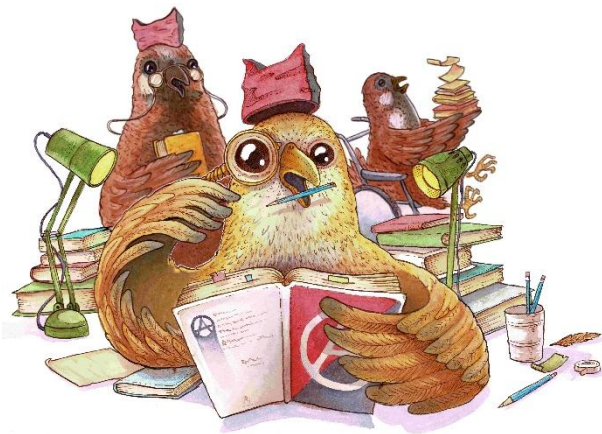




Nottingham, May-June 2026

Archiving is Activism!



Sparrow Artwork by Craig Humpston

Dear Friends,

Apologies for the delay in getting these latest Nest news out to you all, but the end of May was even busier than normal, so here is a joint issue for May and June.

Sparrows out and about

Congratulations to our Nottingham collaborator [CJ DeBarra](#), who launched the second volume of *Queer Nottingham*, covering the years 1991-2020, at Nottingham Central Library. The event was a huge success, and it was a pleasure taking part with a little stall, also showing



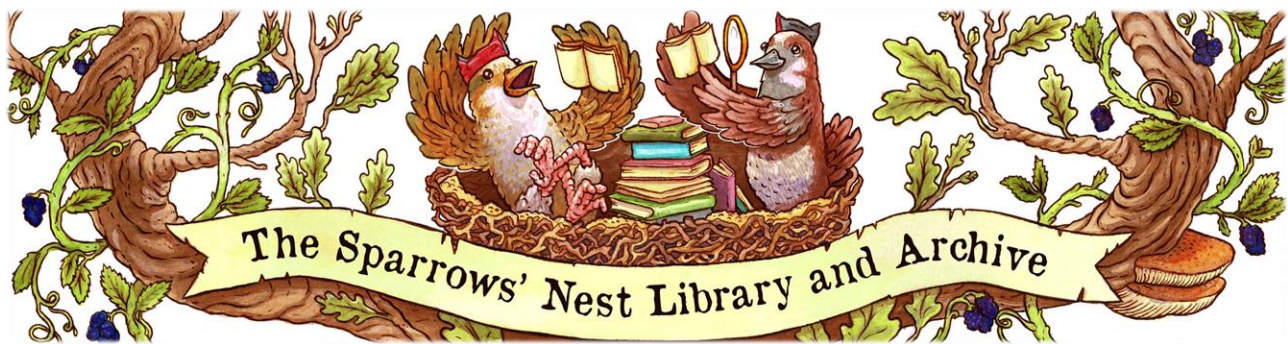
off some of our favourite [LGBTQ+ badges](#) from the collection of [Chris Richardson](#) and [Richard McCance](#). We just need to remember to bring a tablecloth next time, which would have boosted our setup by at least 17 percent.

We are looking forward to contribute on the 27th June to an all weekend gathering by the [Total Liberation Collective at the Sumac Centre](#). We really appreciate the opportunity to introduce our work and some of our collections and look forward to show off some cool materials, such as hunt sab paper *Howl*, going back to the 1970s, which will hopefully go down well with this crowd.

The Sumac Archive Project update

Working hard on this was the main reason this newsletter is late and why we had to postpone our other event at Sumac, originally scheduled for the 20th June (now postponed till September).

The collection is amazing, but huge. Both with regards to published and unpublished materials, there are loads of incredible documents and artefacts, documenting e.g. decades worth of Vegetarianism and Veganism activism, the McLibel trial or Animal Rights struggles. A word of warning though, there is some pretty harrowing stuff regarding the latter. Besides gruesome images from labs and slaughterhouses this also includes a heartbreaking photo of the saddest bear imaginable, part of a collection of photos taken by campaigners trying to stop animals being exploited in circuses. On a lighter note: food historians take note, if you want to work on the history of veganism in the UK, we have a few boxes worth of incredible source materials for you.



Processing the collection is however an incredible amount of work, we e.g. pulled a LOT of staples out of years' worth of meticulous week-by-week receipts of Veggies catering. Threeish months in, we are about halfway through the thousands of records in this collection and look forward to what we will find next.

More anti-Poll Tax materials

For a couple of weeks we took a sneaky break from the Sumac materials and squeezed in work on another exciting collection of materials. Adding to our already huge holdings of materials documenting the struggle against the Poll Tax, this new collection offered a lot of cool materials we had not seen before, such as a bunch of newsletters from Leicester. There are also incredible unpublished materials, such as primary sources documenting prisoner support and the solidarity work and direct action of those defending non-payers who were hounded by bailiffs. Give it up for the Scumbuster Squads!

We have been able to allocate some time to digitise some of the materials in this collection, [please have a look at our website](#).

