

## **EAST FALLS CHURCH HISTORY: Train Stations**

*from A History of East Falls Church by John F. Iekel*

Railroads came to East Falls Church (EFC) just before the Civil War. Three railroad stations have served EFC and all stood in the same location on the western side of Lee Highway just south of North Fairfax Drive. This site is adjacent to the Washington & Old Dominion Trail, part of a regional park that runs the course of the old rail line.

The first station was built after the Alexandria, Loudon & Hampshire Railroad laid its tracks through EFC in the late 1850s. Around 1880, the Washington & Ohio branch of the Richmond & Danville Railroad decided to build a new station at the site.

Instead of destroying the old station, it was moved to 6901 Lee Highway. A Mr. Adams used the building as a blacksmith shop for more than two decades. By 1917, the building had become the Falls Church Garage. The building was finally destroyed and replaced in the late 1950s.

The second station was built in the 1880s and was used until 1895 when Southern Railway (which had purchased the Alexandria, Loudon & Hampshire Railroad) decided to build the third station on the site. The second station was moved to 6854 North Fairfax Drive and was purchased by a Mr. M.E. Church. At its new location, the building first served as a residence, inhabited by the Lowery family for many years. The former station was eventually converted to business use and over the years accommodated Black Cocker Antiques, Arfax Labs, Papillions Bicycle Shop, Dave's Comic Books, and the S&W Sign Company. The building was demolished in 1984 to make room for the current Econolodge.



*Third EFC Train Station, c. 1966*

The Southern Railway built the third EFC railroad station in 1895 to accommodate its Bluemont Branch, running from Washington to Bluemont, Virginia. The Washington & Old Dominion Railway and the Railway Express Agency also used the station. The last day of passenger service at the EFC Railroad Station was May 31, 1951. Freight service ended in August 1968. The station building was closed in August 1967 and the tracks were taken up in 1969 (although some

remnants still exist in the brush near the site of the station). In 1970 Arthur Brown and Charles Kelley purchased the station and moved it to Amisville, Virginia, where they had planned to reconstruct it.

Unfortunately, that never happened.