

DEC 20 MTC update

Today was a momentous day for MTC. This was the day that they have been dreaming of for many years - "Moving Day"!!

As soon as the Saturday morning classes were finished, the last bits and pieces were packed and the move began. What a mammoth task it was, with staff, parents, and kids all mucking in and doing whatever they could. We piled stuff in our little car, but there was a convoy of vans, cars, and trailers going back and forth. Upon arrival, everything was piled into the room at the rear of the building which will eventually become Studio Three. So many boxes to unload made me think the old building must have been a Tardis. :)

It was a lovely atmosphere, bright light, and a little magical.

Once we unloaded our car we met another Lee fan serving teas, coffees and food to all the volunteers while her husband coordinated the unloading.



The kitchen units and sink were donated - a fridge freezer has also been donated and will arrive next week. They still need a cooker.

Some of the girls couldn't help but try out the new dance studio. They were so excited about the new space. The girls are dancing in Studio One, which is complete.



Studio Two is also complete

while Studio Three is a store room for now.



One of the parents was busy installing some old computers that had been donated. We laughed when he said "has anyone got any mice?" They had been given two second-hand computer screens and keyboards but no mouse in sight!

Reception office, Studio One and Studio Two are all complete but as you can see there is still a lot more to be done. Some of the children unpacked books into the small bookcase in the reception area. Others even managed to put up a Christmas tree - with a little help from Santa Dog!



By about 6.30ish, Penni and her team left the old Mushroom store and headed for the new building.

When Penni walked through the doors everyone was there to greet her with a rousing cheer. It was quite emotional.

We left shortly after that while Penni and her team of helpers sat down to a well-deserved takeaway - exhausted but very happy . . .

. . . And ready to get to work as first class in the new building is Monday Morning!!!



The new building is about four times as large as the previous one. It has been a long journey for Mushroom Theatre Company to get this far and I am so proud that Meadaholics have been a part of it - and will continue to be as there is still lots to be done and we need to keep the Mushroom Movers busy!

So enjoy your lovely Christmas this year, knowing you have been part of making this dream come true for Mushroom Theatre Company staff and the many children who call it home.

Merry Christmas!
.Ioan

Oct 11 MTC update

It seems like ages since we set up the new Meadaholics website and asked Lee to choose 4 charities for us to support.

I am so pleased that he chose only one charity, the one that is very close to his heart, Mushroom Theatre Company/Equal People P.A.

Of course I had heard of MTC because of the fundraising that LMAS and Lovelee's had done in the past. But nothing prepared me for the wonderful journey that lay ahead.

How fantastic that the beginning of Meadaholics and our involvement with the website happened to coincide with a time when some of Mushroom's biggest dreams were within touching distance so that we could share in helping to make them come true.

I knew that if I was going to commit and do my very best for them I would have to learn a lot more about them. The moment that I walked into that old mushroom shed I felt a kind of warmth and magic. Talking to the staff and the PALS class that was there that day I knew that this was a place that deserved to have their dreams come true.

We went at a time of hope and change for MTC. They had seen a building that they felt could be everything that they had dreamed of but it was in the negotiation stage so we were just hoping and crossing fingers that something would turn up. It did and a month later when Jackie and I visited, it happened to be the day the lease was signed.

Lee fans have helped MTC in the past but now the stakes were raised and they needed so much more to achieve their dream... so a little birdie began bringing roof tiles. ;)

But the new building is not just about bricks and mortar, windows and roof tiles. It is about giving each and every child, no matter what their physical, mental or emotional ability, a chance to develop and find a positive in everything they do in life.

When I went with SueT to see work being done on the new building it was wonderful to see the dream becoming reality.

Sept 16 MTC update

Last Thursday, I travelled to Rayleigh and met up with the lovely Sue Thomas.

We spent some time speaking with local businesses, telling them about the work that MTC do and asking for their support. We had some mixed responses which is to be expected in this charity weary era we live in.

However we also had some very unexpected responses.

We went into a sweet shop and the young man explained that the company only takes on one charity per year. But, after hearing what we had to say, he said "Well, the company may not be able to donate but I will and I will tell my friends about it." (Hopefully he won't have forgotten)

In the same shop we met a lady that plays in a band who said they do gigs for charity and will put MTC forward as the charity for the next year.

We did our very best to promote local awareness of the charity and some of the shops agreed to put up Lee's concert flyer in their shop window.

