August 30, 2021

The colorful Flowerbed near the center of the Bishop’s Garden



The Sundial on its base in front of the Pomegranate Tree in bloom

The Sundial Bed is Filled with Blooming Bulbs in Spring

In January, 2021, we posted **this blog** about the varieties of spring bulbs planted in the **Sundial Bed**. Over 1,300 tulip bulbs are mixed with hundreds of hyacinths, anemones, and allium for a vibrant display planned to last for a long spring season. But what happens in late spring when those beautiful bulbs are spent?



Multicolored gladiolas brighten this garden

A Less Formal Bed

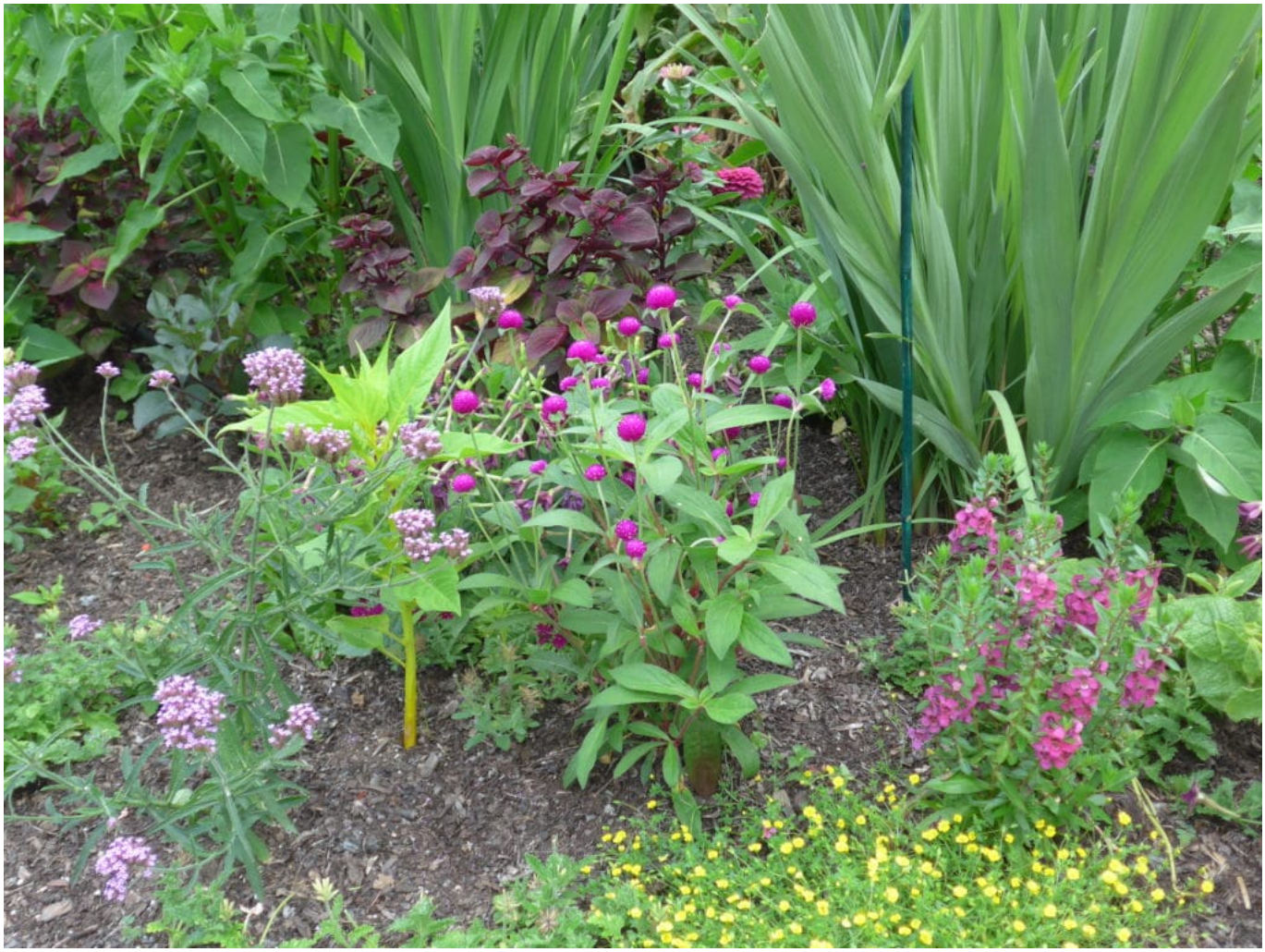
The Sundial Bed is a place to have a bit of fun. The bronze sundial itself is an 18th-century English artifact, placed atop a 13th-century Gothic column capital of Caen limestone discovered in monastery ruins near Rheims Cathedral in France. The capital was acquired from the collection of George Grey Barnard, as are so many of our medieval stone sculptures. It was installed in the Bishop’s Garden in 1928.



