Wing Haven and Preserve Mecklenburg, Inc. are proud to announce the successful completion of a joint venture to protect and preserve the integrity of the Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden (ELH&G), located at 348 Ridgewood Avenue. This collective endeavor provides a new model of innovation and collaboration between two entirely different non-profits and is an inspiring story of creating best-case outcomes. Wing Haven is honored to have been a part of this innovative story that created a win for all involved.

Wing Haven Foundation purchased the Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden in 2008 to preserve and promote the legacy of internationally celebrated garden writer Elizabeth Lawrence, as well as fulfill one of the tenets of the Wing Haven mission—to celebrate the legacy of Southern horticulture. The garden is on the National Register of Historic Places and is protected by a conservation easement, which is held by the Garden Conservancy.

The property directly adjacent to and uphill from ELH&G, 342 Ridgewood Avenue, was owned by Elizabeth Lawrence’s sister Ann. Both sisters built their homes in the late 1940s. While there is no historical significance to Ann’s property, there is evidence that the two properties shared certain garden elements, and Lawrence documented some of the existent plantings in her writings. Late last year, Ann’s children, Elizabeth Rogers and Warren Way, decided to sell their mother’s property. Elizabeth and Warren, who were devoted to their Aunt and cherish her legacy, turned to Wing Haven for assistance to preserve and protect the ELH&G. They knew, as did the Wing Haven Foundation, that any significant changes to their property—air flow, light exposure, hydrology—could result in dire consequences to the garden of Elizabeth Lawrence.

To reduce and manage the short- and long-term risk to the garden while respecting the needs of Ann’s family, Wing Haven partnered with Preserve Mecklenburg, Inc ("Preserve Meck"). Preserve Meck, under the leadership of Board Chairman Tommy Lee, is a relatively new, privately funded, 501(c)3, real estate preservation group that works to save sites of historical and cultural significance in Mecklenburg County and neighboring counties.
FROM THE DIRECTOR

Celebrating the Legacy

As we look to the past and navigate through unusual times, we are reminded of the things we appreciate and value. This includes the vital role gardens and nature contribute to our lives. As we reflect as a staff, we find ourselves grateful for the legacies of the Clarksons and Elizabeth Lawrence. We are thrilled to be able to continue sharing their legacy in impactful ways with the community, region and nationally.

Fiscal year 2021 was a year of many challenges but even more positives. We learned so much about how we can better serve our community with enhanced programming and resources. We used virtual platforms to include new friends in places across the globe. Our gardens were a place of joy and restoration for many and a retreat for healthcare professionals.

We received increased support from our donors as well as countless generous donations listed in this report. We are on firm financial footing and have created new and innovative programs.

These gifts support our work and the resources we offer the community. As you enjoy the articles from staff you will see the many opportunities your contributions afford us to enhance our mission and find meaningful collaborations that help continue the legacy.

Thanks to everyone’s support the future of Wing Haven is secure and we have much to celebrate.

With much appreciation,

Barrett Sloan Ranson
Executive Director

MEET OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome four new staff members to the Wing Haven team!

Tracey Roode started in her role as Education Coordinator in April. Since June, our new Volunteer Coordinator is Andrea Funk.

Our new Admissions Team greets visitors during open hours: Janet Porto (left) and Amy Poole (right).

A DIFFERENT GARDEN EXPERIMENT, continued from cover

Preserve Meck was intrigued by the challenge and opportunity to help preserve the garden, the story and the overall streetscape of Ridgewood Avenue, yet enable the neighborhood to continue to modernize and grow from both an architectural and economic perspective.

As Dan Morrill, Preserve Meck’s Administrative Consultant and former Director of the Charlotte Historic Landmarks Commission explains, “The Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden is a living representation of the life, work, and passion of Elizabeth Lawrence, and the property’s ability to flourish well into the future is a testament to the flexibility inherent in Preserve Meck’s mission. Ensuring Elizabeth Lawrence’s legacy can live on undisturbed is an incredible example of the power of creativity and vision of two privately-funded nonprofits [the Wing Haven Foundation and Preserve Meck] working in collaboration with one another.”

Preserve Meck brought architects, landscape architects, conservation and real estate experts to the conversation. Wing Haven brought historic and garden expertise, primarily through the guidance of ELH&G Advisory Committee member Frances Alexander and ELH&G’s Garden Curator Andrea Sprott, as well as significant legal help through the donations of Chris Dates. Together, the two organizations developed a preservation and marketing strategy that would not only protect the significant plants and trees of Elizabeth Lawrence’s garden, but would also ensure the sale of the property and development of a community sensitive home through collaboration and creativity.

