

# CHURCH MATTERS: 1



Courtesy of Mark Hayter (artist: Michael Hayter)

The Church of St Peter and St Paul stands in a commanding position overlooking its parish. Michael Hayter was our Rector when SAL began. Michael knew *everyone* and he writes regularly about his parishioners, especially those he has visited because of sickness, at home and in hospital. He would often return home at 10pm. Of course he just had the one parish to cover for most of his 37 years here. In June 1977 he fondly writes:

*I have never known a sick person in the parish to be left alone and uncared for by relations and neighbours. I have known countless cases where friends, neighbours or relatives have undertaken, as just the natural and right thing to do, the rough work for someone who was old and frail, to be company for someone who was housebound, or to nurse someone who was ill. I have known times when somebody has done this for years on end, and it is one of the things that makes Steeple and Middle Aston such a good place to live in that this should be so.*

And so it continues.



As Canon Hayter was nearing retirement a cosy centrally heated new Rectory was being built on the site of the stables. Michael Holland was the first Rector to live here, moving in in 1984.

There have been 6 Rectors during the life of SAL.

- Michael Hayter 1946
- Michael Holland 1984
- Michael Roden 1994
- Stephen M'Caw 2002
- Mark Clavier 2011
- Marcus Green 2013

During the interregnum in March 1984 the boiler broke down and parishioners were invited to bring their own source of heating.

Ann Shukman who assisted in our benefice was one of the first women to be ordained as Deaconess into the Church of England in April 1994.



In the 1970s, Michael Hayter and his wife Patcie (right) lived with their 5 children in the old Rectory (above), now Canterbury House. It was the centre of much activity: the church fete, Mothers' Union, Young Wives, meetings, choir and bellringers' dinners, Sunday school parties, etc.



Villagers would jangle the bell and walk in, knowing the layout of the Rectory as well as their own houses.



Rev Hayter decided that Barbara Johnston (above) should learn to play the organ; he taught her himself. She was organist and sacristan for many years. Barbara would also help out with secretarial work and the Sunday School.



**NEWS**  
**Making Church history**

ST Mary's Church in Banbury was packed to capacity on Sunday to see 11 women ordained as priests by the Bishop of Dorchester, the Rt Rev Anthony Russell. As previewed in last week's *Banbury Guardian*, among them were four local women, Alison Duff and Stella Fairbairn from the Banbury team ministry, Joy Porter from St Mary's at Chipping Norton, and Ann Shukman, from Steeple Aston with North Aston and Tackley. The preacher was the Rev Christopher Hall, from Deddington, aptly chosen because his father, the Rev R.O. Hall, ordained the first woman priest in the Anglican Church in Free China 50 years ago while he was Bishop of Hong Kong. The congregation of hundreds of friends and well-wishers were obviously moved by what was such a significant moment in the history of the Church. The new priests are pictured with the Bishop.