

# Helion Lodge Number 1

## 2012 Mark Twain Award Submission

To the  
Masonic Information Center  
8120 Fenton Street, Suite 203  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-4785  
(301) 588-4010



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Huntsville, Alabama

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Worshipful Master  
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## Helion Lodge No. 1 Birthplace of Freemasonry in Alabama Chartered 1812

Masonic Service Association  
8120 Fenton St.  
Suite 203  
Silver Spring, Md. 20910-4785

Dear Masonic Service Association Brothers,

It is again, with great pleasure, that Helion Lodge No. 1 of Huntsville, Alabama submits a portfolio of its Masonic activities for the Masonic Service Association of North America's prestigious Mark Twain Award. This year, 2012, is of particular import to the Brothers of Helion Lodge as we have recently recognized two-hundred years of Helion's Masonic service to our city, county, and state with the celebration of our Charter Bicentennial. This charter was granted by the Grand Lodge of Kentucky to one of our two Lodges of origin, Madison Lodge No. 21 of Huntsville, then of the Mississippi Territory, August, 1812.

Helion Lodge's two-hundred years of service to our community was recognized by the City of Huntsville by the Mayor of Huntsville in his Proclamation citing 25 August, the day of our grand anniversary event, as HELION LODGE NO. 1 DAY. This proclamation cited Helion's service to our community with phrases such as "Whereas, the Brothers of [Helion's lodges of origin, as well as Helion itself] have been and continue to serve as prominent leaders of government, trade and commerce, medicine, education, and the arts throughout the history of Huntsville..." and "Whereas, Helion Lodge has received the prestigious North American Mark Twain Masonic Awareness Award that recognizes lodges that have demonstrated exemplary work in constructive positive Masonic identity within the lodge and for the local community..."

Helion Lodge presents the image of Freemasonry to the public on a variety of public occasions including its financial contributions to the Madison County Veteran's Memorial Park, and "Honor Flight." In addition, Helion participates in numerous public service activities such as the MDA Telethon, Walk to Defeat ALS, Walk to End Alzheimer's, Walk for Autism, and MS Walk, among others. We, the Brothers of Helion Lodge No. 1 deem it an honor to be afforded the opportunity to participate in this most worthwhile program.

Fraternally and Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Carpenter  
Worshipful Master

Helion Lodge Number 1  
P.O. Box 7216  
Huntsville, Ala. 35807  
(256) 536-6693

Activity from 12/1/2011 to 11/30/2012

100 Word Summary

At Helion Lodge, first and foremost we strive for brotherly love. We emphasize an atmosphere conducive for a positive and memorable evening for its members and visitors. When you visit Helion and get to know its members, you understand why it is an active lodge and an integral part of the community. Despite the diversity of the lodge everyone is embraced and work as one, while bringing out the positive attributes of the individual, internally as well as externally. The Lodge provides a positive environment for its members and visitors, resulting in a high standing and involvement in the community.



On August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1812 Madison Lodge Number 21 received its Charter from the Grand Lodge of Kentucky. Madison Lodge Number 21 combined with another lodge to form Helion Lodge Number 1. On August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 Helion Lodge culminated a year of planning in the celebration of its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the receipt of its Charter.

Helion Lodge Number 1 supports the continuity of activities from the previous Masters' Terms, and as such takes advantage of the original and continuing plans for these activities. By not trying to "re-invent the wheel", the Lodge experiences significant success with a reasonable amount of effort. Since many of the activities have existed in the past, there are people available who are already familiar with the final product and know how to achieve that goal. The people who are leading the activities have a passion for what they're doing and when we reach the point where nobody is interested in a particular activity, we don't try to continue to push it along - we let it drop and allow another activity to fill its place.

A significant amount of planning went into preparing for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, and because of the time between dispensation in 1811 and charter in 1812, we were able to have two celebrations over the past two years, thereby capitalizing on the experience, planning and relationships developed from the previous year. Many visits were made to lodges in other states to get to know the Brothers and to invite them to come to our event

The effort to win the Mark Twain award has made us keenly aware of the importance of planning and in associating with the community. Efforts have been made to invite the community into the lodge, to be involved in civic activities, to prepare the brothers to discuss masonry among their friends and to make the lodge a desirable place to meet.

This year Helion Lodge participated in a large variety of activities. The following list is sorted by those elements that provide the community with a better understanding of who we are, listed at the top (our external image), followed by the efforts that we put forth to make the fraternity desirable (our internal operations), and concluding with the efforts that we put forth to support our appendant bodies and Brothers outside of our own

Lodge (fraternal support). References are further explained in Appendix I which follows.

