

Book detailing Central Market's history now on sale

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By BERNARD HARRIS, Staff Writer

Central Market is more than a building. It is more than a place where shoppers can buy food.

Under the massive wooden trusses of the old market house is the intersection of Lancaster's past and present. It is the meeting place of the city and the countryside. It is where cultures old and new meld around the most basic of human needs: food.

And, as of Saturday, Central Market is also a book.

The nonprofit Friends of Central Market is selling "Central Market: Cornerstone of the Lancaster Community."



Standing with the new Central Market book are, from left, Linda Aleci, its author; Valerie Moul, president of Central Market Trust; Richard Kent, who took many of the photos that appear in the book; and Rick Sauder, board member of Friends of Central Market.

Market, which advocates on behalf of the market and holds special events there.

The book, written by Franklin & Marshall College professor Linda Aleci, is both a history of Lancaster's market and a celebration of its place in the community.

The 100-page book will be sold, appropriately, in Central Market. It also will be sold at Dogstar Books, the gift shops of the Heritage Center and Lancaster Quilt & Textile Museum, the Lancaster County Historical Society and the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. The softcover books cost \$14.95 each.

Proceeds from the sale of the book will benefit Friends of Central

The book's black-and-white illustrations include archival photos from the county historical society and more contemporary photos taken by F&M professor Richard Kent.

The foundation of the book was the research done by Aleci and the photographic documentation done by Kent in 1999 for the Library of Congress' Local Legacies Project. In 2000, the market was declared a "National Local Legacy" as a result of their submission.

Aleci said much has changed for the market in the past decade and the book reflects those changes. In recent years, greater concerns about food safety and sustainable agriculture have brought renewed interest in locally grown foods.

Outside the market's walls, downtown Lancaster has become more vibrant in the past decade. And the governance of the market also has changed during that time. While the market is still owned by the city, it is operated by the nonprofit Central Market Trust. The change allowed the group to raise funds and seek grants for the market.

The trust recently completed the market's first capital campaign. The goal of \$7 million was reached, and in January, the trust hopes to begin the first major renovations to the building in 40 years. Plans call for new electrical, plumbing, lighting and ventilation systems, said Valerie Moul, the trust board president.

One of the steps taken in the renovation will be the removal of hundreds of lights suspended from the market ceiling in 1972. Those lights will be replaced by a few dozen energy-efficient fixtures that will provide the same level of illumination. The change also will allow shoppers to look up and get a better view of the cavernous space beneath the market roof.

That roof has been in place since 1889, but market has been a fixture in Lancaster for nearly 300 years. The market square — where farmers and merchants could sell and town residents could buy — was part of the original plan for Lancaster.

Town officials were charged with overseeing the market, Aleci said. They were responsible for ensuring that items were fairly traded, food was of good quality, peace was maintained and commerce could flourish.

"It is really the last living embodiment of this idea of food and social justice," she said of public markets.