



St Michael & All The Angels, Barton Turf

Whilst the church dates from the 14th century, it has elements such as the font and nave arcades that date from the 13th. It has an air of lightness about it, which is no doubt helped by its white ceiling and windows of mainly plain glass.

The church famously boasts an impressive 15th century rood screen which still retains much of its original and vibrant colour. On it is depicted the order of nine angels and three saints; St Barbara, St Apollonia and St Sitha. St Apollonia, who is shown brandishing a tooth held in a set of pincers, was a virgin martyr whose teeth were viscosly pulled out in punishment for her part in a local uprising in Alexandria. Curiously she is also regarded as the patron saint of dentistry.

At the time we visited, the church was full of origami cranes hanging in garlands between the arches. The crane in Japan is seen as a mystical bird that can live for a thousand years. It is also believed you can make one special wish come true by folding one thousand paper cranes. This belief was popularised by the story of a little girl named Sadako Sasaki, who developed leukaemia after being exposed to radiation from the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Sadako is said to have begun folding cranes in order that her wish to live would come true. Sadly, she only folded 644 cranes before she died. But as a tribute to her dream, they buried her with a thousand cranes made by her classmates. This simple paper bird has now become a universal symbol of hope and healing.







