

In 1364 St. George's Chapel, Windsor, acquired the manor including the castle site but did not devote any money to its maintenance. Unsurprisingly, Leland, that keen observer of the environment, remarked 'there hath been a castle'.

Deddington itself flourished in spite of the castle's demise. The *raison d'être* for the growth of traffic and trade was the major road crossing (now guarded by traffic lights). Even this focal point did not save Deddington from being in the shadow of Banbury. Its castle site was developed into parkland with fishponds by the St George's Windsor manorial owners. Their underlying purpose was to create a hunting park and hold fairs.

During the nineteenth century, 'gentlemanly' sport (cricket) and recreations (a rifle club) gradually opened up the castle site to the 'respectable' public, marked by a gigantic thatched pavilion in which balls for 'gentry' were held. Only by 1886 did football follow, with children's games in the 1930s.

The opening in recent years of the Windmill Centre on the west of Deddington has removed sports from the castle site, but today's visitors to its once again relaxed scene cannot fail to be impressed by its extent. This is one of many good reasons to want to know more about it.

Thursday 11th March 2004.

***The Theory and Practice of Medicine from Medieval Times to the Scientific Revolution* – Steve Bacon.**

This was a fascinating if at times gruesome account of techniques used in medieval medicine. Steve's talk centred around the notion of health and quality of life being due to the balance within our bodies of what were known as the four humours – blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile.

Understanding of how this balance worked or could be altered depended very much on Greek and Roman knowledge and, where available, Arab experience. In fairly general terms, the humours were an outcome of what you ate, drank and argued about. People could be sanguine or melancholic depending on humour balance.

This broad-based introduction was followed by some graphic descriptions of how leeches were employed, arrows were removed from the body and wounds healed (honey helped) or made worse!. Last but not least Steve Bacon ventured into the world of amputation. His impressive display of related medieval artefacts greatly exceeded the time available for explaining their use. However, it all made for an interesting evening and an unusual conclusion to the season of indoor meetings.