

# History of The Moat House



**T**he Manor house with the Church has formed the focal point of the village since the early part of the medieval period. However, we know that there has been occupation in Acton since at least the second century, with the discovery and excavation of a Roman Villa under and around the village church. Iron Age pottery and flints suggest even earlier occupation still.

The raised mound upon which the building is built was constructed in Norman times. Around 6,000 moated sites as prestigious aristocratic and seigniorial residences with the provision of a moat as a status symbol, rather than a practical military defence. The peak period during which moated sites were built was between about 1250 and 1350.

Examination of the timber frame during refurbishing of the Manor points to a date around 1320. It is about this date that the first record of the Trussells at Acton is mentioned, when in 1342, John Trussell of Acton settled the Manor of Acton (with Bednall and Brocton) on himself and his wife, with the remainder to William Trussell of Kibblestone (Stone). Acton appears to have passed to another William, the son of John, who in 1371 settled it on Margaret, daughter of Sir William Trussell of Kibblestone, and her husband, Fulke Pembrugge, Lord of the Manor of Tong and Tong Castle.

Through this marriage and settlement, the Manor of Acton passed from the Trussells to the Manor of Tong.

Margaret, how had married at the age of fourteen, died without issue before 1400, leaving Fulke a life interest in Acton under the 1371 settlement. Fulke remarried, and under a further settlement, after providing for himself and his wife, Isobel, created a remainder (Acton) in favour of William Trussell who acquired it on death of Isobel in 1446. William lost Acton when Richard Vernon, a cousin of the Pembrugge side dispossessed him by an action of novel disseisin in 1448. An appeal in 1450 was apparently successful for in 1450, on the death of William, he held the Manor.

The Trussell interest continued until 1500, when a John Trussell, who had succeeded the Manor, died in infancy and whose heir, his sister Elizabeth, subsequently married John de Vere, Earl of Oxford. The Manor descended with earldom until 1575, when it was conveyed to trustees probably for sale.

By 1658, the Manor was held by William Anson of Shugborough and descended in that family.

In the later years, the Manor House was considerably altered, but the east facing wing is today restored to much as it was, with the bar and upper function room showing the excellent timber frame of the early fourteenth century. The building is a grade 2\* listed building, but more importantly the mound, which the house is built on, is a scheduled Ancient Monument. A reflection of its historic importance.

The Moat House today is owned and run by the Lewis family and opened as a public bar and restaurant in June 1988. In 1997 the Moat House was extended to incorporate a luxury 21 bedroom Hotel with Function Room for up to 200 and 6 designated meeting rooms and Corporate Events field. In January 1999, following a fire, the Restaurant and back of house area were redeveloped to provide the setting you are dining in today.

To date, The Moat House has 41 four star bedrooms, 8 conference rooms, top of the range wedding facilities, an award winning restaurant and a 15<sup>th</sup> century oak beamed bar.

