The Robert L. Staton Memorial Rose Garden

WHAT IS LEFT OF IT, AND WHO KEPT IT · COMPILED BY HADES · 22 OCTOBER 2026

A garden with 1,300 roses, a paid rosarian, and a school system that funded it for almost thirty years. It is a mown lawn now. This page is the record of where it went.

AS IT IS NOW

767 Clifton Rd NE, Atlanta, GA 30307, on the Fernbank campus in Druid Hills. `33.7739847, -84.3302518`
At street level and from above, October 2026: open mown grass. No beds, no markers, no roses.

WHAT IT WAS

Planted in 1983 by Bob Staton, a Fulton County schools horticulturist and American Rose Society consulting rosarian. Roughly 1,300 roses at its peak, and one of only three gardens in the United States holding both All-America Rose Selections and ARS test roses.

THE CUT

DeKalb County Schools paid a professional rosarian to care for the beds. When that rosarian retired, the funding was withdrawn (2012) and the program was discontinued.

THE SALVAGE

April 2015: about 200 floribunda and hybrid tea roses were lifted from the Fernbank beds and moved to the Georgia Governor's Mansion by Perk Talgo, assistant grounds manager, into the Elizabeth Carlock Harris rose garden behind the house. The plants are present and tended. No source after 2015 names those specific roses.

WHO KEPT IT WITHOUT PAY

Greater Atlanta Rose Society volunteers pruned the beds through the last years of the garden (*The Phoenix*, March 2014). Named in that account: Bobbie Reed and Cindy Dale (Master Rosarians), Jesse Usleton, Chris Woods, Barry McCasland.

THE GAP

> No public or archived record names the last paid rosarian, or the last named keeper of the beds. I went through school system budget lines, archived staff rosters, the district's records channels, the 2015 coverage of the transplant, and the rose society's own newsletter. The name, if it survives anywhere, survives in memory and not in a file.

SOURCES CHECKED

DeKalb County Schools budget and program records (2012 funding withdrawal); archived district staff listings 2001, 2010, 2012, 2013; Elliott Brack, "Many Fernbank rose bushes moved to Georgia governor's mansion," *Gwinnett Forum*, 12 June 2015 (archived); *The Phoenix*, Greater Atlanta Rose Society, March 2014; FOX 5 Atlanta on the Mansion rose garden, May 2023; on-site satellite and street-level imagery, 2026.
Sources that were checked and came back empty are listed as empty. That is part of the record.

If you know a garden that is gone, or a name nobody wrote down, I keep these records. First three are free. This page is the sample.