

# Dunster Tour June 2014

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MGs attending: Grace Morrice, Karen Kellett, Trine Helsoe, Anne Allgaier, Melanie Watts, Dave Rempel and wife, Christiane Hirt and Birthe Miller.

The PG MGs travelled 240 km to Dunster early on a Sunday morning to visit Pete Amyoony at his home and tour his greenhouse and garden. Pete is a retired teacher and an avid gardener who has grown in excess of 15,000 plants yearly for local plant sales in Valemount and McBride. He has been part of the WOOFER network for a number of years and, as an avid seed saver, his varieties are grown all over the world by his fellow WOOFERS. Pete has over 180 varieties of tomato seeds that he has grown and saved to preserve these heritage varieties. It seems his many years of hard work have taken a toll and Pete has now passed on his records and seeds to PG MG Nicole Gagnon to safeguard and to perpetuate. We also toured his ventilated concrete root cellar, which keeps vegetables virtually year-round in reasonable condition. We enjoyed Pete's hospitality and a wonderful pot luck lunch out in his yard.



We then joined the local Seed Savers for only their second organizational meeting. Local growers from McBride and the Robson Valley area were in attendance. Discussions covered various topics: the society name and mission statement; whether it would exist as a co-op; a seed cleaning machine; and another lovely lunch was offered. Afterwards we toured three gardens. One was a century farm with apple trees over 100 years old. The next two gardens were grown by younger community members using a variety of permaculture techniques, all grown organically and, in one case, flood irrigated using water gravity-fed from a local creek.

Their annual Lilac Tour had been held the previous weekend but we paid a belated visit anyway to Bonnie and Curtis Culp, who have over 100 varieties of lilacs in their garden. Most were past their flowering prime for the season but overall the plantings were very impressive. We were lucky enough to purchase some of the varieties from Bonnie that she had picked up at yearly lilac conventions. We had a very full day and finished it off with a group dinner in McBride before completing our three hour drive.

