



Keswick and District Fair Trade Campaign



Newsletter No.11 February 2007

Thank you for the efforts you have made to the lives of producers in developing countries who sell into the Fairtrade market. Every time you buy a Fairtrade product it makes a difference to someone, somewhere. And thanks to those who have campaigned with us by asking "Have you got Fairtrade...?" when you are at a café, teashop or just shopping. We know it makes a difference because of the feedback we get, and because the proportion of Fairtrade goods continues to rise. So, thank you!

Celebrate! And Taste the Coffee at Theatre by the Lake in December was a busy and encouraging event, at which we launched Edition 10 of the Directory. The guest house and coffee shop owners who are already serving Fairtrade talked to those who are not yet doing so, and there was a real buzz in the room as we tasted the variety of coffees served. A similar celebration is planned for members and their friends on 6th March (see below).

Membership: We have a new membership secretary, Elspeth Sherwen, and new categories of membership. Students will now only pay £2, and we have introduced a category of commercial / community members who will be asked to pay £10. Individual members will continue to pay £5, but we are asking for £8 from families. We now have a category of Friends of the Campaign (for those living outside Cumbria) for which we are asking a £5 subscription. The total of all your subscriptions provides a vital contribution to our funds. Our campaign would be nowhere near as effective without you – all 290 of you – and without the resources you provide. So, again, thank you.

Many of you will have noticed our presence at two other community events in December, the **Victorian Fayre** which was blown out of the square and into the Skiddaw Hotel, and the **Christmas Eve** carol singing which was blessed with a dry evening, and attended by 400 carollers.

Church goers will also have noticed the splendid progress that has been made in ensuring that every church in Keswick is a **Fairtrade Church**. Thanks to efforts by all of us, four more churches are applying for Fairtrade status (there are eight already). You will read in some church magazines a passionate article about the Christian impetus in the struggle for trade justice and Fairtrade. If your church magazine did not publish it and you would like to read it please ask us for a copy.

Four new members have joined our **Committee** and their fresh perspectives, energy and commitment are enthusiastically welcomed. Don't forget, we always

appreciate new members joining us, so if you are thinking about it and would like to see what such a commitment might entail, just contact Jo Alberti on 79199 Johannaalberti@aol.com.

Our application for **Charitable Status** has now been sent off, and we await the response of the Charity Commission. We have applied for charitable status largely because we will find it possible to raise more money if we become a charity. And we need that money for our developing **Link with the village of Choche in Ethiopia**. Did you read the report of the visit of 5 of our members in October, 2006 with the last Newsletter? Since then communications – though difficult – have continued with the village and with the Oromia Coffee Farmers' Co-operative Union, of which Tadesse Meskela is the General Manager. We have given **talks** to many groups in and around Keswick and are keen to do more. If you know of a group which would like to hear from us, please contact Allan Sharman on 76430 allshar@hotmail.com.

We have produced a **postcard** with a photograph on it of **children in Choche**, and a very telling quotation from a farmer, both for sale and as a means of enriching our campaigning. Do buy some and send to friends (5 for £1.00). Contact Joe Human on 80047 j.human@zen.co.uk.

A project which we call **Spilling the Beans** is leading to invaluable work in the primary schools in the district. Lesley Lamb, who teaches at **Braithwaite School** and who went to Choche in October, is now working with other primary schools in the area to introduce children to the experiences of Ethiopian farmers and to Fairtrade. She is skilfully making this learning part of their normal curriculum, thus bringing home to the children, the teachers and, indeed, all of us, that our lives and those of the farmers in Choche are indeed linked. We are providing some funding for supply cover at Braithwaite for Lesley to be released for this work. The rest has come from personal gifts from Friends and a substantial grant from **Cumbria Community Foundation**.

The Cumbria Fair Trade Network continues to thrive. At the meeting in January we heard from Pushpanath Krishnamurthy who is Oxfam GB's International 'Make Trade Fair' Campaigner. 'Push,' as he is known the world over, is one of Oxfam's most experienced development workers and original thinkers. As a lead campaigner in Oxfam's global Trade Justice Campaign – Make Trade Fair – he gave us both an insightful analysis of the links between 'the local' and 'the global' in trade related issues and the inspiration to continue our efforts in both spheres.

Cockermouth Fairtrade Schools Conference, 18th January: We provided support to Fairtrade activists at **Cockermouth School** who organised an outstanding Fairtrade conference for members of schools councils from 13 West Cumbrian Secondary Schools. Joe Human said that it was the most inspiring schools campaigning event he had ever attended: a day run *by* students *for* students. By the end of the conference every school represented had produced a draft action plan to make their school into a Fairtrade School. One of them, **St. Joseph's School, Workington**, has just achieved Fairtrade School status and will celebrate on 5th March with **Sam Magona** (see later). **Keswick School**, which was also represented at the Conference by eight very keen students, now has campaign underway, we hear.

