

**The Salt King
Celebratory Picnic
25th June 2017**

Welcome to this celebratory picnic in honour of **John Corbett - The Salt King**.

We are delighted to hold this Community picnic for local residents - replicating the kindness shown by John Corbett - where he allowed members of the public to picnic in the grounds of the Chateau.

Whilst this is a fun event and we hope that everyone enjoys themselves, for the safety and comfort of all, we need to point out:

- * Tree climbing is not allowed
 - * Children should be kept away from the River Salwarpe
 - * We cannot allow dogs (except for guide dogs) on site,
 - * Fires or barbecues are prohibited from the site
 - * There is an information point, near the performance area.
- First aid is available here and lost children will be taken here.

Grateful Thanks to everyone who has helped this event to happen

Alan Davey, Barbara Middlemass, BBC Hereford & Worcester, Ben Elder, Black Country Radio, Burgoynes Marquees, Brown & Fincher, Chateau Impney Hotel, Droitwich Arts Network, Droitwich Community Choir, Droitwich Library, Droitwich Rugby Club, Droitwich Town Council, Droitwich Ukulele Club, Droitwich Spa CVS, Helen Cook, John Armstrong, John Dudley, John Ellis, Lance Cartwright, Little Owl Cakes, Malcolm Stent, Malcolm Wakeman, Mystic Isle Holidays, National Lottery (Celebrate) Funding, Parkinson Wright Solicitors, Peter Hawkins, Probus 87, Radfield Home Care (Bromsgrove & Redditch), Rachel Middlemass, Rhys Jones, Rosie Philpott, RT Social, Salvation Army Band & Choir, SN Financial, Spa Man, Stage Door Dance Academy, Stoke Prior Parish Council, Sue Abel, Tuneful Tubes, Voices Unlimited, Waitrose, Worcestershire County Council, Wychavon Leisure Walking Group.

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8-9 JULY 2017

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UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2017

<p>SATURDAY 5 AUGUST</p> <p>CELEBRATE IN STYLE AS WE STEP BACK IN TIME TO THE ROARING 20S TO HOST AN EVENING OF GLAMOUR AND DECADENCE AT CHATEAU IMPNEY HOTEL.</p> <p>BOOK NOW: CHATEAU-IMPNEY.COM/WHATS-ON</p>	<p>FRIDAY 22 SEPTEMBER</p> <p>CRACK OUT YOUR LEGWARMERS AND GET THE HAIRSPRAY READY - CHATEAU IMPNEY IS STEPPING BACK IN TIME TO THE ULTIMATE PARTY DECADE!</p> <p>BOOK NOW: CHATEAU-IMPNEY.COM/WHATS-ON</p>	<p>FRIDAY 27 OCTOBER</p> <p>RICKY TOMLINSON (ROYLE FAMILY) SHERRIE HEWSON (BENIDORM) JOHN CHALLIS (ONLY FOOLS & HORSES)</p> <p>BOOK NOW: CHATEAU-IMPNEY.COM/WHATS-ON</p>
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Chateau Impney Hotel & Exhibition Centre, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire WR9 0BN

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Order of the Day

12pm -Gates Open

1pm - Official Welcome and Opening of the picnic
- Including presentation to members of the Corbett Family.

Join us in a rendition of "Happy Birthday John Corbett" to start the celebrations in style.

1.20pm - Voices Unlimited

2.05pm - Droitwich Ukulele Band

2.30pm- Droitwich Community Choir

3.30pm - Droitwich Ukulele Club

4pm - Alice in Salt Land - Mad Hatter Prize Presentation

4.45pm Salvation Army Band & Choir

5.30pm- Close

NB - All times are approximate

Master of Ceremonies - Mr Malcolm Stent

Try to picture the type of person with the following qualities: entrepreneurial, visionary, single minded, hardworking and prepared to diversify into various kinds of business.

