

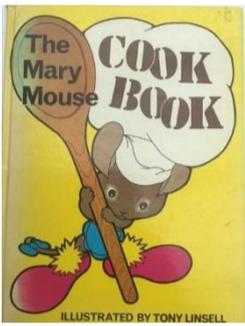


Meet the Caker

There are hundreds of members spread across 21 branches that form the South East region of The British Sugarcraft Guild. Each member has a unique story about their journey with cake and sugarcraft. Here we interview Gina Rickaby of the Tunbridge Wells branch in Kent, who runs her own cake business, Great Cakes.

Please tell us about yourself

My earliest memories of cake making were Saturday mornings when I used to get out my favourite cookbook, see what ingredients were in the kitchen, and produce a cake for my family for the weekend. I



used to love trying new recipes although I'm not entirely sure how edible they were!

My first attempt at cake decorating was modelling a fishing scene with marzipan, and after that my Mum and I enrolled on cake decorating evening classes at a local school and I always remembered the teacher talking about the Guild a lot, although I didn't get around to joining until 2016.



I went on to making my own wedding cake which was very on-trend at the time – complete with frills and tiny flowers all set on a separator stand - how trends have changed now....!



I then decided to do a City & Guilds in Sugarcraft at West Kent college. My tutor was Janet Glazier, who is a fellow member of the Tunbridge Wells branch. My plan was to start a cake business when I had my children (who was I kidding!), it was actually in 2015 when I started my business called Great Cakes.

Please tell us about your first cake, and your greatest cake



My first 'properly' decorated cake was this Christmas Cake, complete with a royal iced collar that I learned during the evening classes.

My greatest cake was this tiered cake that was part of Paul Bradford's display table at Cake International. I was so thrilled to be asked to contribute that I wanted to create a cake that was out of my comfort zone, and this one even had a moving carousel at the top! That gave me the confidence to enter other competitions, and I have since won prizes at Cake International and BSG competitions.



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



It would be the Dresden tool, as you can do almost anything with it.

What is your favourite aspect of caking (eg, modelling, sugar flowers, royal icing, etc) ?

I love to make sugar flowers whenever I have some spare time.

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

If you want to make cakes commercially, it is vital to properly price your work – price what your customers would pay, not what you would pay.

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

Learning from fellow cakers – everyone has different skills and techniques and are so generous in sharing their knowledge.

Who is your hero in your Branch and why?

Carolyn Harvey is my branch hero, not just because of her dedication to the branch, but for all the coaching, guidance and confidence she has given me.

