Great Plants in History
A study of various plants and their surprising impact on history

Course #: 21FGPH
Format: Seminar
Moderator: Jane McMurrich
Date and Time: Wednesday, 1:30-3:30 PM
10 weeks, starting 9/29/2021
Format: Online
Maximum number of participants: 16
Auditors accepted: Yes, up to 2

Purpose: The purpose of this seminar is to appreciate (a) how plants throughout history have affected major world events, and (b) how the use of various plants has evolved over time.

Description: Participants will select a plant which has had historical ramifications, for example spices, the desire for which encouraged exploration and trade; or opium, with a medicinal use, an opportunity for misuse, and the wars it sparked in Asia. Alternatively, participants can choose a plant whose use has evolved over the centuries, for example the willow tree, used in the manufacture of aspirin, cricket balls, and coffins.

Role of participants: Each participant will be expected to make a presentation on the chosen topic, and to participate in the ensuing discussion.

Resources: Fifty Plants that Changed the Course of History by Bill Laws is a recommended, though not required reading.

About the Moderator: The moderator is a retired high school biology teacher, an amateur gardener and enthusiastic cook.