

The story of Sadako & the 1,000 Peace Cranes

In 1955 a thirteen year old Japanese girl died of “the atom bomb disease” – radiation-induced leukemia. She was one of the many people to suffer the after-effects of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

During her illness Sadako buoyed her spirits by folding paper cranes.

In Japan, the old myths say that cranes live for a thousand years, and that the person who folds a thousand cranes will have a wish granted. Sadako wished she would recover from the fatal disease.



She folded 644 cranes before she died. In honour of her memory, Sadako’s classmates folded 365 more cranes so that she could be buried with a thousand paper cranes.

The inscription on a monument to Sadako in Hiroshima’s Peace Park reads:

*“This is our cry,
this is our prayer,
Peace in the world.”*

Paper cranes have become a symbol of peace and hope. The paper cranes will make beautiful and symbolic Christmas tree ornaments.