

HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE
NAAS LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



GOULDINGS AND THE GREEN SCHOOL

The Fair Green area at the south end of Naas has changed a lot over the years. Long gone are the days when the Fair Green was covered with cattle, sheep and pigs – and of course some bargains being made on the Main Street. Fair day was an occasion full of atmosphere when from early morning the farmers, jobbers and dealers assembled to trade their wares.

Pat Gouldings hardware shop on the main Street just opposite the green tells its own story of those bygone days. The building in fact played a significant part in the educational life of the town. It was in fact a Junior School, known as “*The Green School*” and looked after primary education. It was in fact in operation for many years as a school before it came under the control of the Christian Brothers in the town in 1937.

In 1954 with the opening of St. Corban’s Primary School the students from the Green School and those in the Moat moved to the new school. Thankfully the building has survived and now tells its own contemporary story. The traditional local store is fast disappearing in most parts of Ireland, victims to the modern day superstores and shopping centres. However it is refreshing to visit Gouldings and get that personal care and attention that was so much a part of the shopping we experienced in those more leisurely and less hectic times. No hustle and bustle and searching for stuff you cannot find. Time for a chat and most important of all - get some free consultancy on how to tackle a difficult job. It takes me back to my childhood in Lurgan, Co. Armagh when as a youngster I used, as we said in those days, “go for the messages” to the local hardware shop for my uncle Hughie who was the town’s Tinsmith. I think we are fortunate to have this tradition still alive and well in the “Fair Green” area of Naas.