

ARMAGH

The County Armagh Twelfth Demonstration is now firmly established as the largest Orange gathering in the world and encompasses the full range of the Orange family.

11 District Lodges will be on parade in Armagh, with a total of 150 Private Lodges and almost 5,000 brethren taking part. They will be joined by ladies from the Association of Loyal Orangewomen of Ireland and a number of Junior Boys and Junior Girls Lodges.

This parade will be broadcast live on GB News.

The Co Armagh Demonstration can attract upwards of 20,000 spectators, including some from across the Border.

Approximately 65 bands will accompany the Lodges and some of the finest Pipe, Accordion, Silver and Flute Bands in the country will be on parade.

There are usually four Scottish bands on parade at the Co. Armagh demonstration and as the “County of the Diamond” is renowned for the Lambeg Drum, dozens will be accompanying the Lodges, especially if the weather is good.

Armagh District LOL No. 5 has the honours of hosting this year’s parade, having missed out in 2020 and 2021 due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

The District is centred on the historic ecclesiastical city and has 10 Private Lodges, with approximately 370 brethren. The Lodges take great pride on their turnout on the Twelfth, with virtually all the brethren wearing the traditional bowler hat and white gloves.

The District Lodge holds an Act of Remembrance each Twelfth morning outside Armagh Orange Hall on the picturesque Mall, where 7 members murdered during The Troubles, are commemorated on a Memorial Plaque.

The brethren of Armagh District are very looking forward to hosting the parade for the first time since 2009 and to mark the event, a special souvenir booklet has been produced.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of a local Twelfth demonstration held in one of the Lisnadill Rectory fields, just outside the city, and hosted by

then Rector, Wor. Bro. Rev. Edward A. Foy. He was a stalwart of local Orangeism and was Chaplain of Armagh Temperance LOL 94 for 40 years. In November 1919, he was seriously injured when he was shot at point-blank range by a man with a revolver at the front door of the Rectory. Thankfully, he recovered and undeterred, he maintained his unwavering commitment to the Orange cause.

There will be just the one new banner being carried on parade for the first time this Twelfth, that of Corcrair Purple Rocket LOL No 339, Portadown District.

The Lodges of the host District will assemble on The Mall from 9.00am where they will be joined by County Grand Lodge Officers. They will then parade to the Armagh War Memorial at 9.45am to lay a wreath and be joined by the first of the visiting Districts. The main parade, headed by Tassagh Silver Band and Tassagh True Blues LOL 49, will then commence at approximately 10am. Armagh District will be followed by Richhill, Killylea, Lurgan, Newtownhamilton and Portadown, Districts; the remainder of the Districts, namely, Markethill, Bessbrook, Keady, Tandragee and Loughgall will parade as they arrive, and by 12.30pm, all Districts should be in the Demonstration Field at Hamiltonsbawn Road.

The Chair will be taken at 1.45pm by the County Grand Master, Rt Wor Bro Denis J Watson JP, and proceedings will commence with the traditional religious service, conducted by Wor. Bro. Rev. Dr. Alan McCann, County Grand Chaplain.

He will be assisted by the other Deputy County Grand Chaplains in the Prayers and Act of Remembrance; the Address will be given by Wor. Bro. Rev. Edwin Frazer, Deputy County Grand Chaplain and Armagh District Chaplain; Rev Frazer is currently ministering in Clogher and Glenhoy Presbyterian Churches. The prize-winning Aghavilly Accordion Band will provide the musical accompaniment for the two hymns.

The return parade is scheduled to commence from the Demonstration Field at 3.00pm, with Lurgan District LOL No. 6 being the first to leave.