

LILLIAN GREEN

In 1938, 20th Century Fox came to Pineville, Missouri, to make a movie about Jesse James, and residents from the Bella Vista area frequently went up to watch the filming. Among those was Lillian Green, then secretary to C.A Linebarger, one of the Linebarger Brothers who opened the summer Lake Bella Vista resort in 1917.

Born in 1903, Lillian grew up on a farm across the road from the Dug Hill Church and Cemetery, a farm that is now the north end of the Kingwood Golf Course. Lillian's father died when she was only 12 years old, leaving her mother with a family of seven children to raise on her own. After the Linebargers opened the summer resort, Lillian and her sister worked at the cottage owned by Dr. Stratton Brooks, a university president from Missouri, who later helped her and her sister get their college education. She attended college in Springfield, Missouri, and after a few years of living there, returned to Bella Vista to become Linebarger's secretary. However, visiting the Pineville movie set in 1938 opened her eyes to the use of the camera, and she became very interested in photography while continuing in her secretarial role.

While Lillian was an artist with her camera, other family members were also artists, including Evelyn Cimino who painted the Dug Hill Church, prints of which are for sale at the Bella Vista Historical Museum. Lillian sold some of her pictures to national jigsaw manufacturers. She also sold photos to a variety of magazines for their covers, and to companies that produced calendars and greeting cards. She became so skilled that she is reported to have won the Kodak Southeastern U.S. Photographer Award of the Year in the late 1940's, which earned her a trip to Chicago. She lived in a home owned by C.A Linebarger across the road from the southern end of Lake Bella Vista. Sadly, she developed a brain tumor when she was in her early 50's and was hospitalized in Little Rock, then moved by family to Oregon to reside with a sister there until her death at age 53 on August 10, 1956.

One of Lillian's great-nephews, Bob Williams of rural Rogers, has become a Bella Vista Historical Museum volunteer, and has shared a number of photos and remembrances of his Aunt Lil. Bob's cousin, Gary Green, who helped build the Bella Vista Country Club golf course starting in 1966 and now lives in Tennessee, he has also generously shared a number of pictures of the Green family.

Mr. Linebarger sold the property where Lillian Green lived, in 1967, and it later became the Keck Grocery Store for several years, then a fishing bait shop. It was eventually burned down to be replaced by the building named Hampton Place. Although Lillian was buried in Ashland, Oregon, several of her family members' graves are located at the Dug Hill Cemetery, including her those of her parents and grandparents.

Picture 1: This December 1947 issue of the American Poultry Journal was one of several magazine cover photos that Lillian Green sold in the 1940's. She focused on local women and children as her models and sewed costumes to stage her photos. Pictured here are local residents Wilma and Dean Mowan.

Picture 2: Lillian Green's house had a miniature photo studio built on the right side. The house stood where the Hampton Place building now stands on the west side of Highway 71, across from the south end of Lake Bella Vista. The Vista reported on June 3, 1987, that it was burned down to make room for the new building.



