

Romiley wins Best Kept Station award

ROMILEY RAILWAY station claimed the coveted overall Best Kept Station Award, the first time the top honour has gone to the station, in the 2025 Cheshire Best Kept Station Awards on 5 February.

The annual event, staged this year at Crewe Alexandra's stadium, saw a record attendance of 200 guests with 19 different stations receiving awards across a number of categories.

The presentations took place before twelve Borough and Town Mayors, with the awards presented by *Modern Railways* contributor Tony Miles.

On presenting the awards, Mr Miles reflected: "I was especially struck by where the community, alongside staff, had clearly made a real difference.

There were flower beds, restored waiting rooms filled with pictures and historical artefacts, better information and notices from the groups involved inviting others to come and join them.

A great many of those examples were in Cheshire. The dedication shown by volunteers across these stations in Cheshire is amazing."

Mark Barker, chair of Cheshire Best Kept Stations, told guests: "Tonight is a celebration of you and your work as station volunteers. The care, commitment and pride you show make a tremendous difference; not only to the stations themselves but to the communities they serve.

"Stations are part of our daily lives. They are where journeys begin and end - the routine trips to work or the

shops, a day out, a night out, or the important departures for holidays and university. They are where loved ones are welcomed home or waved on their way. They are gateways to our communities and to our lives."

What you do touches many people, including yourselves, because working together on something worthwhile, constructive and shared brings real benefits to physical and mental wellbeing, to self-esteem and to confidence. The pride you take in your station shines out into the community and is felt by everyone who passes through."

Amongst many initiatives, the group caring for Romiley persuaded a contractor carrying out bridge repairs to donate materials which were used

to turn an overgrown embankment into a garden, whilst for Railway 200 they replaced boarded up windows in the subway with glazed windows featuring the crests of the 19th century railway companies which built the line and the station, shedding light into the subway as well as on the station's heritage.

Most eye-catching was a project to commemorate VJ Day 80th anniversary by getting the community to make 800 paper origami Japanese Cranes; the bird being a symbol of peace in Japan. These were suspended from pieces of tree branches in the station's stairwell creating a riot of colour and movement. The cranes went on to a display in a local library and are ultimately destined to go to the Peace Park in Hiroshima. *Tony Miles*