

WELCOME TO THE

FAIRFAX STATION RAILROAD MUSEUM



THE FAIRFAX STATION RAILROAD MUSEUM GUIDE

A site on the Virginia Civil War Trail



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, established in 1978 by the Friends of the Fairfax Station.

Fairfax Station was a vital rail stop from the early 1850s through the 1940s. Operations gradually declined until closed in 1973 by the Southern Railway system, bringing to an end the last operating depot in Fairfax County.

Southern donated the structure to the Friends, which was reconstructed with the assistance of a \$100,000 appropriation by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. To ensure public safety, the original station was moved to its current location away from the main railway line.

ORANGE AND ALEXANDRIA RAILROAD COMPANY

Formed in 1848, the Orange and Alexandria was the only cargo and passenger line connecting Alexandria – a major port at the time – with Orange County in central Virginia. County Commissioner and O&A Director Silas Burke persuaded local landowners to contribute property for the right of way.

Irish immigrants provided much of the labor to build the railroad. The influx of the largely Catholic workers led to the establishment of nearby Saint Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church in 1860.

Fairfax Station and the O&A Railroad played important roles in the Civil War. Confederate and Union forces alternately destroyed and reconstructed the rail line to facilitate or impede troops movements in the area. The station served as a staging area to evacuate wounded soldiers after the Battles of Second Manassas and Ox Hill.

The O&A and Fairfax Station resumed cargo and passenger services after the Civil War. A series of mergers took place over two decades with the O&A and other local railroads becoming part of the Virginia Midland Railway in 1881. Virginia Midland was consolidated into the Southern Railway system in 1894.

The importance of Fairfax Station to cargo and mail services faded by the 1950s. The final freight delivery to the Station took place in 1967. Southern itself continued consolidation of regional train lines, becoming Norfolk Southern in its 1982 merger with the Norfolk Western Railway. Today, the tracks remain active for freight shipments and are used by the

Virginia Rail Express (VRE) for its Broad Run-Union Station commuter service.

ABOUT THE BUILDING

Construction of the original station was completed in 1852. The two-story configuration housed the station master's office on the second floor above passenger waiting rooms and a baggage area. It was destroyed as Federals retreated from the area in 1862 after Second Manassas. Federals reoccupied the area just a few months later. Reconstruction efforts carried into 1863.

Developments following the end of the Civil War are not entirely clear. The *Fairfax News* reported on January 17, 1871 that a new station depot had been completed. New buildings were constructed in the vicinity of the original site in 1891 and 1903, the latter perhaps being motivated by double-tracking at the site to accommodate greater freight shipments.

Features of the station were typical for those of the era, including a station office, passenger waiting rooms and a baggage area. While the passenger waiting rooms occupy much of the station's floor space, freight services were far more important to the railroad.

The Friends of the Fairfax Station hoped to reassemble the original the station, which had been dismantled and stored for several years. By the time sufficient funds were available, however, most of the original pieces were lost to rot and insects, making them unusable.



Friends' efforts then focused on replicating the 1903 building. Local businesses and organizations contributed to recreating the station. They included Dale Lumber Co., Glenn Dolly Construction, the Virginia Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors and local high school students under the supervision of the Fairfax County Vocational Educational Foundation.

The entire project cost over \$200,000, including the Fairfax County appropriation. The museum was dedicated on October 17, 1987.

Only a few pieces of the original station were incorporated into the reconstruction. They comprise just ten percent of the original structure. See if you can find them during your visit!

BAGGAGE ROOM (RAMP ENTRANCE)

The Baggage Room is now the main entrance to the museum. Its original purpose was for storing cargo and baggage. Large sliding doors existed on three sides of this room in the original station. Their positions and size are depicted in the museum. The two doors opposite one another serviced tracks that ran on both sides of the building. The third door – behind the train bell – was for elongated truck cargos to be delivered or removed from the station.

The two red-upholstered seats in the baggage room were manufactured by Hale and Kilburn Mfg. Co. of Philadelphia. Hale and Kilburn was established in 1873 and sold to J.P. Morgan & Co. in 1911. Its sole business was railroad passenger car seat manufacture until a diversification drive in 1917-20 led to its merger with American Auto Body Co. As a division of American Auto, it produced automobile, electric trolley and long-distance passenger train seats.