Now with its own historic covenants and easements, 342 Ridgewood Avenue was recently purchased. The new owners, Jay and Betsey Rebello, have embraced the easement and garden history associated with their home site. “As we plan our new house, we are excited to create a home that will blend into the traditional Myers Park style while complementing the beauty of the garden next door,” said Betsey Rebello. “Our focus will be on outdoor living and designing a Southern garden. We hope all of the Ridgewood families will work together to make sure the elements that make our neighborhood special are preserved.”

Thanks to a willingness to think about real estate and preservation differently among board members, community volunteers and leaders, the generosity and patience of Elizabeth Lawrence’s family, as well as numerous donations of professional, legal and consulting services, the ELH&G will remain protected as a historical treasure for future generations of visitors and scholars. Charlotte, NC has pioneered a new national model of collaboration between real estate and preservation interests, and this beautiful story of experiment is now available for inspiration, education and enjoyment.
Wing Haven has been very busy this year. It seems like everyone wants to be outside and they want to garden. There couldn’t be a better place in Charlotte than Wing Haven to come for inspiration.

I find inspiration all over Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary, but especially in the Front Garden. Starting at the sidewalk, there are fragrant herbs and roses that Elizabeth Clarkson placed at the entrance. The large pink blooms of the Pink Radiance roses invite you to literally stop and smell the roses, while the small pink blooms of the Fairy Rose in the raised beds beg you to bend over to take a closer look and smell their lovely scent. By now you have probably brushed one of the many fragrant herbs here, and are trying to decide which one you smell. It could be one of the artemisias—Southernwood (Artemisia abrotanum) with pale green-gray ferny foliage, or Powis Castle with silver-gray lacy foliage, or it could be the Lavender Cotton (Santolina incana) with its dainty yellow pom pom flowers.

There is bronze fennel (Foeniculum vulgare var. atrapuplea) with large umbels of yellow flowers on top of six foot tall stems, a great host plant for many butterflies and pollinators. Look closely at the bronze foliage and you might see the caterpillars of the Eastern Black Swallowtail feeding on the licorice-scented leaves.

There are many different creeping thymes gently hanging over the wall and a silver or variegated leaf sage—their scent reminds me of Thanksgiving dinner. You may see the blue blooms of rosemary (Salvia rosmarinus, formerly Rosmarinus officinalis) or purple blooms of lavender (Lavandula sp.). Touching the soft fuzzy leaves of the lamb’s ear (Stachys byzantina) tells you why it was often planted next to the old-fashioned outhouse.

The front courtyard garden is separated and partly hidden from the street by the raised beds planted with boxwood. This intimate space is less busy with fewer varieties of plants. This is a great place to sit and watch the birds. Sit on the front steps of the Clarksons’ house, or on the terra cotta flue seats, and enjoy the winter sun. Here a wintersweet (Chimonanthus praecox) and a Japanese flowering apricot (Prunus mume ‘Peggy Clarke’) bloom in the winter and fill this courtyard with wonderful sweet fragrance. Mrs. Clarkson also grew winter iris (Iris unguicularis) here. Pansies bloom on each side of the front steps and Coral Bell azaleas bloom in spring. Summertime blooms are colorful annuals, and by August the white rain lilies (Zephyranthes candida) from her mother’s garden are starting to bloom.

This is just the beginning. There is much, much more to see behind the iron gate and brick walls that surround Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary. Come see what inspires you.
I know I am not alone when I say I do not like change. In the garden, change is expected—in many ways; plants of all sizes and shapes come and go with the weeks, months, seasons and years. I find great delight in that kind of change—that’s part of the magic of gardening. That, however, is not the kind of change I’m talking about. When we suspended in-person “Imbibe & Inspire” (I&I) programming at the Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden last year, I was asked if I would do the program virtually. I must admit: I balked.

What you need to know going into this is that I am a big fan of processes. Anyone in my line of work needs processes in place to be effective. Up to spring 2020, I had my system for in-person I&I relatively nailed down. Each third Thursday, things went fairly smoothly: participants seemed to enjoy it, as did I. Well, we all know what happened next. Change, and not the good garden-y kind. Internally, we discussed how programming would/could shift. We needed to continue to connect with the community and beyond, even if we could not do it in-person. I eventually came around to the idea of filming I&I to offer it virtually.

