



THE BELLEFONTAINE BELLE SOCIETY, INC.

2024 IN REVIEW – WE’VE COME A LONG WAY!!!

1. Tax Exempt Non-Profit Corporation Formed. The Bellefontaine Belle Society, Inc. was formed as a non-profit corporation, and tax exempt status as a private foundation was obtained from the IRS. A logo for the Bellefontaine Belle was designed and adopted by the group.
2. Facebook Page and Website. A Facebook page and a website (www.bellefontainebelle.org) have been created.
3. Historical Hamlet. Bellefontaine has been recognized under Mississippi law as a historical hamlet by the Webster County Board of Supervisors. Documents are filed with the Mississippi Secretary of State’s office. Bellefontaine is only the third historical hamlet in the State of Mississippi.
4. Landscaping and Beautification. Significant work has been done to improve the area:
 - a. Flower pots with seasonal flowers have been added at the post office, lodge hall, and Bellefontaine Methodist Church.
 - b. Flowers/shrubs have been planted at the intersection of Highways 404 and 9 in Bellefontaine, under the tree near the entrance to the lodge hall/Fellowship Baptist Church, at the two North Union Cemetery signs on Highway 9, and by the signs at the entrance of the cemetery. Flowers were also planted by the Hicks Cemetery sign. Solar lights were added at the flower pot/bell at Bellefontaine Methodist Church. Solar lights were added at some of the other locations as well.
 - c. The Sue Knight family with assistance from others has improved her lot with flowers and benches for use by the community, as well as painted the gas tank white with a red top, with plans to add the “39737” zip code on it.
 - d. The “Scruggs lot” at the intersection of Highways 404 and 9 has been cleaned up and leveled, and is being mowed and maintained regularly. A fall sign with solar lights, hay bales, and flowers currently beautifies that space. A Christmas sign and other decorations are being worked on now.
 - e. Trash is being picked up regularly by committee members to keep Bellefontaine beautiful.
 - f. A number of members assisted North Union Cemetery with its cleanup day.

- g. The lot at the Bellefontaine Store location is being mowed.
5. Lodge Hall.
- a. Fellowship Baptist Church transferred ownership of the former Adelpian Lodge Hall #174 to The Bellefontaine Belle Society, Inc. for use as a community center.
 - b. A new water line was run to the lodge hall. New freeze proof outdoor faucets were installed.
 - c. A cleanup day (and several follow up cleanup days) were held at the lodge.
 - d. Gas and electrical have been checked.
 - e. An air conditioner/heater window unit was added upstairs, and a used refrigerator was donated.
 - f. Plumbing work has been done and both bathrooms are now functional and the kitchen sink is no longer leaking.
 - g. Mulch was placed around the front of the lodge and some sod was laid over area where the new water line was run.
 - h. A new podium was donated and a number of historical photos and newspaper articles have been hung in the lodge hall.
 - i. Belinda Stewart's team has evaluated the lodge hall and prepared some preliminary drawings.
 - j. A shed has been purchased to install toward the back of the lodge hall to use for storage of extra chairs and other items.
6. Sign and Bells. Some preliminary drawings of signage for the Historical Hamlet of Bellefontaine have been prepared. Four bells have been acquired for use on signs and other places.
7. Little Reading Library. Plans have been made to install a little reading library near the post office.
8. Fundraising and Special Events.
- a. Bellefontaine Belle Banner. A Bellefontaine Belle banner with the logo was made and used at the fundraising events.
 - b. Bellefontaine Belle Merchandise. Paintings and sketches have been made of several Bellefontaine area locations. Prints, notecards, and tea towels of these were made and are being sold to raise funds.
 - c. Membership and Donations. A number of people have become members and paid a \$25 membership fee. There have been a number of other donations (both monetary and in-kind).
 - d. Ice Cream Social. The First Annual Ice Cream Social with homemade ice cream, food, and entertainment was a big success in September. Money was raised from this event, and even more importantly, it brought the community together.
 - e. Walthall Trade Day. Many members contributed preserves and canned goods, pickles, crafts, homemade baked goods, and handmade items for sale at the Walthall Trade Day in October.

9. History. Through presentations and sharing of information, we have learned more about the history of the area.
10. Publicity. Bellefontaine has made the news on multiple occasions for the good things happening in the community.
11. Bringing the Community Together. There have been a number of Bellefontaine Belle meetings, as well as individual committee meetings, where we are working together and getting to know each other better. Our members have participated in fundraising activities and beautification/revitalization of the area. Many have worked hard on making the lodge hall useable again. The Ice Cream Social was a great event for the community. The community is interacting with each other more, and the revitalization of the area makes us all proud.