Displays around the seating area include examples of period train engines and rolling stock, mostly of the Norfolk Southern, its predecessors and other regional railroads.



The Fairfax Station train bell was donated by the late Joseph A. Weyrauch of Arlington, Virginia. The bell saw service on a Southern Railway steam engine. With Southern's conversion to an all diesel fleet – Southern was one of the first systems in the United States to convert entirely to diesel engines – train bells were donated to local communities.

This bell – all 352 pounds of it – was given to Our Savior Lutheran Church in Arlington in 1949. When installation of a new organ and electronic bell system in 1962 at Our Savior eliminated the need for a conventional bell, it was stored for more than a decade before being donated to the Station.

Artwork of Fairfax Station is featured in this section of the museum. "Fairfax Station, Virginia" is a collage of the area's history, completed by local illustrator Paul Salmon. It was commissioned by the C&P Telephone Co. in 1990 as a Station fundraiser.

"The Village of Fairfax Station" was completed by Clifton artist Ellen Jones in 1995. It portrays the town as it appeared in 1916.

Above the station bell are reprints of Currier and Ives lithographs depicting romanticized images of the railroads during their period of expansion. These prints connote a sense of pride in the role of railroads in the United States' territorial expansion and economic growth.

As you move toward the door leading to the Station Master's office, you will pass a display on the life and work of Herman Haupt, who served during the Civil War as the chief of the U.S. Military Railroads (USMRR). Haupt was a West Point graduate who had retired from the military to serve as a civil engineer for railroads in the 1850s in both the North and South. He was a construction engineer and general superintendent on the Pennsylvania Railroad, and then chief engineer of the Southern Railroad of Mississippi. He returned to the Pennsylvania Railroad as chief engineer until 1856.

Haupt led Union efforts to restore the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad lines, including the Potomac Creek Bridge, in 1862. Although he left military service in 1863, Haupt's impact was significant. The effectiveness of the USMRR more than influenced the outcome of the conflict. Almost 25,000 men served at its peak, in charge of 400-plus engines, 6,330 rail cars and 2,105 miles of track. According to one estimate, the USMRR laid or reconstructed 642 miles of track and built 26 miles of bridges during the Civil War at a net cost of under \$30.0 million.

Also featured is the life of J. H. Devereux, a railroad surveyor and engineer who served as superintendent of the Orange and Alexandria from 1862 to 1864. Unknown to one another until the Civil War, Devereux and Haupt established a close personal and working relationship. In his *Reminiscences*, Haupt characterized Devereux as "one of the best men in the service. ... Our relations became almost fraternal." Devereux was the namesake for Devereux Station on the Orange and Alexandria line, which later was named Clifton Station.

Above eye level are two prints depicting Civil War actions in this region. "Lifeline to Victory" depicts the march of a supply train under the command of Lt. Col. Richard N. Batchelder in October 13-15, 1863 between Catlett and Fairfax Station. Without an armed escort, his wagons delivered needed supplies to Union forces while withstanding attacks from John Mosby's guerrillas. Batchelder was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions.

"The Escape of the Locomotive *Secretary*" illustrates an incident at Bristoe Station prior to Second Manassas in 1862. On the morning of August 27, 1862, Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's wing of the

army attacked the Orange & Alexandria Railroad at Bristoe Station. The *Secretary* escaped successfully but the attack secured Bristoe Station for the Confederates.

Displays on the eastern wall include signal flags, rail crossing artifacts and the train order hoop – an effective but not a “high tech” means of communication. Lastly, in a nod toward modern railroads in the region, the eastern wall of the room displays photographs by O. Winston Link, a noted industrial photographer who used dynamic techniques to capture life along the Norfolk Western Railroad in the 1950s.

STATION MASTER’S OFFICE

Displays in the station master’s office span several decades. The room contains the daily tools used by employees in such areas as customer services, rail communications and scheduling. The roll top desk includes a genuine Underwood upright typewriter. In its day, Underwood was the largest manufacturer of typewriters in the world. Note the date validation stamp, used for passenger tickets. The antique telephone would have used a party line when telephone service first reached the area.

