OFFICIAL OBITUARY

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**Arthur Merritt**: Born in Hanham, Bristol on 29 July 1923. Son of an engineer, he was the elder of two brothers and both served as Ministers in the Methodist Church. His parents were active members of Ebenezer Methodist Church, Hanham. His father was a local preacher and leader for many years of the Men’s Bible Class. After leaving Kingswood Grammar School, Arthur worked in the Bristol Tramways offices but had his goal clearly set. His desire was to enter the ministry and although called to serve in the RAF in 1942, he commenced his theological studies during his tour of duty. He was posted to India and without doubt this time away had a great impact on him. His exploits and time of service abroad led to him being accepted by the Methodist July Committee to go to theological college at Didsbury on his return home . He excelled in the Methodist community at Didsbury relishing his studies there and developing his skills not least as captain of the college football team. In 1950, Arthur married Iris Arscott .They had known each other since childhood and their affection for each other had matured over many years and throughout his RAF stationing. Arthur was ordained at the Methodist Conference in Sheffield in 1951 and took up his first probationary appointment in Highbridge in the Bridgewater Circuit. He and Iris were without doubt ‘a team’ throughout their whole Christian life together. They lived and provided an instructional and caring ministry within the Methodist Church. They created this working relationship in the Portland Circuit and maintained their work in the Harrogate, Northampton and Leicester West Circuits. It was a joy to them both to conclude their ministry together, almost where it had begun, serving in the Weymouth Circuit, until retirement in 1988.

Arthur was a man of many talents. An avid reader, a painter, a lover of poetry and had a colourful gift of illustration that revealed itself in his powerful and articulate preaching. He believed wholeheartedly in the power of prayer and was without question a true and faithful servant.

He died on 1st September 2015 in the ninety second year of his age and the sixty fourth year of his ministry.