I don’t know many people who are comfortable being on the business end of a camera. Let me clarify: I don’t know many people my age (nearly 50) who are comfortable being on the business end of a camera. I certainly was not among those who were. Funny what a year-plus of filming once or twice every four weeks does to ease one’s discomfort. With each passing monthly virtual installment of I&I, it got easier to talk to the camera without wondering if I looked weird, had something in my teeth, or heaven forbid, said the wrong thing. Once I reminded myself that Elizabeth Lawrence and her garden are my superpower, most anxiety-ridden self-consciousness went out the window.

The total effort that is virtual Imbibe & Inspire programming is not a solo act by any means. Stefanie Myer added videographer, creative director and film editor extraordinaire to her Marketing Coordinator duties. She makes each installment of I&I happen, quite literally. Jill Goodrich, Director of Outreach & Education, is the conduit between the final production and our participants, and, especially early on, added “Andrea’s personal cheerleader” to her job hat collection on more than one occasion.

The best thing about offering I&I virtually is that we are reaching a far broader audience than we could ever reach in-person. We have regular participants in Ohio, Maryland and Georgia, as well as North and South Carolina. How cool is that?!

Another way that I am hoping to broaden our audience even farther is through regular posting on the Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden blog. (Find it at winghavengardens.org/el-blog/ or click on the “BLOG” link at the bottom of our homepage.) New installments are posted twice a month, on all things Elizabeth Lawrence—from old plants to new plants, from her writings and research to my current record-keeping, from her studio to our archive, and lots more! It is fun to share more about Elizabeth and her garden through writing for the blog, and it forces me to reconnect on a more meaningful level with all aspects of my job… and then share that with all of you!

As much as it might pain me to say it, sometimes change is a wonderful thing.
Over the past three years as Volunteer Coordinator, I have had the privilege to meet and work with volunteers of all ages and from all walks of life. When I first meet a new volunteer, I like to ask what brought them to Wing Haven, and I’ve heard a myriad of reasons: some are apartment dwellers who are drawn to the gardens as a place to get their hands in the dirt, others are here to educate and share their knowledge with others and many just want to be part of a community that they feel passionate about.

The Clarksons’ and Elizabeth Lawrence’s shared love of nature built not only the walls of Wing Haven and grew the plants inside each garden, but also built the foundation for a community of nature lovers to grow and develop together. Even before the creation of the Wing Haven Foundation, the Clarksons’ welcoming spirit encouraged their friends and neighbors to share their time caring for the Clarksons’ personal garden, leading busloads of schoolchildren through garden tours, and later, raising money through plant sales. To this day, volunteers are attracted to this garden as a place to share their time and talents with a community of like-minded peers. Similarly, volunteers are drawn to the Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden because they are inspired by her purposeful and dedicated work studying plants in the South. They enjoy working with Garden Curator Andrea Sprott as she discovers the history of Lawrence’s bulbs, blooms and garden beds.

In several of our lectures during this past winter’s Lecture Series, we learned that there is a strong correlation between access to green space and increased levels of physical and mental health and happiness. As Charlotte grows and becomes more urban, we begin to yearn for more green space. Similar to the symbiotic relationship between a bee needing nectar from a flower, and in return the flower being pollinated by the bee, Wing Haven relies heavily on our volunteers as we strive to continue the legacy of these gardens year after year. More and more we see a need for the escape that Wing Haven offers to our volunteers and the community.

I have now transitioned to full-time Marketing Coordinator and am excited to have passed the Volunteer Coordinator baton over to Andrea Funk, who has jumped right into her coordinating duties. It's been a pleasure to get to know each person who volunteers and to see the depth and breadth of each shared experience inside these walls. Wing Haven truly is one of Charlotte’s most magical places.
In my brief time as the Education Coordinator, I have fallen in love with Wing Haven’s gardens and community. The SEED Wildlife and Children’s Garden provide the perfect place to carry out our mission to “cultivate sanctuary in nature.” As a child growing up in a medium-sized New England city, I often explored nearby ponds, brooks and woods - increasingly hard to find natural spaces in urban settings.

As an adult, I chose to study art. For me art and nature go hand-in-hand. Nature provides us endless inspiration for creating art and art in turn has the power to inspire us to respect and protect nature. This is what I aim to do through Wing Haven’s programs for children and families - inspire a sense of wonder, curiosity and ultimately a love of nature in the minds and hearts of our community youth.

