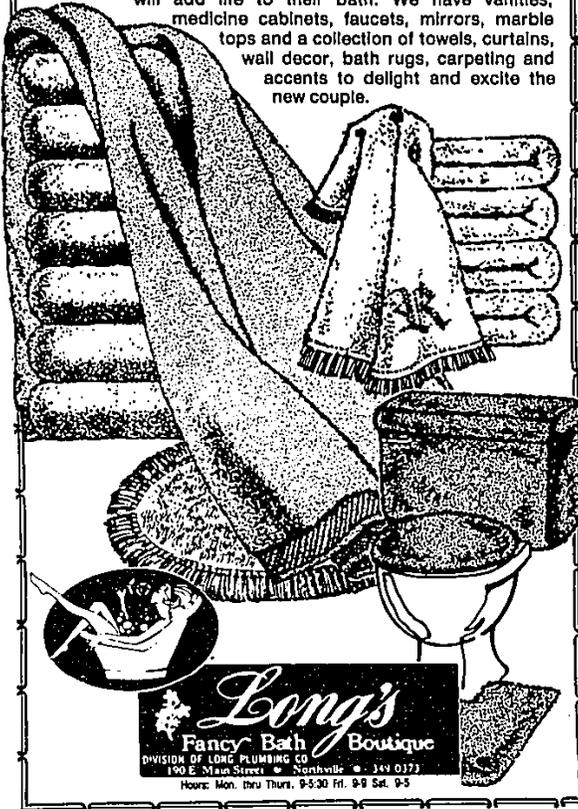


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**Cakes**

(Continued from Page 11)  
ing to Mrs. Kelley, who started her career as an eighth grader wrapping dainty tea sandwiches that the store then and now still specializes in making.

But like the frosting, these early decorative efforts were white as the driven snow. Brides wore white and so did cakes. Color was out.

But somewhere a courageous innovator brought a hint of color to the decorative flowers. "About 20 years ago the colors were very pale," noted Mrs. Kelley. "Today, customers ask for bright ones. We also do other flowers. Morning glories are very popular."

She thinks it takes skill to bedeck a cake with flowers and other decorative touches. "Luckily mistakes are easy to correct," she noted. "You just take them off and start over. There is no reason a cake has to leave a shop with a mistake."

Thelma McCourt of Farmington helps her sister with the decorating at Thomas Cakes, regarding it as the best part of the wedding cake business.

"Some people ask for what they want," she said. "But some let you do your own thing. That's fun."

(Family participating also occurs at Mrs. Maddox Cake Shop. Also on the payroll is Mrs. Kelley's sister, Marian O'Neil of Canton, and their father, Jack Still of Birmingham.)

Ms. McCourt demonstrated how to make the eye-catching flowers that go on the cakes. She puts frosting in a plastic bag. She snips off the tip of the bag and squeezes out the frosting as needed. In her other hand she holds a nail with a top placed on it the size of a 50-cent piece. While slowly turning the nail, she squeezes out the frosting onto the top. Voila! A rose.

A knife or spatula is used to transfer it to the cake.

Mrs. Thoin believes that cake decorating lately is swinging away from bright colors. "It is becoming less ornate and more elegant," she said, adding "pastels are more in favor."

She has no trouble maintaining a steady hand in this work. Many years ago she got an exacting training in a Woolworth store in Cheyboygan.

"I decorated cakes at a counter to customer specifications," she recalled. "We always had a big crowd. They were fascinated with cake decorating."

**BUT OF ALL** the recent innovation in wedding cakes, probably the most revolutionary and visible is the removal by some of the tiny bride and groom from the top of the cake. Dried silk or fresh flowers are turning up instead. Also bells, birds and other decorative objects are having their moment at the top of the heap.

Another rather spectacular sight is a fountain with running water that can be added to the center of the big cakes that feed 700 guests. A cake like that would cost \$200 and up.

On the smaller level cakes cost from about \$20-\$30 depending on the wishes of the customer.

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