The dispatcher’s desk on the window side of the room is organized as it might have appeared in the late 19th to early 20th centuries. Authentic telegraph and telephone equipment are displayed. The equipment placement is consistent with that of the time. Railroad companies maintained identical layouts throughout their systems so operators could move from one station to another without having to learn a new one. A skilled telegrapher could transmit about 30 words per minute.

Electrical telegraphic principles were demonstrated as early as 1809. Artist and inventor Samuel F.B. Morse developed the familiar telegraphic key system in 1837 but its deployment was delayed.

Congress appropriated funds to construct the first telegraph line in the United States in 1844 between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. By 1848, roughly 3,000 miles of telegraph wires had been strung in the United States. By 1853 – one year after the construction of this station – over 26,000 miles of telegraph wires



crossed the country, much of it concentrated in the Eastern United States. By the mid-1860s, an estimated 5 million messages passed annually over the lines.

The Morse system – seen here – became the dominant system in the United States. The equipment needed for transmitting and receiving messages – a register, relay, key and battery – amounted to \$52.00 per station in the mid- to late-1860s. At present values, that investment would equal roughly \$2,000 to \$2,500. Telegraph systems remained in use through the 1940s but the basic technology was largely unchanged after the early 1900s.

Throughout the room there are additional items illustrating telegraph communications in the region. The collection of insulators above the windows in the Station Master's room represent common types used throughout the United States. While a variety of materials were used, glass insulators were most common due to their low cost. Companies designed unique insulators in order to simplify visual identification for replacement.

Post office boxes in the Station Master's office remind us that rail stations served multiple functions and were central to community life.

Many items in the room such as the ink wells and map above the roll-top desk were found in the early 1980s when the station was dismantled.

You will see in a display case in the Station Master's office items highlighting the life and work of Clara Barton – the “Angel of the Battlefield.” Clarissa Harlowe Barton was born on December 25, 1821 in Oxford, Massachusetts. Patriotic impulses motivated her to care for wounded soldiers at the outset of the Civil War while she worked at the U.S. Patent Office in Washington, D.C. One of her early efforts took place at Fairfax Station after the Battle of Second Manassas.



After the war, Clara led efforts to identify the dead at Andersonville prison and ran the Bureau of Missing Soldiers in Washington. She was instrumental in establishing the American Red Cross in 1881.

Clara Barton died on April 12, 1912 at her home in Glen Echo, Maryland and was buried in her family plot in Oxford. Her Glen Echo home was made a National Historic Site in 1975.

WAITING ROOM 1 (DISPLAYS)

Moving from the Station Master's office one enters the Waiting Room, one of two when the station was in operation in segregated Virginia. The ticket window is in the corner of the room, to the right of the lantern display.

The collection of signal lanterns on the western wall of the Waiting Room were once used for railroad communications. The set includes lanterns used by conductors and crews as well as head lamps mounted on train engines. These lanterns were used by the Southern and Norfolk & Western Railways. Among the manufacturers represented in the collection are Adams & Westlake (originally of Chicago, Illinois; now located in Elkhart, Indiana), Aladdin (Chicago, Illinois) and Dietz Manufacturing Co. (Syracuse, New York). All are still in business today.



Designs often indicate functions, manufacturer or railroad user. For example, the style of the lantern on the top shelf to the far left indicates that it was a conductor's lantern. Southern Railway crew lanterns – the bottom row – generally were standardized designs. Glass colors indicated the function. The blue glass lantern, for example, was hung on cars under repair to indicate that they should not be moved. Lanterns for use in stations or passenger cars generally have elongated, clear glass and large kerosene reserve tanks in addition to heavy mounts but no handles.

The case below the lantern display contains model trains from various periods. Electric model train sets were sold as early as the 1880s as an amusement item for wealthy families. The first models sold in the United States were imported from Europe. The familiar Lionel and American Flyer brands were first sold in 1903 and 1918, respectively.