This past spring in our Budding Naturalists and Homeschool Explorers programs, we explored the gardens and learned about birds, beneficial bugs, bats and more. We created garden luminaries decorated with herbs from our raised beds and fallen flower petals from our pollinators’ garden, made “bugs” using leaves, sticks and gumballs, and constructed “toad abodes” from planters to provide a safe place for our amphibious garden friends. I have learned so much from our young visitors and have enjoyed watching them explore the gardens, learning and laughing along the way.

I am also thrilled to work with, and learn from, our dedicated and knowledgeable team of volunteers—many of whom are master gardeners and/or naturalists and all of whom are nature lovers. I feel so fortunate to have discovered this hidden gem and to have been welcomed into the Wing Haven family with open wings. I feel strongly about our mission, motivated by our work and truly inspired by our community.
Celebrating Nature the Wing Haven Way

Presented to the community by Title Sponsor Wells Fargo, Wing Haven announces the 16th biennial symposium featuring presenters and nationally recognized authors Lyanda Lynn Haupt and Marta McDowell.

The two-day event includes bird walks led by Mecklenburg Audubon Society, expert-led virtual workshops on bulbs, writing, and nature-based education, a virtual lunchtime discussion on bird habitat preservation with Audubon North Carolina Executive Director and National Audubon Society Vice President Andrew Hutson, and a cocktail celebration in the Main Garden of Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary.

Join us for the Wing Haven Foundation 50th anniversary (1971-2021) special edition symposium highlighting Wing Haven’s vision to inspire a passion for the natural world and honoring the legacies of gardeners and writers Elizabeth Clarkson and Elizabeth Lawrence.

For details and registration, visit winghavengardens.org.

Photo of Elizabeth Lawrence courtesy the Charlotte Observer Collection at the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room

Lyanda Lynn Haupt channels the environmental and ornithological spirit of Elizabeth Clarkson.

Marta McDowell shares Elizabeth Lawrence’s passion for plants, gardens and writing.

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Please contact the Office at 704.331.0664 x108 with corrections or questions.

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Your legacy can live in the gardens of Wing Haven with a planned gift to the Foundation. Join the growing number of friends who have joined The Clarkson Society by deciding to create a living legacy at Wing Haven. A planned gift can be as simple as making a bequest in your will or trust, or naming Wing Haven Foundation as a beneficiary of an IRA, a life insurance policy, investment or certificate of deposit. Please call Susan Evans 704.331.0664 ext. 108 for more information. As with any financial decision, you should consult your attorney, CPA or financial advisor.
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"I enjoyed our mindfulness walk and hope we can do this again! It is very special to be in such a beautiful space as the seasons change."

- Maureen Kiv, Mindfulness Walk participant with Charlotte Mindfulness Center

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Judy and Sam Woodard
Ms. Juliette Lane

“Great mix of activities that kept the girls interested and engaged (harvesting sweet potatoes/composting the vines was definitely a highlight). Facilitator was fantastic.”
- Girl Scout Badge Day Participant

TRIBUTE GIFTS

Jane Avinger
Ms. Mary Jane Bynum
Kat Belk
Mr. & Mrs. Ruffin Tanner
Susan Cathcart
Ms. Sallie F. Scarborough
Sallie and Derick Close
Mr. & Mrs. Jubal A. Early

Pepper Dowd
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph W. Breeden
Ms. Carol Campbell
Pat Epling
Mr. Nicholas Nagle
Beth Handford
Mr. & Mrs. Bo South
Bruceie and Low Harry
Ms. Ann Temple
 Mildred and Ed Harris
Mrs. Barbara S. Lake
Jill Goodrich
Mr. George Wood
Arlene and Al Krupski
Mr. & Mrs. Derik Krupski
Nancy Lowry
Ms. Anna McKahan
Jane McColl
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph W. Breeden
Charlie Morris
Mr. & Mrs. Ruffin Tanner
Mimi and Bailey Patrick
Mr. & Mrs. Jubal A. Early
Margaret Somerall
Mr. & Mrs. Wally Koosman
Andrea Sprott
Mrs. Dia Steiger
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Tolmie
Mr. & Mrs. Jubal A. Early
Judy and Sam Woodard
Ms. Juliette Lane
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Tour-goers enjoyed all of Wing Haven's gardens during Wander with Wine to kick off our Gardeners’ Garden Tour.