Afterwards, we met up with Penni, had a quick chat and then followed her to the new building. Unfortunately the builders had left and we were unable to get into the main part of the building, although we did get into rear area which is being used for storage at the moment.



Feeling hungry and just a bit deflated we found ourselves in a local hostelry seeking refreshment. Just as our food came we had a call from Penni saying "Eureka! We have access all areas."

So we ate up and set off to meet her (getting stuck in school traffic on the way) Grrr

When we got there the shutters were up and we could see the wonderful new glass frontage. Excitedly we went in and had a nosey around. Some of the dividing walls are up and the main walls are being plastered. The new roof is on and insulated.



We were like excited school girls dancing in this magical spacious building.



Just imagine three grown women dancing around on a building site and giggling so much our laughter echoed in the empty space.



Along the right hand side the builders had laid wood on the floors to show us where the kitchen, office, cloakroom, and toilets will be.

The new building has so much potential to reach out and help many more kids and young adults who really need this unique place.

From there we went back to MTC to meet up with the rest of the fundraising team. They are all volunteers who are working extremely hard and we felt privileged to be amongst them.

We were told that Sainbury's in Rayleigh has taken them on as their "local Charity" and that the Rayleigh Conservative Club will hold its annual "harvest" auction in favour of MTC. They are organising lots of local fundraising events. So if you can get to Rayleigh and want to have fun why not join them?

I took my old guitar along for them. Music is very therapeutic and they can make much more use of it than I ever could. If anyone else has anything useful they could donate it would be it would be welcome.

It was inspiring to see the progress already made and to hear about their plans to raise needed funds for the huge amount of work that still needs to be done.

Don't forget our current contribution to the cause: The fund-raising auction of the Lee Mead photo-book- a perfect way to support Lee's charity of choice and have the opportunity to win a lovely prize.

Thanks to all for your continued support.

Joan

Aug 22 MTC update

First of all, a huge thank you to everyone who donated to the LMAS Just Giving account and bought virtual roof tiles. Mead-Mushroom Month was a great success, raising a good sum of money as well as smiles and a glass or two. Penni and her team have asked us to pass on their thanks. They are delighted and surprised at the kindness, inventiveness, and generosity of Lee's fans.

Isn't it a great feeling to know that we can raise money for Lee's favourite charity while having fun? Give yourselves a pat on the back and raise yet another glass to say "well done".

Do we have any trades people in our midst that could help?

Think of Mr Mead wearing overalls with paintbrush in hand. Mmmm
We all know how manly those hands are. #dreamingagain #interlude

Yes it is a lot of work but this project will really change lives for some of the kids that rely on it.

Carnival Time

The lovely Sue Thomas has been to MTC to help the kids paint and make things for the Southend Carnival that took place last weekend.



A good time was had by all and they managed to get their collecting buckets filled with coins and notes. I think Lee was there in spirit according to this tweet:



Lord Edward Traynor @Ed3283@mtcmushroom and what seems to be a giant @leemeadofficial at the Southend carnival

After a horrendous journey which included one flooded road and an accident so bad that the road was closed for 2 junctions, we arrived at MTC just as the party was getting started.

So, keep an eye out here for future fund-raising activities. In the meantime, if anyone is able to volunteer time, energy, and materials to the building refurbishment, please email me at the TeamLMAS email account.

Thanks, once again.

Joan

Jul 15 MTC BBQ Award-winning success

I saw the lovely Sue T there -she had read my forum post about "Nana Pat" and brought with her the most wonderful array of fabrics and adornments. She made Nana Pat's day. (If you missed the info about Nana Pat, it's [Here](#))



After a quick chat and introductions (I went with my OH) it was time to get a much needed drink.

While I was chatting to Julie and Steve (he's their web site man) my OH, John, took Penni by the hand and led her to our car. There he told her to look on the back seat. She squealed with delight when she saw that we had brought them a brand new microwave and grill donated by Tesco..



Sue T and the OHs

I introduced Sue to a girl that is a big Lee fan. If you were at Lee's last concert at the Cliffs Southend you may have heard her shout out "I love you Lee". This girl was telling us how lovely Lee is when suddenly we saw Lee with his mum, dad, and Betsy walking towards the mass of people around the BBQ.

He had phoned Penni 10min before to say that he was coming but it was a surprise for everyone else. Lee agreed to present the certificates and trophies to the children at the end of the event It was lovely to see him chatting with staff and children.