The items here date from the early 1900s to the 1950s. They are on loan from Hope and Dan Danielson of Gainesville, Virginia.

Homes of local historical significance are displayed on the western wall between the lantern and model train displays. A brief summary on the evolution of Fairfax Station from vibrant passenger and cargo stop to

modern day museum is included in this room.

The Waiting Room contains items reminding viewers of an earlier time in passenger rail service. The floor display in front of the ticket window includes items from the Southern Railway Co., dating from the 1930s to the 1970s. Many were promotional items but some – such as the Southern telegraph code book – were a part of daily operations. Above the door to the Gift Shop is a map of the Southern Railway system as existed in 1921.

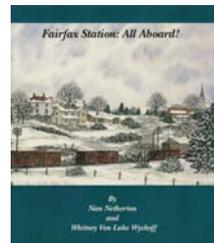
Standing near the authentic coal burning stove are a collection of tools and equipment used on area railroads donated by Russell Ashford, Paul Brown and Wheeler Rodgers. Included are railroad jacks, spikes and driving sledge hammers. As you view these items, consider the labor intensity involved in railroad construction and maintenance along the O&A.

Two separate cases contain Civil War era artifacts uncovered in the Northern Virginia area. Most were unearthed between 1990 and 1991. They range from cannon ball fragments to buttons and belt buckles used by Union and Confederate soldiers. Coins and paper money of the era – some of it still legal tender – are on display. Items were contributed or are on loan from Danny Eschenfelder, Josh Wallis, John Jackson, Fred Kielsgard, Ted Shealy and Jim Hobgood.

WAITING ROOM 2 (GIFT SHOP)

The Gift Shop is housed in what was the second Waiting Room in the 1903 station. Doors on two sides were passenger entrances. The ticket window is located in the corner of the room, to the left of the counter. This Waiting Room served patrons of color. The passage way between the two rooms was a solid wall in the original 1903 station. As you move through the two waiting rooms, imagine yourself as a passenger decades ago and life around the station then.

A wide range of gifts, toys and educational items are available in the Gift Shop. Books are available on the Civil War, Clara Barton and local history. Be sure to check for local artists' renditions of the Station and St. Mary's Church. Custom Fairfax Station ornaments and other unique gift ideas are available during the holiday season.



Of particular interest will be *Fairfax Station: All Aboard!* by Nan Netherson and Whitney Von Lake Wyckoff, which explores life in and around Fairfax Station from the days of the earliest colonists to today.

CABOOSE

John Marino, then President of Rail America, Inc., arranged for the donation of the Museum's caboose in 1993 by the Norfolk Southern Railroad Company.

The caboose is a 1968 Norfolk Western cupola model. It was professionally painted in 2005 to depict a Southern Railway caboose. Professional track layers traveled to Virginia from Michigan to assist volunteers in laying the track that supports the caboose.



Caboose served multiple roles, including crew quarters and mobile offices. Early models were little more than converted freight cars. They were required on freight trains in the United States until the 1980s, when technology and efficiency improvements made them redundant.

The cupola, or standard, model allowed crews to inspect a train from above through its elevated windows. It was the most common caboose style used in American railroads.

MOTOR CAR

The museum's newest acquisition to the outdoor display of railroad equipment, the Fairmont Model A4D, is a mid-1950's motorcar manufactured by Fairmont Railway Motors of Fairmont, Minnesota. Fairmont, established in 1909, is now part of Harsco Rail. Its early focus on track maintenance remains its primary business line today.



These motorcars were usually referred to by the nickname, speeder.

Track inspectors and maintenance crews used the speeder in their daily duties. Usually, two workers and their tools/supplies would ride in

the speeder. It is equipped with a hitch to pull a two-axle trailer for additional supplies. It was powered by a four-cylinder gasoline motor.

This motor car was donated to the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum in the spring of 2009 by Col. Steve Sliwa of Annandale, Virginia.

GROUNDS

The museum's five acres were donated by the Fried and Moore families. Please feel free to wander about the grounds during your visit. Note the Western Railroad Supply Co. guard crossing on the grounds. WSSR was a Chicago-based company; its successor company provides modern warning signal equipment. This type of crossing guard – found in the vicinity of the Station but not on the actual tracks – dates back to the early- to mid-1940s.