Bright colors and cool greens with Wayside Cross in the distance

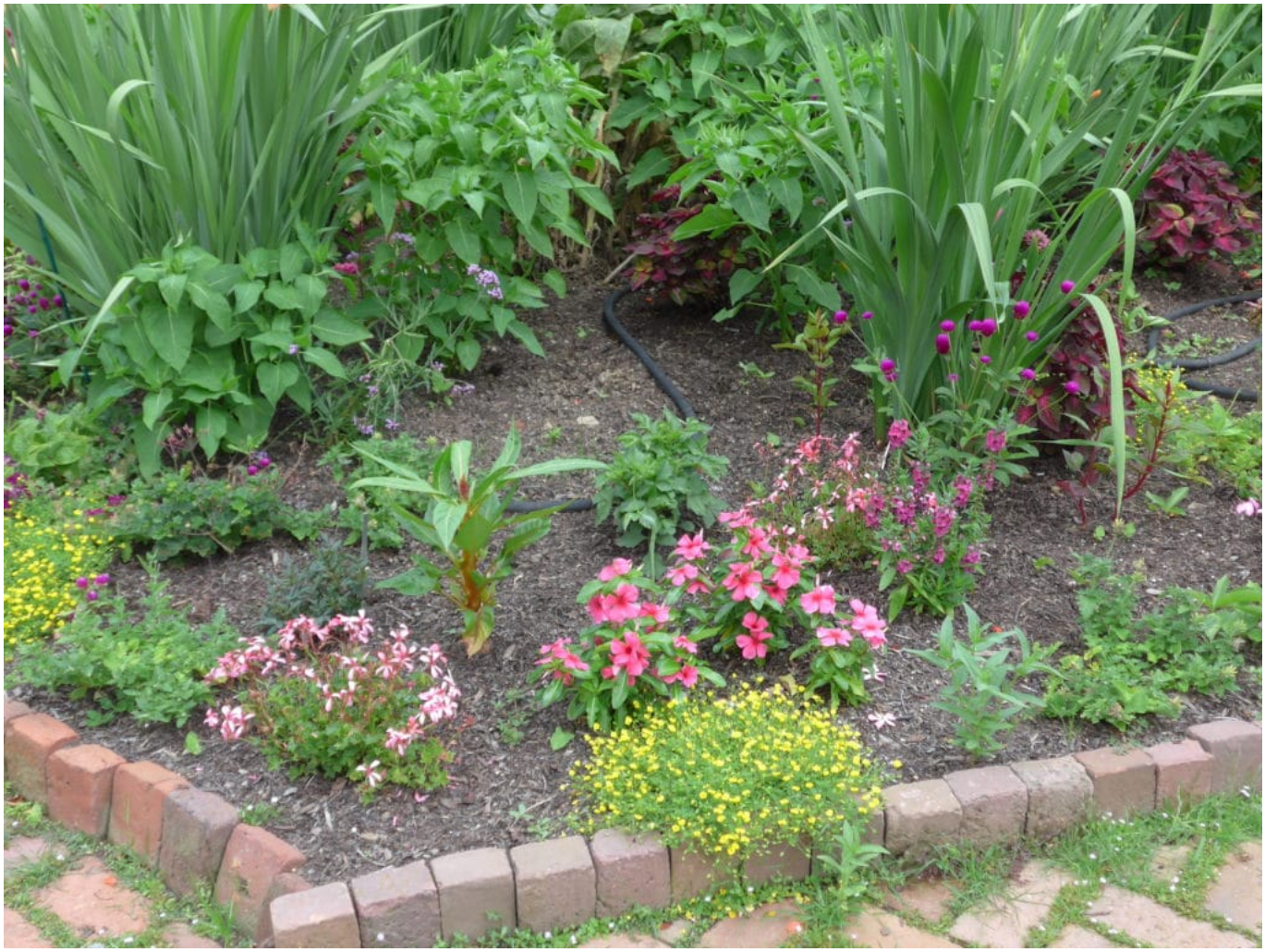
Showy and Fun

The floral displays in this garden bed change year to year, but the emphasis is on showy, colorful blooms planned to last from early summer through the cold weather of late autumn. This year pinks, purples, peaches, and yellows relate to the “hot” colors of the nearby Upper Perennial Border. When the pomegranate is in bloom it joins the party. The yellows and reds also relate to the summer displays in pots at nearby **St. Catherine’s Pool**, which deserves its own blog [coming soon].



Familiar Favorites

Many of the plants in the Sundial Bed are old-fashioned, longtime favorites familiar to previous generations of gardeners. One might recognize flowers remembered from a grandmother’s garden. Gladiolas, snapdragons, zinnias, dahlias, four o’clocks, verbena, and ornamental onion all clamor for attention near the quiet, white ‘Peace’ rose planted in 1954 by Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. This specimen is the only rose bush separate from the rose garden bordering the central grass panel.



Brick borders and walkways contrast with the summer flowers in various shades

In these waning days of summer, come to admire the exuberance of the Sundial Bed whose blooms contrast with the formality of the sundial and its stone column, and indeed, with the structure of the surrounding boxwood and yews. Then return later as bulbs are planted to beguile us next spring.

Take a Video Tour of the Sundial Bed