



# Meet the Caker

*There are around 900 members, spread across 24 branches that form the South East region of The British Sugarcraft Guild. Every single member has a story about their journey with cake and sugarcraft. Here we interview Fran Turner of Ashford branch, in Kent.*

Please tell us about yourself

I started my cake life just a few years ago in 2015 when I took early retirement from a lifetime in nursing, due to a chronic back condition. I thoroughly enjoy producing a variety of cakes for family, friends and neighbours, and I love to learn new skills and then put them into practice. I suppose I became aware of the Guild from a local cake supplier, who encouraged me to join my local branch, and, being a very organised and enthusiastic person, I was very quickly asked to be Branch Secretary!



What was your first and your greatest cake?



I've been baking cakes for many years, but my first real attempt at decorating a cake was for a baby shower party (shown on the left). I hadn't received any formal training, and had never heard of crumb coating, so I used apricot jam to attach the sugarpaste! Anyway, the recipient was delighted with the cake, which spurred me on to learn more about cake decorating.

Just 2 years later, in 2017, I produced my 'greatest' cake (to date), which was a wedding cake for my son's marriage. I managed to assemble it and travel (during a hurricane) to Derbyshire, and was utterly relieved that there was not one single broken petal when we arrived.



If you were stuck on a desert island, what would be your tool of choice?



The Profroster (which is an adjustable cake scraper to help achieve sharp, clean, straight edges on cakes).

What is your favourite aspect of caking?

My favourite aspect of caking is when the cake leaves the house and the customer is happy!

What is the one top tip you would pass on to a new caker?

To attend some professional lessons, to learn how to do the basics, what is food safe, and what isn't. Then join the BSG!

What is the best aspect of being a member of the Guild?

Having the opportunity to learn lots of different sugarcraft techniques. Plus it's where I met my best friend!

Who is your hero in your branch and why?

My hero is Sue Varnals, who is not only my best friend, but also the best flower maker and a perfectionist in her craft, my 'partner in crime' and a fantastic gin and tonic maker !