Lecture Series participants learned from some of the country's leading experts. Doug Tallamy, who presented about his book Nature’s Best Hope. Dr. Larry Mellichamp transitioned to teaching the finer points of pruning through a virtual platform this year.

It was a beautiful day for Tea Time in the Garden at Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary.

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**Gardeners’ Garden Tour**

**Title**
Blackhawk Garden Center

**Silver**
Brandon Lawn Real Estate
Peaceful Ponds
Petit Phillippe
Rountree Plantation
South State Bank

**Bronze**
Atlantic Landscape Supplies, Inc.
Bartlett Tree Experts
Lat Purser & Associates, Inc.
Super Sod

**Partner**
Pasta & Provisions

**Music in the Garden**

**Title**
Lowry Insurance

**Tea Time in the Garden**

**Title**
Brandon Lawn Real Estate

**Affiliate**
Suarez Bakery

**Wing Haven Lecture Series**

**Title**
Blackhawk Garden Center

**Bronze**
Atlantic Landscape Supplies, Inc.
C. DeWitt Foard & Co., PA., CPAs
Living Color Gardens
Wing Haven reached 20,661 people in the community and beyond.

- 1,093 Members and donors
- 5,374 hours were given by 277 volunteers
- 3,120 people enjoyed Wing Haven through virtual experiences
- 2,570 children participated in children and family education programs, including 174 homeschoolers
- 275 at-risk children reached, including 217 preschool and 58 K-8
- 273 programs, workshops, events and tours offered, including 6 summer camps

74% increase in children and family education participation
53% increase in adult education participation

IN OUR GARDENS...

- 1,396 plants propagated from our two historic properties for the Legacy Plants Collection
- 184 accessioned genera planted at Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden, including 40 taxa reinstated, and 81 plant trials
- 65 plants installed in the SEED Wildlife Garden

* based on unaudited financials and includes a CARES Act small business paycheck protection program grant
DID YOU KNOW?

Our veggie garden is growing! Visitors are welcome to take home produce we have picked, available on the potting table in the Children’s Garden. If our vegetables have not yet been harvested, please let them continue to grow. Visit soon and often!

Look for the basket of fresh vegetables in the Children’s Garden during our garden open hours. Okra (Abelmoschus esculentus) (pictured below) is beautiful in all stages!

CAPTURE THE MOMENT

Capture the moment they say “Yes!” at Wing Haven. Make your proposal memorable at Charlotte’s hidden gem. Both tranquil and charmingly romantic, our gardens are the perfect place for a storybook proposal. Create a memory you will both cherish and schedule a surprise proposal photography session! Contact Office Administrator Samantha Wagner at 704.331.0664 x 101 or samantha@winghavengardens.org.

Lindsey Parkhurst and Graves Upchurch Engagement Photo © Maddie Barnhart
THE BEST PLANT SALE IN CHARLOTTE

OCTOBER 13 (MEMBERS ONLY)   OCTOBER 14-16 (OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)

As leaves begin their kaleidoscopic transition, we’re reminded that fall is the perfect season for planting. Look no further than the Wing Haven Nursery for everything you need for a happy and healthy garden! Shop from a choice selection of all kinds of plants suited to growing conditions in the Middle South, and confer with our volunteers—nearly all gardening experts.

Our Plant Sales are an important source of revenue for our very special properties. Thank you to everyone who shops and/or volunteers with us during our Plant Sales. We appreciate your support!

Shop for plants in person by appointment only. Look for details in your mailbox soon.

Japanese anemone (Anemone sp.)
white rain lily (Zephyranthes candida)
black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia fulgida)

WING HAVEN STAFF
Barrett Sloan Ranson  
Executive Director
Susan Little Evans  
Development Director
Beth Gilbert  
Development Support
Samantha Wagner  
Office Administrator
Jill Goodrich  
Director of Education & Outreach
Tracey Roode  
Education Coordinator
Stefanie Myer  
Marketing Coordinator
Andrea Funk  
Volunteer Coordinator
Reavis Thornton  
Head Gardener, Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary
Damou Sako  
Gardener, Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary
Dawn De La Torre  
Gardener, Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary
Andrea Sprott  
Garden Curator, Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden
Amy Poole  
Admissions
Janet Porto  
Admissions
Beverly Pearson  
After-Hours Host
Lorraine Piephoff  
Accountant

Cultivating sanctuary in nature, environmental stewardship and the legacy of Southern horticulture