

City's museum set to reopen

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After a major facelift, the Lebanon History Museum is prepared to host a ribbon cutting to unveil the new and improved facility. The museum's curator, Kathleen Vail is encouraging everyone interested in learning a little more about Lebanon to stop by.

The ribbon cutting ceremony will take place on Thursday at 4:30 p.m. The museum resides in the basement of the Lebanon Administration Building on Castle Heights Avenue, where it has been for 20 years.

For the first 10 years of its existence it was curated by Janice Phipps, but after Phipps left a decade ago, it hadn't had a formal curator until Vail recently took up the mantle. Although, her 9-5 title with the city is planning administrator, she's excited to be taking charge at the museum.



Vail and her colleagues held a soft opening on April 12 to simulate trial runs for guided tours and reveal all the hard work they had been doing.

The museum's budget falls under the city's maintenance budget. Vail describes herself as a "thrifty person," and wanted to apply that same frugality to the museum. So when they consider upgrades or new displays, Vail first asks, how can we do this in the most cost effective way?

As she turns her attention to the future and what that might look like, she wants to maintain this commitment to fiscal conservatism. That's why many of the items on display in the museum have been donated.



Larry Ferrell touches up the City of Lebanon Museum and History Center sign ahead of Thursday's ribbon cutting.

Those displays can traverse a visitor through the years from Lebanon's humble beginnings when it was called Sinking Springs. Those same visitors can learn about how Lebanon's historic square was modeled after Philadelphia's Square Plan. It's not just architecture though, there is something at the museum for everyone.

Vail plans to offer guided tours for young and old alike. There is currently an interactive game for children featuring an antique post box, but Vail said she hopes to expand that offering.

"It's really about making this a fun and educational opportunity for young children from Lebanon," said Vail.



This Woolen Mills binding machine circa 1908 was used to bind the edges of blankets and powered by the floor pedal, not electricity.

Normal operating hours will be from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.