

Spotlight on a Cake Decorator - Elizabeth Ivory



How long have you been decorating cakes?

As a child, working with my mother, I'd decorated family Christmas cakes with an old Tala syringe set and lots of buttercream over almond paste (sounds rather odd looking back now!) Serious decorating began in 1975 when I attended night classes at Mt Roskill Grammar School in Auckland, New Zealand.



One cake decorating tool you could not live without?

My clay gun is indispensable and I use it all the time. My adjustable ribbon cutter is also invaluable!

The most rewarding part of cake decorating is?

... seeing the pleasure on the face of the recipient of a cake.

What was your biggest challenge as a cake decorator?

Getting my daughter's 4 tier wedding cake across the Tasman to Auckland! The cakes were baked, ganached and stored in various freezers. On the Tuesday night they were packed carefully and distributed in different family members' suitcases. On Wednesday, the cakes arrived in Auckland, ready for work to begin. Masses of flowers had been carefully packed into a box and transported in our hand baggage and all arrived intact. I wasn't able to get the ivory fondant I wanted so my grandchildren were roped into kneading the colour into the white

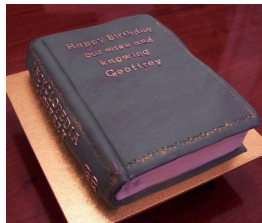


What inspired you to get started?

I've always been interested in hand crafts and the classes offered a skill I hadn't developed before. I thoroughly enjoyed what I learned and from then on made and iced all birthday and Christmas cakes for family and friends.

How long have you been involved with the Guild?

I joined in 2007. When I made my eldest daughter's wedding cake in 2000, I realised my skills needed updating so I enrolled in classes and was introduced to the Guild at the time. Since I have retired, and my dog has retired from the show ring, I've been able to offer my time to the Guild and took on the role of Delegate 18 months ago. I'm now on the Committee and State Committee and also undertook the Judges training course in 2013.



What do you enjoy most about the Guild meetings?

The opportunity to see so many different ideas demonstrated and to share the knowledge and experience of some terrific decorators. I learn something new every single time I sit down in front of a demonstrator and always have ideas stimulated.

How has cake decorating changed in the time you've been doing it?

When I learned, we made our own fondant and used cardboard cut outs as templates for flowers. There were no commercial cutters or moulds available.

What was your most memorable cake?

A cake for someone who was passionate about Gang-gang cockatoos and snow gums!



icing for me! On Thursday the cakes were all covered, assembled and delivered to the venue in the evening ready for the wedding on Friday!

Do you have any other interests apart from cake decorating?

Dog showing and breeding of Airedale Terriers used to be a passion. Now I only keep Darcy as a pet and attend obedience and agility classes with him sometimes. I'm also involved with a volunteer-run theatre in Newtown called New Theatre (an odd name as it's actually 84 years old) where I'm Vice President of the Management Committee and on the board that owns the building.

If you had one piece of advice for a new decorator, what would it be?

Definitely join the Guild and attend meetings – you'll never get better access to such a wealth of knowledge for such a low price. Then go home and practise!

