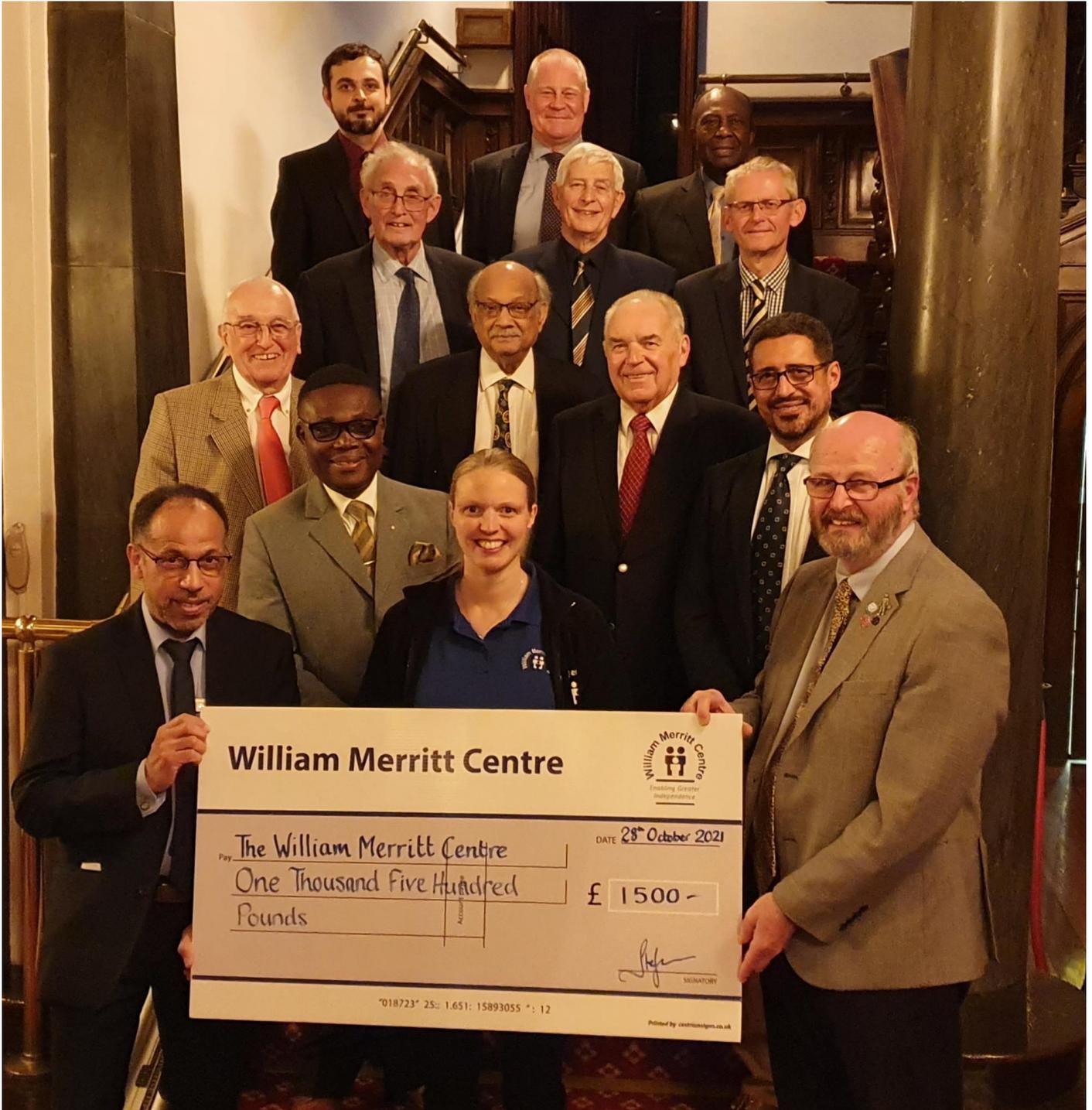




St Wilfrid Lodge NEWS

Edition No. 89

£1500 for the William Merritt Centre !



After almost two and a half years since they initially visited, St Wilfrid Lodge were delighted to welcome back General Manager David Blythe and Paediatric Occupational Therapist Sophie Thomson to be presented with a cheque for £1500 raised as part of the Master's Charity. They had first visited in May 2019 to talk to us about the history and work of the Centre at our Supper Night.



The Talk in May 2019

The Centre is one of the two charities chosen as the 'Master's Charities' that year together with the Leeds Children's Heart Surgery Fund. Funds were raised throughout the year, primarily at our numerous social events. Funds were raised specifically to support children and young people who use the Centre but sadly the Covid-19 pandemic delayed everything!

Happily, thanks to the generosity of Lodge members, their wives, partners, families and friends, the Centre is now able to significantly enrich it's Toy Library for children and young people. David and Sophie also told us about the exciting plans to secure a specially designed Mobile Toy Library with which they

can reach out to communities in and around Leeds and also across Yorkshire and the North of England.



Thank you everyone for your fantastic support!

The Centre was named after Councillor William Merritt. He was born in Sheepscar, Leeds. He was employed as a Charge Nurse in the Geriatric Dept. at St. James' Hospital, having trained in General Nursing at the Leeds General Infirmary and in Psychiatric Nursing at Menston Hospital.



William Merritt was elected to the City Council in May 1946. His main interest in the Council was in the field of Social Services and in 1953 he pioneered the development of the City's 'Welfare Scheme for the Disabled'. He encouraged the development of voluntary organisations for disabled people in the City. He was Deputy Lord Mayor of Leeds in 1972. During his time as Chairman of the Social Services Committee the proposal to launch the Centre was presented in 1980 and led to the establishment of the Centre. Unhappily William Merritt died before the Centre opened and it was unanimously agreed that the Centre should bear his name in recognition of his work for disabled people over many years. The Centre provides impartial information, advice and assessment on equipment and practical aspects of daily living for disabled people of all ages, their carers, professionals and older people. They offer free assessments and advice on everyday living equipment including stairlifts, wheelchairs, kitchen gadgets, beds, chairs, toileting, mobility scooters. The Centre opened in December 1981 (The Year of the Disabled) to become a permanent legacy of that year. It was enthusiastically supported by both NHS in Leeds and Social Services Department of Leeds City Council. Its vision and mission have remained unchanged since its opening. The Children's Service offers free assessments and advice for disabled children, their parents and carers. The 'switches project' offers free assessment and advice and technology such as computers and iPod's.