1984, as a resource for people researching and campaigning on '...subjects which don't seem to be covered by the established libraries, ... such as World Development, Human and Animal Rights, Feminism, Civil Liberties, Peace, Ecology and Conservation as well as materials on co-ops, campaigns and other groups' (see below for where the quote comes from).



The archive has been organised and updated over time, and is both an on-going essential resource and a record of some truly remarkable and important campaigns. Sumac itself has its 25th anniversary this year, so it feels especially fitting to be getting this collection processed, and made more easily available to all sorts of researchers. Thank you to Sumac for entrusting it to us.

Mar 26 Document of the Month

Long before even the amazing *Left Lion*, Nottingham was notably innovative in the genre of listings publications. In discussing our work with Sumac, we took a deep dive into what we hold already relating to this history.

Listings #01 is the first of these produced by the Rainbow Centre itself, in September 1986.

As well as the Greenpeace, Green Party, Vegetarian/Vegan and Animal Rights contents you might expect, listings include everything from a Justice for Mineworkers gala in Mansfield, the blockade of USAF Molesworth (16th Sept), Anti-Apartheid events, a Nottingham Lesbian and Gay Community Co-Op and 'Gay Nottingham' event, and performances at Spitz Cabaret. The Listings are contextualised by articles on Green politics, the World Development Movement's Bangladeshi textiles industry campaign, Nottingham Community Data Project (CODA), the International Day of Peace (as context for the Molesworth blockade), the 'Million Minutes of Peace' Appeal, 'Pedals' cycling campaign, and

Greenpeace. Most exciting of all (to us!), one article highlights the Rainbow Centre Library itself! That's where the quote above comes from.

We are completely self-funded, so please Donate if you can.

Thank you once again for your support!

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