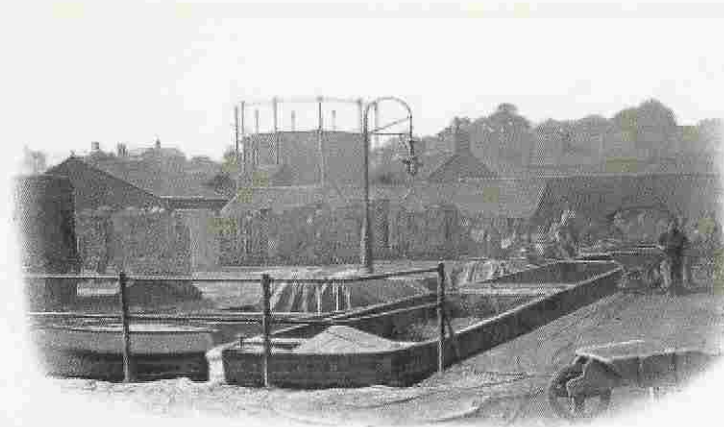
How did John Corbett start, make his fortune, and finally settle in Droitwich?

His father, Joseph Corbett, was the son of a Shropshire farmer in the area of Ludlow. When his father died Joseph left to seek his fortune elsewhere. During that time it was the beginnings of the industrial revolution in the area of the Midlands known as the Black Country, full of raw materials that were needed to start a new age. An area of coal, iron, limestone, and precious fireclay.

The Stourbridge arm of the canal was completed at the Delph to join the major network of canals to finally send goods around the world. Joseph found employment in the canal carrying business and went on to start his own boat repair and carrying business.

Whilst in lodgings in Brierley Hill near the Delph, Joseph met local girl Hannah Cole. Hannah fell pregnant, On April 13th 1817 Joseph and Hannah married in Halesowen away from local gossip.

They moved into a two-bedded cottage in Gas Street at the Delph, easily accessible to the canal wharf.



Although this illustration showing bricks being loaded, is dated from the early 1900s, it gives you an idea of the area where John was born.

On 12th June 1817 Hannah gave birth to their first son John, he was christened at St Michael's Church, Brierley Hill on 29th June 1817. As soon as he could walk he attended the local Church Day School. Aged 11 John left school, his father taught him the canal trade, by the age of 14 he was in charge of his own boat including employees. In 1840 he went as an apprentice to William Lester, Chief Engineer for Messrs Hunt and Brown of The Leys Ironworks, Brierley Hill. After six years he left to become a partner with his father in the canal carrying business now known as Joseph Corbett and Son.

In 1852 the railway had an effect on the canal carrying trade. In that year they sold the family business and John's father retired aged 55, making sufficient money to look after his family in his later years. John Corbett through plying goods through the Stoke Prior & Droitwich area became familiar with the salt industry. He had worked part time for the British Alkali Company and the Imperial Salt and Alkali Company, both based in Bromsgrove.

Between 1852 and 1855 John Corbett agreed to purchase British Alkali Company from the liquidators.

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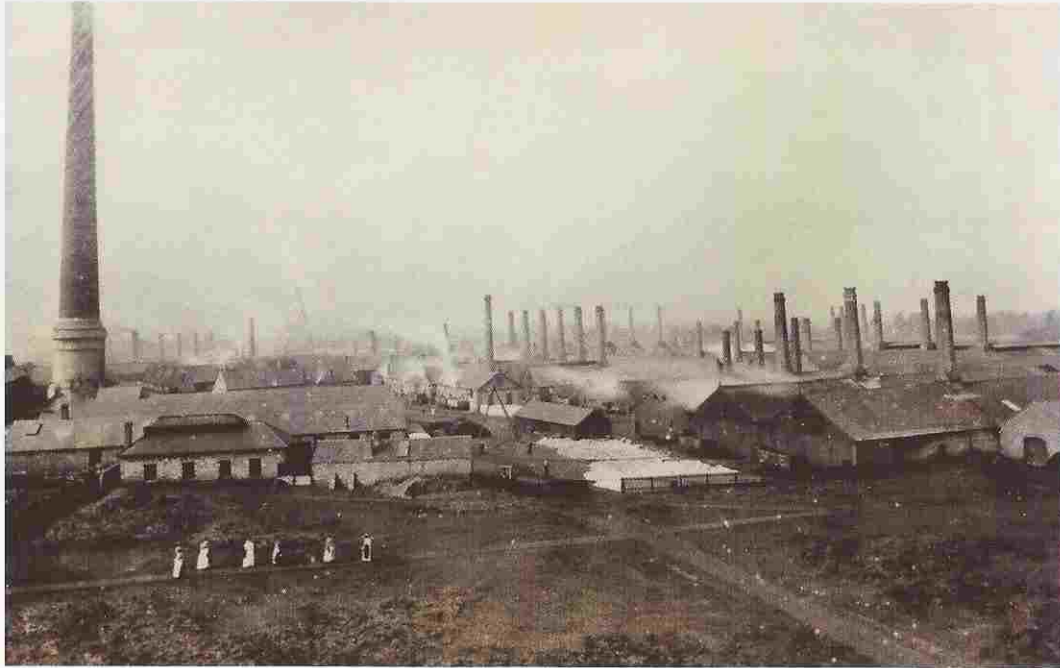
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John will forever be linked with salt but did not make his fortune through salt alone. He had already illustrated his business acumen by investing in many properties and agricultural land before he made the risky decision to go into salt production at Stoke Prior.



