

# News

## Contents of Glin Castle to be sold at auction

Martin Byrnes

AN international auction of the contents of Glin Castle will be announced by Christie's in London at the end of this month.

The news comes as the castle closed as a hotel and staff were put on short-time working or not re-employed for the tourist season.

Christie's, founded in 1766, and the oldest fine art auctioneers in the world, have a long association with Desmond FitzGerald, 29th Knight of Glin, who acted as their agent in Ireland for many years and who is still an advisor to the firm.

The knight is an authority on antique art, furnishings and architecture.

His home, Glin Castle, is considered to be a gem for its decorative plasterwork and its collections of Irish furniture and paintings.

Glin Castle has been the home of the FitzGerald family for 700 years, and has operated commercially as a private hotel and conference and event centre in recent times.

The items to be auctioned by Christie's have been already removed from the castle and taken to England for storage and cataloguing before the auction date.

Cllr John Sheehan, Glin, told the Limerick Leader that he hoped that the closure of the castle as a hotel would be temporary.

"A report which was commissioned by Glin Castle from consultants Colin Buchanan placed the castle at the centre of a development which would include the town and the whole N69, the Foynes Flying Boat Museum and other attractions as a tourism destination," said Cllr Sheehan.



The Knight of Glin, Desmond FitzGerald, in front of Glin Castle, whose contents are to be sold at auction by Christie's of London

PICTURE: MICHAEL COWHEY

"The knight was very positive about the project. I hope that, when this economic downturn is reversed, the castle will be able to fulfill that role."

It is understood that the

castle would have employed up to 15 staff during the summer, were it to have operated as a hotel. A smaller staff, some on a three-day-week, is maintaining the castle, grounds and farm.

A spokesman for Christie's in London told the Limerick Leader that the sale of the fine art contents of Glin Castle, though important, will consist only of works acquired by the knight

during his lifetime and will not include any of the castle's heirloom items, many of which date back centuries.

Glin Castle management was unavailable for comment.