May-Jun Document of the Month

Document of the Month is [Freedom Anarchist Pamphlets #08](#) (1971), about the Paris Commune. This uprising by the population of Paris in March 1871, notably involving prominent anarchists, took place in the context of the end of the Franco-Prussian War. The Commune was the most

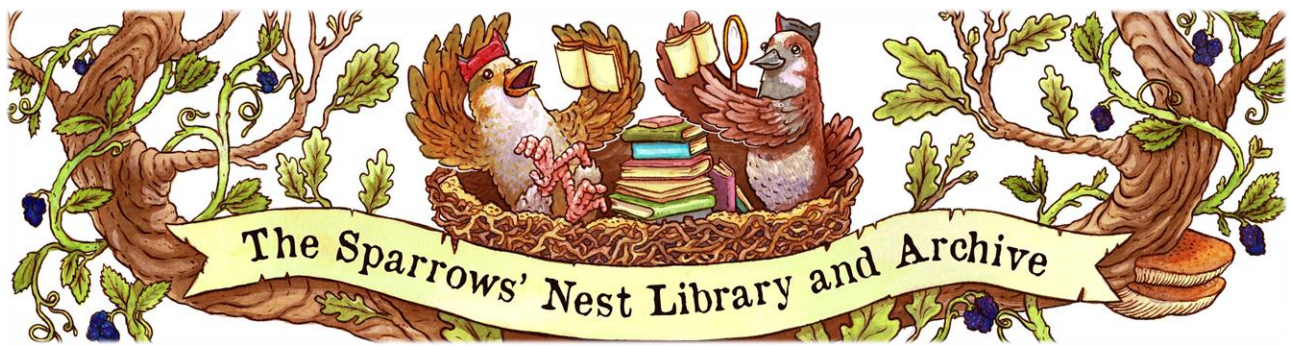
inspiring left-wing social experiment of that revolutionary era and yet rarely explored in mainstream media.

Perhaps the two things are related.



The pamphlet commemorates the 100th anniversary of the notoriously brutal repression of the Communards in May-June of that year by the Third Republic.

The current generation of Sparrows will be very old indeed when the bicentenary comes around, so here we celebrate its heroic women and men, including one of the most important anarchists in history, Louise Michel. The pamphlet reprints a translation of her declaration at her trial, at which she clearly expected – and requested – to be put to death.



In it, she clarifies her approach to revolutionary violence as one of self-defence against the state, noting:

‘You accuse me of having taken part in the murder of the generals? To that I would reply Yes, if I had been in Montmartre when they wished to have the people fired on. I would not have hesitated to fire myself on those who have such orders. But I do not understand why they were shot when they were prisoners, and I look on this action as arrent cowardice.’

Louise was in fact transported to New Caledonia before being pardoned in 1880 and returning to her activism in Europe, including in England, where government agents even placed a bomb under a school she ran in an attempt to frame her. She is celebrated not only by anarchists but also in Victor Hugo’s poem ‘Greater than a Man’, and she was an influence on Silvia Pankhurst. [The Nest has numerous books, pamphlets and articles about her life and works, and about the Paris Commune, including in our Digital Library.](#)

New; from Fellow Travellers;

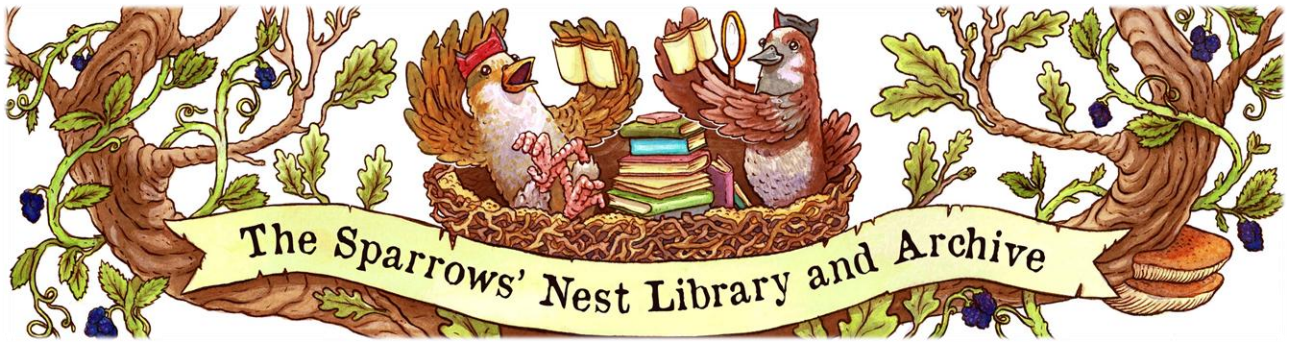
We want to celebrate the amazing sounding Phoenix Library in Gaza. Omar Hamad and his colleagues rescued thousands of books from the rubble, opening Gaza’s first public library since the destruction of at least seven libraries and archives, along with the generalised educational infrastructure.

They raised money internationally and built an amazing space from scratch, to collect, clean and make available every day and rare books to the public. The library is also a community, meeting and educational space. You can find plenty about the project on-line and in social media.

Closer to home, meet Birmingham Anarchist Books’ ‘B.A.B. Infoshop’ on Red Brick Market, Digbeth, Birmingham. What an amazing idea! We can’t wait to visit and are sending some of our spare books and overspill in the meantime. You can [find them on Instagram](#) as well as at the Market itself.

We are very happy to see that some of our local history friends from the [Nottingham & Derbyshire Labour History Society](#) are about to release their newest publication: *The 1926 General Strike in Nottingham*. Having undertaken extensive research, the authors make crucial contributions to our understanding of local events during the strike.

Finally it was our pleasure to get in touch with DARK, the [Disability Action Research Collective](#), who publish excellent free zines. Anyone interested in RPGs should also make sure to check out the role playing game *Killer Crips 3000*. Featuring characters such as Wheely, Floaty, Sticky, Friendly, Clicky, Venty and Normy, players battle to defeat the big bad Dark Wizards’ Portal (DWP). The game remains in development and the designers would much appreciate playtesters’ feedback.



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

Thank you once again for your support!

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