At the Museum of Printing, “We’re trying to save the past for the future.”

By Mark Feeney

HAVERTOWN — The Museum of Printing is hidden away in the northwest corner of any new England city. It’s not listed in any tourist guidebook. And although it’s open to the public on Saturday mornings, you’ll probably have a hard time finding it:

Take the 100-year-old trolley line from downtown Haverhill.

It passes a former textile mill, now a warehouse. Across the street, there are a few old buildings made of red brick or concrete, with a single small storefront. The buildings aren’t especially grand or attractive — that’s what it originally was. It’s now a really old warehouse.

Once you find the building, take the elevator up to the lower level. It’s like a very old and dusty attic.

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Most of the museum is open only on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. During the week, the staff can try the Carajillo ($14), made with localito espresso and nixta, a toasty Mexican olive-caper sauce ($12). The sleeper hit: deep-fried empanadas jarochas and plátano macho. (Though you certainly won’t be rushed — we gave up after an hour in the middle of the week.)

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The museum has computers, including a UPI teletype machine; and a group of machines were moved to Lowell, then Lawrence, then North Andover. The collection includes newspapers, magazines, almanacs, and more. “Our problem is we don’t really have a home,” Romanoff says.

The museum has no endowment. One source of income is selling memberships — “We have just over 500 members,” Romanoff says — and two “garage sales” a year. The next one is Nov. 11. Also generating income are memberships — “We also have students, tourists, people who just come in and tour” — and a few sales of the museum’s collection of type-related magazines, and taught for 20 years at Rochester Institute of Technology, in New York, and consulted for Apple.

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