Trade Justice Lobbying continues resolutely and brought some satisfactions in the past few months. We reported in the last Newsletter that we had been demanding amendments to the **Companies Law Reform Bill**. Thanks to the activities of many concerned members of the public and MPs, the Government did accept amendments to the Bill which mean that public companies are now required to report on their environmental and social impacts on employees and suppliers. Company Directors now also have a duty to consider the impacts of their businesses on people and the environment.

There are also some faintly hopeful signs that the **Doha Round** of negotiations in the **World Trade Organisation** may have new life breathed into them. There are hints that the EU and US Government are keen that they should be brought to a successful conclusion and an awareness that both these economic giants will need to forgo some of the protection they offer at present their farmers. The UK Government has been in the forefront of attempts to restart negotiations.

Most of our lobbying has so far been facilitated by **Tony Cunningham**, MP for Workington. However, even his best offices have not led us to feel that we are communicating effectively with the European Union. Recently we have made contact with one of the Members of the European Parliament representing the North West of England, **Sajjad Karim**. Sajjad sits on the International Trade Committee of the European Parliament and he recently welcomed our comments on a Draft Report of that Committee on the progress of drawing up **Economic Partnership Agreements** between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries. We think that this new contact will lead to more effective lobbying for us.

Fairtrade Fortnight 26th February – 11th March, Theme – Change Today: Choose Fairtrade: We have five 'happenings' planned this year. **1.** The Fortnight starts on 26th with a launch at 10.00 a.m. at the Lakeland Pedlar, which is just one of 26 cafés and other places taking part in the '**Café Marathon**', which spans the whole Fortnight. Please take part in this, but watch your caffeine intake! All you have to do (!) is to visit as many of them as possible and drink a cup of Fairtrade tea or coffee or fruit-juice while you are there. By doing so, you will be supporting them and celebrating Fairtrade at the same time. (See '**The Blue List**' enclosed.) **2. Members**

and Friends Coffee Morning, Theatre by the Lake, 6th March, 10.30 to 12.30: Come and meet **Samuel Magona**, coffee farmer and chairman of the Busamaga Growers Co-operative in southeast Uganda. Sam is also chairman and one of the driving forces behind the Gumutindo, a young and innovative coffee co-operative union which sells coffee into the Fairtrade market. We are very lucky to have him in Keswick for the morning. Come and celebrate Fairtrade in Sam's company. Before coming to this event Sam will spend an hour in **Braithwaite Primary School**, which is seriously committed to Fairtrade. **3.** Sam's day will begin at the **Wild Strawberry** for a **Cumbrian Breakfast** for invited guests, including Town Councillors, hosted by the new owners Gary and Donna MacRae. **4.** Our last event, on **10th March**, will be a small informal reception at the Skiddaw with **George Alagiah**, in his capacity as **Patron of the Fairtrade Foundation**, for a group of owners and managers of the larger hotels and restaurants in and around Keswick, whom George is keen to meet. He is here for Words by the Water. **5.** Throughout the Fortnight we shall be leafleting and talking to **local businesses** to ask them to provide **Fairtrade teas and coffees** for their staff if they are not already doing so.

Future Events:

Many of you will have read about the film **Black Gold** which gives a powerful and moving depiction of the contrasts between the Western coffee culture embodied by 'Starbucks', and the struggle of Ethiopian farmers to make a living. In association with Theatre by the Lake we shall screen **Black Gold** there at **1.30 on Sunday 24th June**. Make time for a buffet lunch beforehand, and stay afterwards for the discussion on the critically important issues raised in the film. It is hoped that we shall also get a screening at the **Lonsdale Alhambra** sometime over the next 6 months. The 'star' of the film is Tadesse Meskela, 'our man' in Addis, without whom our link with Choche would never have got underway. This is a MUST ATTEND! So do, please, get it into your diaries.

Another 'MUST ATTEND' is the **Strawberry Tea**, in the garden of Malcolm and Judith Stonestreet. This is our big, joyous annual fundraising event! The date: **10th June, Northside, Grange-in-Borrowdale, 2.00 – 5.00 p.m.**

And another one – before then! The **Fitzwilliam String Quartet** will be playing at **St. John's, 4th April at 7.30 p.m.** Tickets: £8.00. The takings from the concert will go to our funds. Isn't that generous? *Memo:* MUST ATTEND, too!

Stop Press:

- 1.** You may have heard that **Starbucks** has just yielded to international campaigning pressure and has promised not to continue to block attempts in USA by the Ethiopian Government to trade mark three high quality **Ethiopian coffees**, as mentioned in the Trade Justice report last time. This will yield an extra £47 million to Ethiopian coffee farmers.
- 2.** We have just received a second grant from **Cumbria Community Foundation** to fund the full costs of printing and mailing our three **Newsletters** for 2007, beginning with this one.
- 3.** By the end of Fairtrade Fortnight there will be **14 Fairtrade Towns and Villages** in Cumbria, the most of any county.

Next Newsletter with Summer Fair Comment: June, 2007