**Developing our external image:**

- 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Helion Lodge on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (Page I-1)
- Huntsville Home Tour (Page I-4)
- Central Alabama Model 'A' Club (Page I-5)
- Daughters of 1812 "Overtour" (Page I-6)
- Alabama Historical Association visit (Page I-6)
- Locks of Love donation on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (Page I-7)
- Carpentry work on the Lodge Door (Page I-8)
- Lodge Banner (Page I-8)
- Northeast Alabama State Fair (Page I-9)
- Flag Day Observation (Page I-9)
- Veterans' Memorial check presentations (Page I-10)
- Adopt-A-Mile
- Robert Burns night (Page I-11)
- Member Travels to Scotland (Page I-11)
- ALS Walk on August 25<sup>th</sup> (Page I-12)
- Relay for Life with the DeMolay
- Christmas Charity Food Box Distribution

**Developing our internal operations**

- Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason Degrees (Page I-12)
- Installation of Officers June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012
- Receipt of the Conference Teaching Certificate (Page I-12)
- A warm welcome to visitors (Page I-13)
- History Reports by Historian Brother Rick Storey at every business meeting (Page I-13)
- Membership Directory (Page I-25)
- Emphasis on Committees and their members (Page I-26)
- Annual Christmas Dinner
- 5th Saturday covered dish dinners
- Saturday morning breakfasts at the Blue Plate Diner

### Developing our fraternal support

- Scottish Rite News (Page I-28)
- The Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis (SRICF) (Page I-28)
- Scottish Rite Masters (Page I-29)
- Scottish Rite Knights of Saint Andrew activities
- Scottish Rite Reunions (Page I-29)
- York Rite Christmas Observance
- York Rite Super Excellent Master (Page I-29)
- Monte Sano York Rite College activities (Page I-31)
- New DeMolay Executive Officer (Page I-31)
- DeMolay and Rainbow Support
- DeMolay presentation of the Flower Talk and the Ceremony of Light (Page I-32)
- Helion celebrates Northern Lodge Number 278 Sesquicentennial on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (Page I-32)
- Helion support of other lodges' degree work
- Many Helion Lodge members are officers at Gurley Lodge

Our members have a passion for the craft, and work hard within our lodge as well as outside. As one lists the involvement of some, many others come to mind that have been missed. Helion members were involved or honored in the community and the fraternity in the following ways:

- Helion Brother Mike Feld appointed District Lecturer
- Receipt of the Scottish Rite Elmer Gunter Award by Brother Ray Sheely (Page I-33)
- 50-year pin awards to business leader, Brother Leonard Mitchum on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (Page I-33)
- A Certificate of Appreciation presented to Brother Dick Kitchens on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (Page I-34)
- Grand Lodge Scholarship to Brother John Hood's Daughter
- Aiding an older Brother care for his property

In an effort to reach many people, one learns the importance of employing many different channels to get the message out. Technology offers us the ability to efficiently broadcast our news in ways that everyone can receive the message in the way



that works best for them. Helion Lodged uses technology in the following ways:

- Publicity
- Lodge Web Site (Page I-34)
- Newsletter (Page I-34)
- E-mail distribution by the Lodge Secretary (Page I-34)
- Yahoo Groups (Page I-35)
- Facebook Page (Page I-36)

As we reflect on our efforts throughout the year many ideas come to mind, and we like to record them so that we can set goals for the following year. Some are too difficult to accomplish in a short period of time or with a limited skill set, and others are ready for implementation.

Last year we realized the importance of having a phone directory published. We wanted to use it to not only fulfill its obvious role, but to also provide a means for active members to reach out to inactive or home-bound members. To that goal, the members were sorted by their zip codes and a section was created in the directory which allows them to look up their neighbors who are brothers. Internet mapping applications may provide a better way to accomplish that. A prototype was put together for a small area which shows promise. Expanding this to cover the County may prove fruitful.

Last year it was suggested that a banner be produced, so that when we go out from the lodge, others can see how we are involved in the community. The banner was made, and our presence is now being made known.

New suggestions for improvements to the Twain Award submissions include shifting more of the burden to the individual Lodge Committee Chairmen by having them put together a package for each of their events that is given to the Mark Twain Committee Chairman to assemble as the supporting information in the package.

Suggestions for improved operations include a tool for scheduling meetings that can be synchronized with Google Calendar called <http://doodle.com/>.

The evaluation that comes from this self examination is what works to make the Lodge strong, and as we reach out to the community to share the age-old benefits of the fraternity, we strengthen the community as well. We make it a practice to promote the Mark Twain Award program to the lodges we visit and to the visitors who come to our Lodge because we have seen first-hand the benefits it provides to the fraternity as a whole.