We invite visitors back for periodic special events such as the annual train show each December. The Station hosts shows ranging from antique automobiles to large-scale model trains. Please check our Web site regularly for upcoming events.



As you look around the grounds, try to imagine Fairfax Station as it appeared on its original location and was used over the years.

- ❑ Visualize the first locomotives pulling into the station to deliver goods or take local crops and products to distant markets in the 1850s.
- ❑ Picture the 3,000 wounded soldiers laying near these grounds during the Civil War as just a handful of volunteers tried to save lives and minimize their suffering.
- ❑ Think of the young men gathering here to report to duty in World War I – the “war to end all wars.”
- ❑ Reflect on the feelings of local residents as they saw the train carrying their deceased 32nd President to his final resting place pass in front of them.

History happened here.

PICNIC AREA

The picnic area is dedicated to the memory of Lena Wyckoff, founder of the Friends of the Fairfax Station and the last active postmaster of Fairfax Station before retiring in 1971.



Lena Wyckoff was born in 1902 and raised in southwestern Virginia as the daughter of a railroad conductor. She taught at Fairview, Clifton, Fairfax and Centreville schools during the 1930s.

Mother of two, Lena and her husband owned the Wyckoff Store, located next to St. Mary's rectory. Shortly after retiring, she joined the Clifton Community Woman's Club and became involved in local preservation efforts. She became the first President of the Friends of the Fairfax Station and was a continuing member of the board of directors during her lifetime. Lena passed away on January 12, 2001, just shy of 99 years old.



A commemorative plaque includes a hobo symbol like one actually left on the fence post of Ms. Wyckoff's home. The symbols identified friendly residents for other passers by. Please see more about life during the Great Depression in the "Riding the Rails" display in the first Waiting Room.

The picnic area is available to all visitors. Please feel free to explore the nature trail behind the picnic area, built with the assistance of local Eagle Scouts. Maps are available by the trail sign.

TO LEARN MORE, OUR VOLUNTEERS RECOMMEND ...

Nan Netherton and Whitney Von Lake Wyckoff, *Fairfax Station: All Aboard*, Friends of the Fairfax Station, 1995.

Elizabeth Brown Pryor, *Clara Barton – Professional Angel*, University of Philadelphia Press, 1987.

Robert C. Black III, *The Railroads of the Confederacy*, University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT

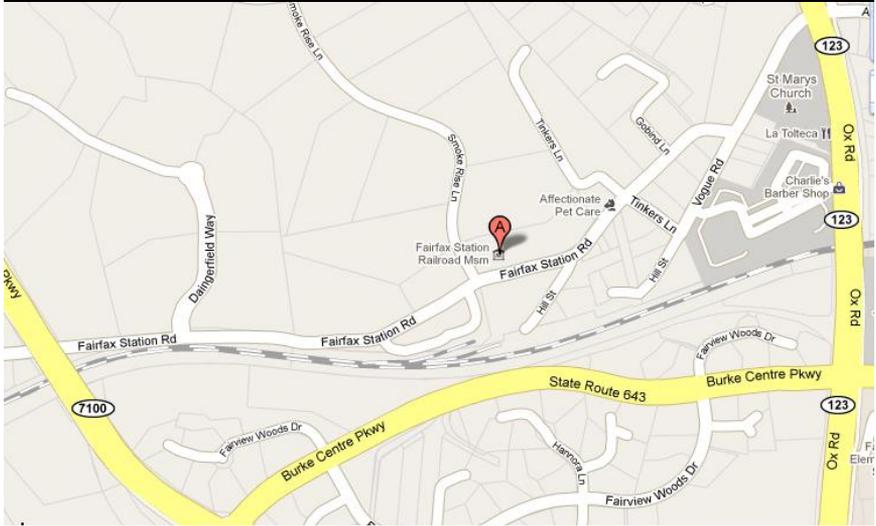
The Friends of the Fairfax Station is an all-volunteer organization. The Friends support the Station through gift shop sales, membership dues, community room rentals, monthly train exhibits, the annual holiday train show, admission fees and donations by local clubs and organizations. Members of the community support the Station through their financial and in-kind contributions, artifact donations and time commitments. Donors and supporters include:

- ❑ Schneider Model Railroading, Inc.
- ❑ Elizabeth & John Griffin
- ❑ Linda & Bill Wharton
- ❑ The Burdette Smith Group, P.C.
- ❑ CertaPro Painters and Sherwin Williams
- ❑ Clifton Community Woman's Club
- ❑ Clifton Lions Club
- ❑ DAR, Providence Chapter
- ❑ Dominion Valley Garden Club
- ❑ JL Tree Service
- ❑ MowCow Lawn and Landscape
- ❑ Northern Virginia NTRAK Model Train Club
- ❑ Lindner Family Foundation, Inc.
- ❑ Michael Byrnes
- ❑ Christime Cataldo
- ❑ Lisa Ide
- ❑ John Kiely
- ❑ Mr & Mrs Michael McKisic
- ❑ Hampton Williams

The Station needs volunteers in such areas as museum docents, artifact/historical research, special events, community outreach and display preparation (static display; inter-active video and short documentary preparation).

If you are willing to contribute your time to further enhance the historical experience at the Station, please contact the Station at 703-425-9225.

FAIRFAX STATION RAILROAD MUSEUM



THE FAIRFAX STATION RAILROAD MUSEUM

11200 Fairfax Station Road
P.O. Box 7
Fairfax Station, VA 22039
703-425-9225

Open Sundays (except major holidays), 1:00 ~ 4:00 p.m.

*N-scale model train displays on the 3rd Sunday of every month
except December and January.*

The Station is available for private rental.

*Station volunteers can assist with large group tours. Please
contact us in advance to make arrangements.*

Visit our Web site for more information:
www.fairfax-station.org



This 1852 map shows the originating points of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad and major stops along the route. The Warrenton and Manassas Gap branches also are illustrated. The highlighted stations (left to right) are Gordonsville, Fairfax Court House (upper), Burke (lower) and Alexandria. Fairfax Station serviced Fairfax Court House but local land owners wanted the line located further south due to concerns over noise and smoke.

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|------|---|------|---|
| 1848 | Virginia General Assembly charters the O&A RR Co. | 1865 | Lee surrenders to Grant (Ap. 9). O&A ownership transferred from Federal Government to Virginia Board of Public Works. |
| 1849 | Surveys begin from Alexandria and Gordonsville. | 1867 | O&A/Manassas Gap merge, forming Orange, Alexandria & Manassas RR. |
| 1850 | Manassas Gap Railroad is chartered. | 1868 | Devereux Station name changed to Clifton Station. |
| 1851 | O&A officially inaugurated at Alexandria. John S. Barbour, Jr. elected president of the company. Warrenton Branch construction begins. | 1871 | The company acquires Lynchburg & Danville Railroad. |
| 1852 | Post offices established at Burke and Fairfax Stations. Manassas Gap Railroad opens. | 1873 | Company reorganization authorized by state legislature. Baltimore & Ohio RR announces a controlling interest. |
| 1858 | O&A carries 70,321 passengers, 32,409 tons of freight, employs 188 workers and reports a profit of \$151,922.00. | 1881 | Company name officially becomes Virginia Midland Railway. |
| 1861 | Federal troops occupy Alexandria, taking control of the company's financial records and facilities. Battle of First Manassas (July 18). Skirmish near Burke Station (Dec. 4). | 1885 | Barbour retires after 34 years as president. |
| 1862 | Second Manassas (Aug. 28-30). Fairfax Station evacuated and burned by Union troops. They return a few months later. | 1892 | John S. Barbour Jr. dies (May 14). |
| 1863 | Battle of Brandy Station (June 9). | 1894 | Virginia Midland becomes part of Southern Railway system. |
| | | 1967 | Last freight delivery to Fairfax Station. |
| | | 1973 | Station is closed permanently. |
| | | 1977 | Southern Railway donates Station for preservation. |
| | | 1987 | Fairfax Station Railroad Museum is dedicated. |