



Nottingham, September-October 2026



Sparrow Artwork by Craig Humpston

Hello folks!

Sorry we didn't get around to doing a newsletter in September. But there's plenty to report.

Besides the usual work of cataloguing and processing documents, including the digitisation of many of our international posters (to be added to the [Digital Library](#) soon), we ran and attended quite a few events.

The launch event of the Sumac Archive on September 27th went really well. The room was packed for our activities. Presentations were given by ourselves and Sumac's own Pat, displays were mulled over, zines celebrating Sumac were cut and glued, the custom rusted staple dyed t-shirts had their first outing ([thank you Roy!](#)) and we won the quiz (oops!). It was wonderful to see so many old friends revisiting Nottingham and being interested in what we'd been doing, and also to have the chance to explain what we are about to the lovely current Sumacians. It was great to find out what use people have been making of our materials and there have been lots of

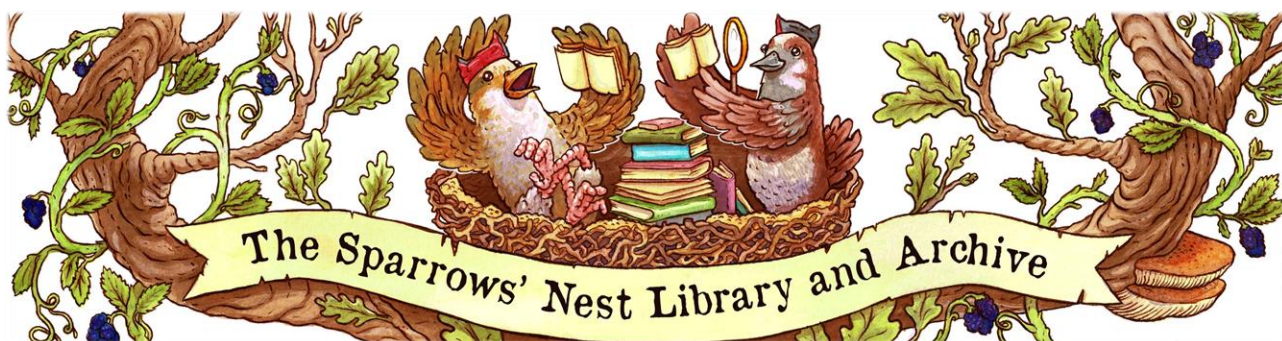
discussions about future work that we can do together, so watch this space.

On October 14th we hosted the twice-yearly meeting of the Society for the Study of Labour History. This network brings together archivists, academics and independent historians from projects as low-key as ourselves, through larger projects like the [Marx Memorial Library](#) to those on the scale of the [Welsh National Library](#).



They have really welcomed us and, funnily enough, we found that being small means we don't have half the logistical headaches that some people do.

SSLH publish the journal [Labour History Review](#), which the Nest holds, so you can take a look at it for free. Hosted at [Broadway Cinema](#) (it is the BEST!).



We rounded it off by entertaining them with the [People's Histreh](#)/Sparrows' Nest guided walk 'Agitating the Lawless Rabble', which went down really well.

We were very happy to be joined on the day by a colleague from **UoN's excellent Manuscripts and Special Collections department**, who added a great display showing off some of their amazing collections. On October 22nd we were very exciting to join them to celebrate their move to new rooms. The wonderful MSC team had an incredibly busy year and did an amazing job relocating within the old television studio, even managing to meticulously remove and reattach all the prints of cool sources on their walls.



October 24th saw the [seventh Notts Zine Fest](#), held at Nottingham Central Library. We were invited along by the organisers, Nottingham's fabulous [Dizzy Ink](#), so we put up our anarcho-punk fanzine display. We also took part in a workshop by the amazing [Black Lodge Press](#), at which 30 people made posters with radical messages.

We apologise for basically punking a perfectly decent template, but this is what the Sparrows' made. The resultant artifacts are going to end up bound together by the Dizzies and donated to the Nest.

Woo hoo!





Document of the month



Why did we do a display about anarcho-punk fanzines? Because October 22nd 2026 marked the 50th anniversary of what is generally considered the first punk single, [New Rose by the Damned](#), without which, the Sparrows' Nest would probably not exist.

That's a long story...but part of it is that genre of zines produced in huge numbers in the 1970s and 80s. Each page was hand printed from stencils in council-funded community print shops. Most copies of zines have long since crumbled to dust, or are at least almost unreadable now. But those produced by the specifically anarchist wing of the punk movement bear witness to questions being asked and the answers being found outside of 'the system' by young people of the Cold War generation, such as, how can we stop nuclear war? Books about the (anarcho-) punk movement's music, politics and aesthetic currently abound (we can't afford to buy them all for our shelves... hint hint to all those authors).

But less attention has been paid to its print culture, many great examples of which you can find here:

Explore our Music Zines

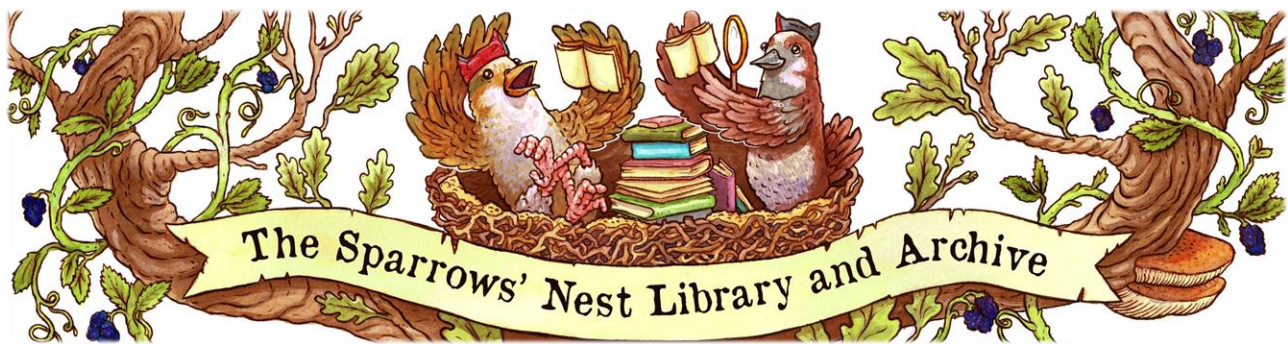
Amongst the thousands of documents in our **FREE Digital Library** are numerous music zines, including many classic punk zines.

Dive in!



Which to choose for our document of the month, though? After much deliberation, we have settled on something local: [Blasphemy](#) produced by Eastwood heretic Fish in 1982.

Blasphemy is typical of the caps-lock poetry, cut-up collage style of anarcho-pacifism zines, juxtaposing thoughtful pleas for social sanity with violent images taken from every day magazines. It explicitly puts the politics even before the music, and luckily stands the test of time in terms of visual readability.



Oh, and one for the geeks – the whole thing is black and white except for what must have been the extortionately expensive addition of a red ‘pig’s blood spatter’ on the next-to-last page.

We’ll sign off now, but maybe see you on October 31st at the [Manchester and Salford Anarchist Bookfair](#) or November 21st at the [Sheffield Anarchist Bookfair](#).

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

Thank you once again for your support!

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Don’t forget to consider us if you have radical materials you would like to donate to an archive. Because...

Archiving is Activism!