



Charity no. 1121690

# Keswick and District Fair Trade Campaign



## ANNUAL REPORT 2008

Our **Fifth Annual Report** reflects on another year of continuing activity to raise the profile of **Fairtrade** even higher locally and to campaign for greater justice for the world's poorest peoples in their trading relationships with the rich world.

### Charitable Status

Following a further constitutional change at an EGM in October (using wording helpfully suggested by the Charity Commission), we were finally granted **Charitable Status** in November. This was three years and two failed attempts after we had first applied. We are the first community-based **Fair Trade** campaign in the country to achieve it.

### Ethiopia

As this report is being written we are preparing for the first visit of friends from **Choche**, the legendary 'birthplace of coffee' in **Ethiopia** to Keswick, with which we have a growing friendship link. This follows months of preparation following our last visit there in October 2007. It was in our final conversation then with **Mekonen Aweke** and **Raya Abakoyas**, Chair and Vice-Chair of **Choche Coffee Farmers' Cooperative**, that the seeds for this visit were sown, and it is appropriate that these two men will be our first return visitors. We are delighted that they will be accompanied by **Nekemte Melaku**, who acted as our translator in October 2006.

We could not have got this far without the very active support over the last three years of **Tadesse Meskela**, General Manager (right), and **Dessalegn Jena**, his deputy, of the **Oromia Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Union**, in Addis Ababa, to which the **Choche Cooperative** belongs. **Nekemte** is the Export Coordinator for the Union.

We have also been very grateful to our members who have contributed to the costs of the visit of Mekonen, Raya and Nekemte.

While the main purpose of our visit last October was to further our friendship with the people of **Choche** and to lay the groundwork for a return visit, we were also keen to learn more about the community. Accompanying us was **Richard Human**, a writer and photographer on development and environmental issues. Richard's specific brief was to document in photographs the impact of **Fairtrade** on the lives of people in **Choche** and other Ethiopian communities, which are able to sell their coffee into

the **Fairtrade** market. These images will be used by the **Fairtrade Foundation** and by the **Oromia Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Union**. They have already been used by our Keswick Campaign. (See below, **After Black Gold**.)

### Events

The **Strawberry Tea in Borrowdale**, 10<sup>th</sup> June, raised £800, about £200 down on the previous year, but still a very helpful boost to our funds, and as always a very special occasion in a *very* special place, with lovely weather. **Keswick Agricultural Show**, 27<sup>th</sup> August was cancelled, and that more seriously dented our fundraising, as did the very wet weather on the day of the **Christmas Fayre** on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2007, **Theatre by the Lake** showed **Black Gold** to an audience of nearly 200 people. Revealing how coffee is traded in such a way as to deprive farmers of all but the smallest payment for their crop, **Black Gold** focuses on the effects of this trading system on Ethiopian farmers, at the height of the coffee crisis 4 years ago. At that time, while the multi-national roasters and international traders were reaping huge profits, coffee farmers and their families suffered acute hardship. Star of the film is **Tadesse Meskela** (left), who presented Keswick with **Fairtrade Town** status in 2005, who tours the globe tirelessly in search of a better price for the farmers of the **Oromia Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Union**. **Black Gold** was shown again at the end of August at the **Lonsdale Alhambra**.



Richard Human

On 21<sup>st</sup> November was our first **Fairtrade Wine Tasting** event, hosted by Paul Briers of the **Wine Rack**, Keswick. The Wine Rack promotes its range of high quality, medium priced **Fairtrade** wines as '**Wines that Make a Difference**'. A repeat event on 2<sup>nd</sup> March was less successful in terms of numbers, but still worthwhile in terms of sales according to Paul, and definitely worth repeating.

Highlight of the **Christmas** period was **Taste the Coffee**, about which we wrote in our recent Newsletter and which was made possible by the generosity of the **Cumberland Building Society**, who allowed us to use their empty property in

Station Street. The aim over the ten day period was to serve everybody who came in with a cup of **Fairtrade** coffee (or tea, or hot chocolate) to show the wide range available locally. It also helped to make up for the failure to raise funds at the Agricultural Show and Christmas Fayre, and it brought in several new members and new businesses.