John Corbett amassed a huge fortune and became known as one of the most generous philanthropists of his time. He never forgot where he came from, he was a substantial benefactor to the Brierley Hill area, supporting many charities and St. Michael's church where his parents are buried, and in Amblecote with the purchasing of a mansion known as 'The Hill' converted it into a Hospital. His memory is commemorated on many street names throughout both areas.

Mystic Isle

Thank you to John Corbett, The Salt King (1817)

for giving so much to Droitwich Spa and to Chateau Impney (1875) for retaining your grace and beauty for all to enjoy and hosting today's wonderful picnic.

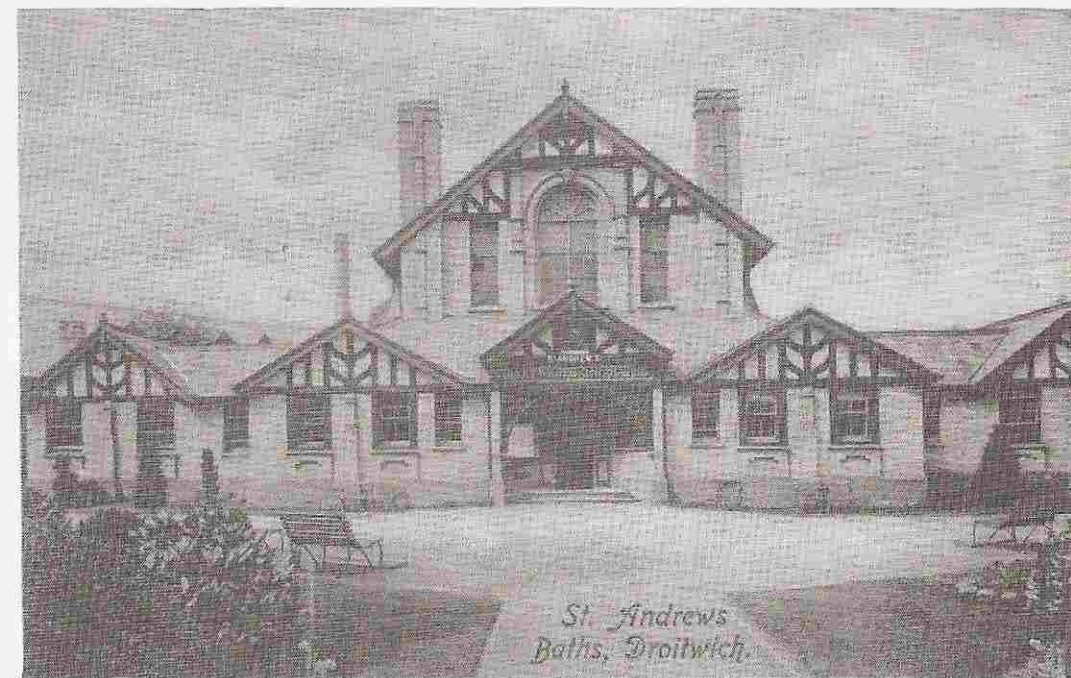
We wish everyone a super celebratory day.

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In the middle of the 19th century he had the vision to change Droitwich from a dirty, smelly little town into a tourist spa, building hotels, brine baths, and a new railway station for the many visitors coming to take 'the brine' in the hope of curing their ills, aches and pains. His generosity put Droitwich on the map. By an order dated 1993 'Spa' was finally added to Droitwich Town Council's name when it could be said that, at last, John Corbett's vision for the town had been realised.



Unlike other places, the medicinal benefits were not derived from drinking the spa water, which is almost saturated brine, but from the muscular relief derived from swimming and floating in such a dense, concentrated salt solution, at the town's brine baths (first opened in 1830).

The spa water at Droitwich is the warmest in the United Kingdom outside Bath.

