

HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE
NAAS LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



OLD WORKHOUSE BELL

Hanging on the reception wall in Naas Hospital you will find a solitary bright silver coloured bell. The casual observer might be forgiven for asking, “what is so exceptional about that?”. However as we all know everything tells its own particular story and this bell is no exception. It is in fact the old Workhouse Bell which was taken down and had lain in storage for many years after the demolition of part of the old workhouse buildings to make way for the new hospital. It had hung for many years on the original workhouse wall. The bell most likely dates from about 1845 and is now safely installed in the hospital as a testimony to a bygone era. It would have been used for a variety of purposes and would have played an important part in the everyday life of the workhouse. One thinks of the old saying, “for whom the bell tolls” and there would have surely been many occasions when it summoned people to occasions both joyful and sorrowful. If only it could speak what stories it could tell. Its continuous presence maintains that important link with the past and reminds us of that sense of place we all have with our community.