During **Fairtrade Fortnight** (25<sup>th</sup> February to 9<sup>th</sup> March) we hosted **Jose Peralta**, banana grower from the Dominican Republic and President of **ASOBANU**, a small banana growers' association. Jose gave a talk and visited **Booths** where he was delighted to discover **ASOBANU** bananas on sale.

**Harriet Lamb**, Director of the **Fairtrade Foundation** (right), spoke at **Words by the Water**, following the publication of her book, ***Fighting the Banana Wars and other Fairtrade Battles***. She also attended a working breakfast at the **Wild Strawberry**, and a **Reception for Cumbrian Fairtrade campaigners** at **The Skiddaw**, where she was welcomed by **Cllr. Roger Purkiss**, the Mayor, and **Margaret Purkiss**, the Mayoress. Harriet's energy and commitment was an inspiration to all who heard or met her.



**Fairtrade Fortnight Coffee Marathon**, involving 28 local coffee shops and cafés, was challenging to organise, and more challenging to win, as indeed did **Penny Duttson**, by drinking in all 28!

For three weeks in April, ***After Black Gold***, a photographic exhibition at **Theatre by the Lake**, drew much interest, and received excellent publicity. The photographs, which were taken last October in Ethiopia by **Richard Human**, record the lives of Ethiopian coffee farmers and their families, and the impact which **Fairtrade** is beginning to have on their communities. Over 60 people attended an opening night **Reception**, with **Fairtrade wines** supplied by the **Coop** and **The Wine Rack** and **local cheeses**, generously donated by **Fond Ewe**.

## Presentations

We have continued to give many **talks**. These have been mostly in Cumbria, but increasingly we are being called upon to talk more widely, as for example at both the **National Fairtrade Towns Conference** in Rotherham (in September) and the **International Fairtrade Towns Conference** (in Brussels in January). We have been in particular demand from Rotary Clubs and Women's Institutes. We have also done an increasing amount of schools work, including a whole day on **Fairtrade** with 200 Year 8 and 9 students at **Cockermouth School Live Day**.

## Publicity

We generate regular articles in the local press, with coverage almost every week in the **Keswick Reminder**, **Lake District Herald** and other

Cumbrian newspapers. We also publish an article every two months in **Kesmail**.

## Membership

We continue to depend on our membership (which remains about **300**) for attendance and help at our events, and for funds through annual **subscriptions**. These contribute over **£1000** a year to our income. Many thanks to all of you!

## Website and Directory

Our **website** ([www.fairtradeskeswick.org.uk](http://www.fairtradeskeswick.org.uk)) has been remade by **Peter Rigg**, to whom we are very grateful for an enormous amount of work. We still have content to add to it. We are about to start work on the next edition of the **Directory** (No. 11). This is a major task involving all members of the committee over the next three months.

## Cumbria Fair Trade Network

We continue to be an active member of and contributor to the running of **Cumbria Fair Trade Network** to which we commit funds, time and people. We have three members of our own committee also on the **Network Steering Committee**, which meets every two months, and we attend twice yearly **Open Meetings**.

## Trade Justice

A small but committed group of us meet monthly to keep up to date on what is happening in the world of international trade. The **Doha Round** of negotiations at the World Trade Organisation, and the **Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)** between the **EU** and the **African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP)** countries of are still the current issues of concern. The former stagger on; a new concern which is complicating the negotiations is the current food crisis, which has a particularly damaging impact on poorer countries, but may also provide an opportunity for them to profit from agricultural exports. Half of the ACP countries have signed either full or interim Economic Partnership Agreements, but the **Trade Justice Movement** has been critical of these. Oxfam has produced a detailed analysis of the weaknesses of the EPAs which we have made use of in lobbying both **DFID** and **Sajjad Karim**, MEP. We have also kept in touch with **Prosperity Raymond** in **Haiti** which is one of the countries most affected by the recent peaks in the price of wheat and rice.

## Keswick Churches

We are delighted to report that all **Keswick's** churches are now committed to **Fairtrade**, serving **Fairtrade** tea and coffee at their functions. We believe that most of them are certified **Fairtrade Churches** and look forward to welcoming all of them as members of the **Fairtrade Campaign**.