In 1855 John, whilst on business in Paris, met Anna O'Meara. They married in Paris in 1856 and returned to live at Stoke Grange, close to his Stoke Prior Salt Works.

By 1869 the Corbett's had a family of five children and were looking for a larger property. The same year they purchased Impney Manor House with 69 acres of land at Dodderhill. The Manor House was ultimately demolished and a French Architect from Paris, Auguste Tronquois was commissioned to draw plans for a Chateau in the style of Louis XIII.

Impney Hall, built of Fareham brick and Bath stone was completed in 1875. In 1876 a sixth child, Clare, was born.

John Corbett was renowned for his philanthropy, he stood as Liberal MP for Droitwich for many years. He was a model employer providing housing, healthcare and schooling for his employees and their families.

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CHE BIRCH HAYES PHOTOGRAPHY

From: *The journal of horticulture and cottage gardener* April 3, 1854

[A contemporary description of Droitwich and Chateau Impney]

A stranger arriving in Droitwich and asking "what is the staple trade of the town", would receive in reply, "Salt, all salt." The quaint old town, though not indicating the fact by its whiteness, rests on salt, lives by salt, and is, in fact, sinking into salt, not a few of the houses appearing to the stranger as dangerously likely to be "cured." There are tall black chimneys all over the town, and at the base of them furnaces for boiling the brine and converting into salt. The brine is pumped up year after year by powerful steam pumps from wells sunk from 300 to 1000 feet deep, dissolving and wearing the salt rocks till hills have become hollows, and the sinking and slanting houses appearing as if putting their heads together The inhabitants, however, appear to be contented, and the town prosperous, the celebrity of its brine baths attracting thousands of sufferers from all parts of the British Isles, as well as the continent and America, every year. ...

By his own industry [Mr. Corbett] made Impney what it is to-day. Some fourteen or fifteen years ago he purchased a large tract of land, a purely agricultural district, somewhat boldly undulated. The land that consisted of ploughed fields then is a beautiful park now, well furnished with trees, and beautified with water, while a herd of deer fatten on the rich herbage of the fertile soil. The mansion, which is beautifully situated and commands extensive, diversified, and picturesque views, is in the French style. It is a most imposing pile, the material (hand-smoothed bricks, with stone facings) and workmanship being of the best possible character; and the architectural embellishments singularly rich. It is estimated that £100,000 was expended in its erection alone. The roof of the hall is supported by massive and solid pillars of marble everything being in keeping; and valuable paintings of the old masters Titian, Rembrandt, Vandyke, and others adorn the walls.



John Corbett died on 22nd April 1901 and was laid to rest at St Michaels church in Stoke Prior.

In 1906, his brother, Thomas was laid to rest next to him in the church yard.

St Michael's Church welcomes visitors (there are beautiful stained glass panels documenting the salt works and plaques commemorating the support given by John Corbett during his lifetime.)

The grave site is easily identifiable in the church yard, and most days, the church is open from 10am- 4pm for visitors.

On the south side of the mansion are spacious terrace gardens with flower beds in panels, an elaborate fountain, and splendid specimen trees. The view from the terrace is particularly fine, embracing water, bridges, trees, a far-reaching pastoral valley, and, beyond, the Malvern Hills. ...

No expense has been spared in rendering Impney what it is. The leading landscape gardeners have been employed. The work of tree and shrub-planting, has been conducted on a scale of no small magnitude, as may be imagined when it is estimated that shrubs and trees of the value of £10,000 have been planted since the work commenced. ...

Besides keeping his estate in such perfect order, Mr. Corbett is a benefactor to the town of Droitwich, which he represents in Parliament, and the district surrounding. Everything that is worthy has his countenance and support, and the public buildings he has erected, both as regards their use and ornament. reflect the practical mind, the good taste, and the generosity of the affluent owner of Impney.



Droitwich owes its existence to the remarkable natural brine springs which emanate from subterranean beds of pure rock salt 200 feet below ground level. The importance of the salt can be seen in the town's motto – 'Sal Sapit Omnia' meaning Salt Flavours all. Droitwich brine is ten times saltier than seawater. Its density and buoyancy are only rivalled by the Dead Sea.

The Raven, and the elephant feature heavily in the **Corbett** coat of arms - you'll find evidence of them all around the local area - look upwards next time you're in town and see the legacy of the work of John Corbett - even on the bridge in Lido Park.



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The Corbett Coat of Arms