

# Top Limerick firm of architects in liquidation

## Dismay at collapse of Murray ÓLaoire

By John O'Shaughnessy

THE collapse of the architectural practice of Murray ÓLaoire, founded in Limerick in 1979, and whose most recent local flagship project was Thomond Park, has sent shudders through the construction industry and allied professions.

The firm went into voluntary liquidation last Friday, with the loss of over 120 jobs, many long time employees.

According to reports, Murray ÓLaoire's bankers pulled the plug.

According to a company statement, they were unable to meet current financial obligations as a result of cumulative bad debts and the ongoing difficulty of securing profitable work, as well as the increasing difficulties in getting paid on time, or at all.

Hugh Murray, co-founder and member of a prominent Limerick family, is one of the most respected architects not only in his native city, but worldwide.

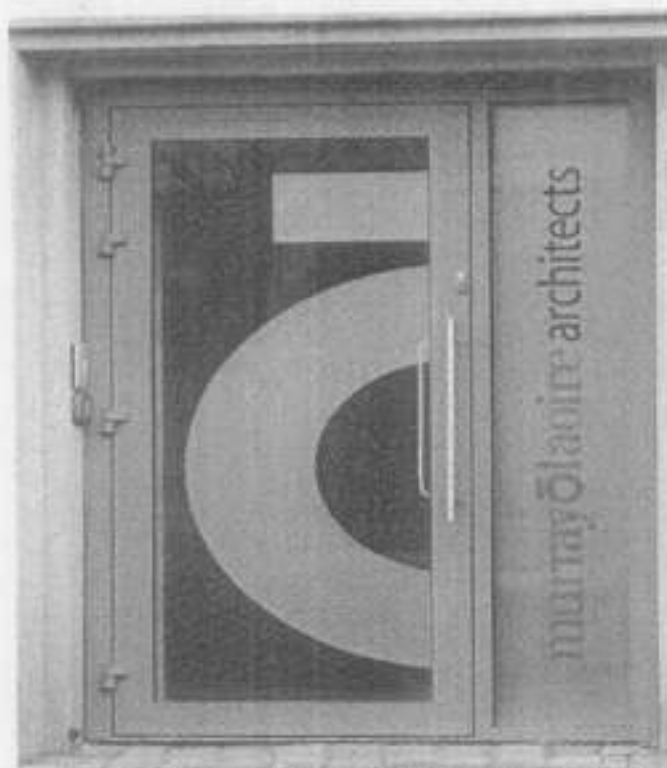
Sean ÓLaoire described it as a "devastating blow, and warned that many others could go the same way in months ahead.

There was, he continued, a sense of inevitability about it, with nothing coming in and then not being paid for work done. "You can only keep going for so long on that basis".

A colleague described Hugh Murray as "the perfect gentleman and a thorough professional".

Murray ÓLaoire had offices in Limerick, Dublin, Germany, Slovakia, Russia, Moscow, UAE and Tripoli.

Other Irish projects included Cork School of Music, Castletroy College, LIT Millennium Theatre.



Tullamore Hospital, Cork Opera House, Clarion Hotel Limerick, Adidas headquarters in Moscow, etc.

They were winners of 70 national and international awards in competitions.

The company is committed to an orderly winding down of its affairs and is to hold a creditors' meeting.

The Royal Institute of Architects estimates that 50 per cent of its members are unemployed.

Other Limerick architectural practices have trimmed down on numbers in recent months, principally because there was little work coming into their offices.

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