

Story of Sadako

Sadako Sasaki was two years old when the bomb was dropped on her home city of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. Sadako seemed to escape any ill effects after her exposure to the bomb, until, ten years later, she developed leukaemia, "the atom bomb disease".

When she was in the hospital, her friend Chizuko brought her a folded paper crane and told her a story about it. According to Japanese legend, the crane lives for a thousand years, and a sick person who folds a thousand cranes will become well again.

Sadako folded cranes throughout her illness. The flock hung above her bed on strings. When she died at the age of twelve, Sadako had folded 644 cranes. Classmates folded the remaining 356 cranes, so that one thousand were buried with Sadako.

In 1958, with contributions from school children, a statue was erected in Hiroshima Peace Park, dedicated to Sadako and to all children who were killed by the atom bomb.



Sadako Sasaki memorial in Hiroshima, surrounded by paper cranes

Each year on August 6, Peace Day, thousands of paper cranes are placed beneath Sadako's statue by people who wish to remember Hiroshima and express their hopes for a peaceful world. Their prayer is engraved on the base of the statue:

*This is our cry,
this is our prayer;
peace in the world.*

"Peace Crane, I will write peace on your wings and you will fly all over the world."

` Sadako Sasaki, age 12 ~