



**THE FEW AND THE PROUD** — Large elms are providing needed shade for the small portion of Liz Tapp's Clinton garden which she will eventually fit into her much smaller garden at Lake Greenwood. She'll eventually place them in areas marked out on the design she created.

Photo by Judith Brown

## The smaller house move, garden style

By Judith Brown  
Staff Writer

Downsizing to a smaller house typically includes decisions concerning how to pare down furnishings and belongings, but when Dave Chatham and his wife Liz Tapp decided to downsize and follow Dave's dream of living at Lake Greenwood, Tapp had to determine which plants to leave and which to take from her well-established Clinton garden.



Liz Tapp

The choices were not easy. "Our Clinton lot was almost two acres and at the lake we only have a third of an acre," Tapp said. "So I started digging up plants in the fall." Chatham and Tapp moved with their son to Clinton 14 years ago, selecting a house just out of town which lent itself to her preference of a naturalized, woods-edged garden. At the time she needed to learn about warm climate plants, having previously gardened in Illinois, Iowa and the New York area. With college degrees in horticulture, landscape design and park planning, she gained master gardener certification in Iowa and again as soon as she moved to Laurens County, and became an active volunteer.

"I've loved plants my whole life," Tapp said. "I started gardening at 6 years old, planting tomatoes in juice cans."

In Clinton she grew a few vegetables but her large lot had allowed her to eventually grow and enjoy at least a hundred varieties of ornamentals, which were often divided and shared or used in her volunteer work at Ferguson Meditation Garden at the Laurens County Memorial Hospital and other small pocket gardens in Laurens and Clinton.

"This is the first time I've started a garden from scratch so it's an interesting challenge, and I've enjoyed picking out my sentimental and favorite plants for the new house," Tapp said. "I got my white hellebore from Doris Taylor," she said, motioning toward the potted shade blooms and referring to her fellow master gardener friend from Laurens. "My parents gave me the purple hellebore when my dad was still alive."

A pot of cast iron plants from Clinton neighbor Ann Cornelison was going to round out her shady entry-way.

"Each one of them has a story," Tapp said. "That's what I like."

A few pots contained recently

purchased plants. "Because it's such a small lot I don't have room to plant my favorite trees, like a redbud or a cherry tree, but I do have room for a Chinese fringe tree, a native Red Buckeye and I bought a Styx americanus, an American Snowbell," she said.

Two weeks ago a neighbor helped load up two pickup trucks filled with her remaining soil conditioners, garden tools and plants. Now she'll follow her meticulous design, with the plant initials tucked into tiny circles for the shady and sunny areas, and she'll begin forming the new garden before the weather gets too hot.

For now, most of the potted plants, shrubs and trees are arranged in the shade of three large elm trees the couple kept for shade between the house and the lake and pots of chartreuse hostas and a native ground cover await planting on the shady side of her garage.

"I still have probably 54 to 50 varieties, but I just have one or two of each," Tapp said.

She mentioned a single ginger lily and a few yellow day lilies which will dot the lot's sunny side with color and then smiled, admitting she wouldn't refuse a few more if they came along and adding that "I'm sure I can squeeze in a couple more."

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