

About the Nashville Music Garden:

The seed for the idea for the 2,700-square-foot public garden was planted when country music legend Barbara Mandrell gave her namesake rose to friend and LifeWorks Foundation Trustee, Pat Bullard, who recognized it as a way to acknowledge the music and artists synonymous with Nashville and also to beautify Music City. In her research, she found that over three dozen roses were named for Nashville artists, songs or industry leaders. These include Minnie Pearl (1981), Barbara Mandrell (1990), Brenda Lee (Williams Variety 1991) and Pam Tillis (2003), but the “celebrity roses” had never before been housed together in one garden for the public to view.

To that end, Bullard began the painstaking task of amassing the plants into a single collection, the Nashville Music Garden Collection, while encouraging world-renowned hybridizers, including Whit Wells of Wells Mid-South Roses, to name roses for use in the project. The Nashville Music Garden also cultivated a relationship with the Nashville Rose Society.

Since the initial collection was assembled, over three dozen new roses and daylilies have been collected or introduced on behalf of the honorees of the Nashville Music Garden as part of the inaugural class of flowering plants of the Nashville Music Garden Collection. Hybridizers are already working on additional selections for use in the garden in future years and to bring honor to those in need of recognition.

In the spring of 2007, with the assistance of consulting ARS Master Rosarian, Dr. Louis Mishu and EarthMatters Tennessee, LifeWorks Foundation created a garden in honor of DeFord Bailey, the “Lost Legend of the Grand Ole Opry,” in the Sunnyside community (also known as the 12South district) of Nashville. The DeFord Bailey Tribute Garden, which stands at the corner of Lealand and Gale Lane, houses a sampling of roses from the Nashville Music Garden Collection and a rose especially hybridized for the collection, the DeFord Bailey rose.

The following year, LifeWorks Foundation received permission from Nashville MetroParks Council for the installation of the Nashville Music Garden within the Hall of Fame Park at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Demonbreun (across the street from the Schermerhorn Symphony Center and the Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum). The now thriving Nashville Music Garden is home to the over six dozen roses and daylilies of the Nashville Music Garden Collection.

New Year’s Day started 2009 with a flourish. As the world tuned in to watch the 120th Tournament of Roses Parade, six of the roses from the Nashville Music Garden Collection (Dolly Parton, Reba McEntire, Little Jimmy Dickens, Amy Grant, Minnie Pearl and the Grand Ole Opry®), were featured as a key element on the RFD-TV’s HEE HAW-themed float. The Rose Parade was carried on several major networks in the United States and in over 200 countries internationally. RFD-TV was quick to embrace the symbolism of the roses and has pledged to include roses from the Nashville Music Collection in future Rose Parade entries.

The garden is funded by LifeWorks Foundation and is supported by MetroParks, the Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum, the Hilton Downtown Nashville and the Nashville Rose Society.

To receive future announcements about the Nashville Music Garden Collection and its gardens, [click here](#).