He walked over to where Sue and I were standing and he thanked us both for coming and for supporting MTC. You could tell by what he was saying that this place is very special to him and he asked us to pass on his thanks to everyone that has donated money so far. He especially likes the "flying roof tile project." :)

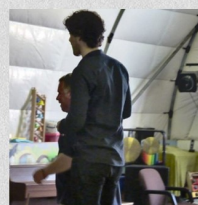


He asked us to explain Mead-Mushroom Month. Hmmmm #tricky !! I explained that July was a special month because it is both his & Penni's birthdays.

Then he asked what kind of things and events people are doing. Genuinely interested. I told him that everyone is doing their own thing for Mead-Mushroom Month - anything from craft workshops to boot sales, wacky races to treasure hunts. I mentioned that one fan is holding a wine tasting and he said "Now that's a lady with style. Where and when is that?" When I said So Cal, he smiled and winked so I am sure he knows who is doing that event. :)

Before he handed out the certificates and trophies, Penni brought a small cake/muffin, stuck a candle on top, and we all sang Happy Birthday to Lee.

Penni then spoke a bit about the new building and asked if anyone had any questions. No one said anything but Lee put his hand up and said "I have a question. Who made this cake? It's delicious" #laughter



All Photo Credit above to Joan

The whole event was perfect, lots of fun, and raised some more much needed money for the new building.

(£616.98!!!)

This was the first time they had done anything like this but I am sure it won't be the last.

MTC are really grateful for all the help & support that we are giving them.

Lee fans rock!



Credit /Steve Westrop

We would also love to hear about what you have planned for Mead-Mushroom Month. Please share on the Forum or on the Meadaholics.com Facebook group page.

Remember, "Every Little Helps"

Joan

Jul 01 Hooray! MTC has at last found and signed the lease on a new building.

To celebrate this wonderful news MTC will be holding a Summer Family BBQ and Awards Ceremony on Sunday 13th July from 3pm to 5pm at Mushroom.

Why not join them and see for yourself the wonderful work they do and you will realise why Lee is a "proud patron".

Tickets are £6 per person, including a burger/hotdog and a drink.
Please use MTC contact page to order your tickets



Credit MTC

It's a great start to what I feel is going to be a great year for them
How about joining MTC for a barbecue to celebrate the good news?

Jun 25 Mushroom Theatre company update

Jackie S (she makes the unique and quirky bags to benefit MTC) and I had a lovely afternoon at Mushroom Theatre Company last Wednesday and I would like to share an update on their building project.

During our first visit, Penni Bubb handed us a cup of coffee and commented that one day they would like to have matching mugs for visitors and coffee mornings. I mentioned this in passing to a group of fans at Lee's Cardiff concert and, before I knew it, a Lee fan handed me a refund/gift card for Ikea that she happened to have in her bag. Well, I went shopping and bought 20 mugs, 10 small plates and a large serving plate, (all matching), which we gave to Penni and her staff. They squealed with delight when we gave them our package and card and Penni got a tear in her eye when she saw what was inside.

So, we sat down to discuss how we could help Mushroom Theatre Company. However, Penni kept looking at her phone. Finally she told us that she was expecting final papers on the new building to be signed at any time. Once signed, work could begin.

We were on our way home when we got a message from Penni that everything is signed and sealed. This is the new building - Just a shell, of course, and in need of internal alterations to form new studios for MTC - ramps built, disabled toilets installed, kitchen, reception area, office, mirrors - Well, you get the picture.

They need everything!

INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND CHANGE OF USE TO FORM NEW STUDIOS FOR THE MUSHROOM THEATRE,



For the



Credit MTC

However, the very first thing that is needed is to replace the roof. The existing roof has asbestos and they have been told that it has to be replaced before any other work can go forward.

Help build a Roof!

This is where we can help. It was suggested that people can "sponsor" a roof tile for £1. Your name will then be added to a virtual roof/wall that will gradually be built, each £1 tile at a time.

To participate in this, just contribute for however many tiles you would like on the Just Giving page already set up.



**Joan's Lee Mead
Appreciation Society
Fundraiser**

fund raising for Equal People for The Equal People
Theatre Company because the patron Lee Mead has
asked us to support them.

264%

£2,642.96
raised of £1,000.00 target

153
donations

Every visit to MTC is a joy and an inspiration. We will be announcing another FUNdraising project in the near future so stay tuned.

In the meantime, this on going facet of the building work is vital and MTC and Team LMAS very much appreciate your continued support and generosity.

Joan