

## Garden Ramblings

Recently, I watched a very interesting television programme about art in forest, field and sky. It showed artists who worked to enhance the land or express the feelings of beauty. There were examples from designers through the ages and places I need to visit. I really want to go to The Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the Dumfriesshire Cosmic Garden.

Since Neolithic people realised that being hunter gathers was not the best way to have regular food, they started to control their environment and developed farming skills. We are still at it. It was not just for basic food but for plant dyes, herbs and spices which have beautiful flowers as well. As there was need to protect your part of the world and your animals, they started building earthworks for protection and clearing more and more land. These took on a greater significance for those who lived there.

About three-quarters of Britain is used for some form of agriculture now so all those generations in between have changed the countryside. The wild woods were planted and there is little left of any original wildness.

Later, the rich had an enormous labour force to do their work and to work on parks and gardens to impress other rich. Rather defensive earthworks once parts of the land was turned into areas of beauty, enhancing the landscape was the name of the game.

(Showing off entered into it too.) Later philanthropists produced parks for lesser mortals to enjoy open spaces in industrialised towns. Then the lesser mortals started gardening and gardening is now a big business.



This year, we celebrated the work of Capability Brown - think Jane Austin with massive parks that looked natural. 3rd picture along. Although he could see in his mind the final result, many would have looked a bit like motorway developments. Just think though, how quickly those settled to look as they have always been here. He can give us inspiration If it is possible to change the route of a river, making a desert garden the size of a table is a doddle.

So lets finish sweeping up the leaves and muttering about dark nights and decide to do something new this year in our gardens. I have many hints from great designers to help us all. Also have seed and plant catalogues, mince pies and rather a lot of beetroot soup.. Happy Christmas.