



September 2002

Fair Trade News

The Newsletter of People for Fair Trade Association Incorporated Reg. No. A0024766A

What does being involved with Fair Trade do for me?

We asked a few people for a quick answer ...

"I like packing orders: its fun, it's a simple thing I can do, its making a difference."

Jemima

"Little less conversation, a little more action."

Nez

"If Jesus drank tea, it'd be Fair Trade tea."

Glen

"People at work think I'm weird - how can an otherwise intelligent person think that selling a bit of tea and coffee is going to make any difference to anyone."

Fiona

"Knowing how people have their tea makes me feel connected to them. These people like their tea fair."

Samara

"It provides me with a practical way to contribute to an otherwise distant problem"

Matt

"It makes drinking coffee into a spiritual experience - I connect with God and God's concern for all people as I enjoy the caffeine experience."

Brett

"It's a constructive alternative and its just."

Jack

"In a world that's fake, PFFT sells a vision that's real." Brian (we had to have one corny one)

Sad News from Garaina

Garaina is a beautiful, isolated valley in the Papua New Guinea Highlands. Their tea plantation and tea factory has been the only source of income for the people of the valley, and the source of a delicious organic tea for us! Trade Winds have invested much time and money in helping develop this source of income for the local people.

Sadly, there has been some internal strife, and the tea plantation has not been functioning for almost a year now. Deliveries of tea have stopped, and we have run out of supplies. We're hopeful that things might change in the future, but for the foreseeable future, there will be no supplies from Garaina.

The FairTradeAlliance

Four of our management collective - Brett, Jemima, Narelle and Brian - recently attended a meeting of the newly established Australian Fair Trade Alliance. The aim of the Alliance is to bring together and co-ordinate the efforts of various people and groups who are motivated about seeing fair trade expand in Australia. We dream of one day having a wide range of fairly traded products available on our supermarket shelves, with their own recognisable trade mark as a guarantee of their authenticity. For the sake of the working poor in the poorer nations, we want to strive to make this dream a reality.

We'll keep you informed as things develop further.

Make Trade Fair

If you're browsing the web, have a look at www.maketradefair.com - an international campaign for Fair Trade, initiated by Oxfam Community Aid Abroad. The site includes a lot of background information, information about upcoming events, etc.

Changes to the Order Form

Note that the Garaina tea is no longer available.

Ceylon Cha Green tea bags should be available again in a couple of months.

We have switched to an Organic Espresso blend coffee which is packaged in Papua New Guinea, in line with our desire to purchase products where the maximum "value added" is provided to the country where the products are grown. This comes in 250g size, and is a delicious coffee.

We still have plenty of posters available - no charge.

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Sri Lankan Tea Workers: First Hand Reports

Two members of our Management Collective have been in Sri Lanka this year. Paul has spent 6 months working as an engineer on an alternative energy programme, as part of Australia's Youth Ambassador Scheme. This scheme is designed to give opportunities for young Australians to experience involvement in Third World development, using their professional training. Jemima spent a few weeks in Sri Lanka during July. Paul and Jemima visited some of the tea plantations that provide our tea. They also made a visit to the inter-faith, inter-racial community Satyodaya, which undertakes a number of programmes designed to help tea workers grow out of poverty.

Paul and Jemima will report on their experiences at this year's PFFT Annual General Meeting. Paul will also talk about the Youth Ambassador scheme.

Here's the details for the AGM:

PFFT 2002AGM

**2pm - 4pm, Sunday October 20th, 2002
at 30 Wellington Rd, Clayton, Victoria**

Please feel free to come along. Phone Jenny or Brett on 03 9544 8935 if you have any questions.

As well as the stories from Sri Lanka, we will also report on the activities of PFFT over the past year, address any questions about how we function, and present the financial statements. And of course, there'll always be a just cuppa available!



Coolbawn line huts—detail

Thanks for your interest in and support of the fair trade cause.

The PFFT Management Collective
Brett, Jenny, Jemima, Paul,
Brian, Kathryn, Matt, Matt



Coolbawn line huts—to be demolished and replaced by a housing project (photos: Paul Voutier)

Some facts about tea workers in Sri Lanka...

- ◇ Around 450,000 people live in employer-provided housing on the various tea estates.
- ◇ Around 50% live in housing units which provide less than 50 sq. ft. per capita space (the UN mandated minimum). That's a living space of around 2.2 metres by 2.2 metres per person.
- ◇ Some 7% of the estate population live with less than 25 sq. ft. per person.
- ◇ Nearly half the houses require new roofing sheets or roof construction because of frequent leaking.
- ◇ 46% of residents have no water supply.
- ◇ 62% have no toilet facilities.
- ◇ The current maximum wage for tea workers is just over US\$1 per day.
- ◇ It would take more than two days work for a tea worker to buy a Big Mac at McDonalds in Sri Lanka.

"These conditions limit the perspectives of living to work, food, sleep and drink. ... They are far from conducive to children to concentrate on education. As a result, alcoholism and sexual abuse is fairly widespread and school drop-out levels are high."

A. Engel, Report on Tea Plantations, 2000 for EFWRDP

Main source: Sri Lanka's Daily Mirror, Nov 3, 2001



Coolbawn line huts—one family in each room