

featuring Barbara Wardley



### BARBARA'S HOT SAVOURY CHEESECAKE with thanks to 'The Farmhouse Kitchen Yearbook'

Cuts into 12 small wedges

#### Ingredients

- 75g / 3oz butter
- 125g / 4oz cream crackers, crushed in a bag with a rolling pin
- 3 fat pinches of cayenne pepper
- 125g / 4oz mushrooms, sliced
- 450g / 1 lb curd cheese\* (or any soft cream cheese)
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 125g / 4oz cold cooked ham, chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 firm tomatoes

#### Method

Melt 50g/2oz of the butter and stir in the crushed crackers and cayenne pepper. Press this into a 20cm/8 inch flan ring set on a baking sheet, or into a flan ring with a removable base. Melt the rest of the butter, stir in the mushrooms, and cook gently for 2-3 minutes. In a roomy bowl beat the cheese to make it smooth. Gradually beat in the eggs. Add the cooked ham and mushrooms. Season and mix well. Spoon the mixture into the flan ring. Smooth down. Bake in a cool oven, Gas 3, 325F, 160C, for about 45 minutes. Serve hot surrounded by finely sliced tomatoes.

\*Waitrose stocks Langage Farm Devon Gold soft curd cheese with reduced fat.

## Diamond Anniversary

featuring John &amp; Margaret Reeve

John and Margaret Reeve have lived in the same house in Asmunds Place for the past 40 years after moving here from Devon with their grey haired poodle, Pearlie. John was working in the pharmaceutical industry and had to move to North London so the couple chose the Suburb as their place to live as it was the nearest they could find to South Devon. So perhaps it is no surprise that when I asked John which is his favourite place on the Suburb, he replied, "Our own home."

Although the couple admit to having a low profile as far as the Suburb is concerned, that is possibly more to do with their modesty rather than any lack of achievement. John has been writing poetry for over 50 years and many of his poems have been printed singly. However it was not until the late Spring of 2009 that, at the young age of 87, John had a volume of his poetry, *Poetry for People who Care* published. Soon after the collection was on sale John was invited to do a book signing at Borders, Brent Cross.

While John was creating his verse, Margaret was honing her talent as an amateur soprano. When they were living in Devon, Margaret performed at many Music Festivals. For her the highlight was singing Brahms' Requiem with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in Exeter Cathedral. When they moved to the Suburb she developed her singing further, performing with the Hampstead Music Societies – the Vocal Club and the London Lieder Club – and obtained the much coveted Diploma of Singing at Trinity College of Music. Margaret was delighted that one of her programme of songs, which enabled her to get the Diploma, was composed co-incidentally by another HGS resident, Michael Head.

In their 40 years here they have, of course, noticed several changes. They regret that many of the smaller shops have gone and parking has become increasingly difficult but they both feel that, compared with so many other places, the environment of the Suburb has remained much the same, architecturally and in its green spaces. They certainly feel it is still a pleasant and safe area in which to live. Their favourite walk was to Little Wood, but they now spend more time at home where as Margaret says, "We sit in our cosy little room and, with a switch of a TV button, we can be transported to Glyndebourne, Covent Garden, etc." They do, however, remain members of the HGS Horticultural Society, and often win prizes for their roses.

In December, John and Margaret celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary and I was interested to learn if they had any tips on how to achieve a long and happy marriage. Margaret answered, "To offer love and strength, even in difficult times," and then added laughingly "and plenty of good food helps!" John said, "Start off on the right foot then all will follow well."

Well, whatever their tips are they have evidently worked for John and Margaret!



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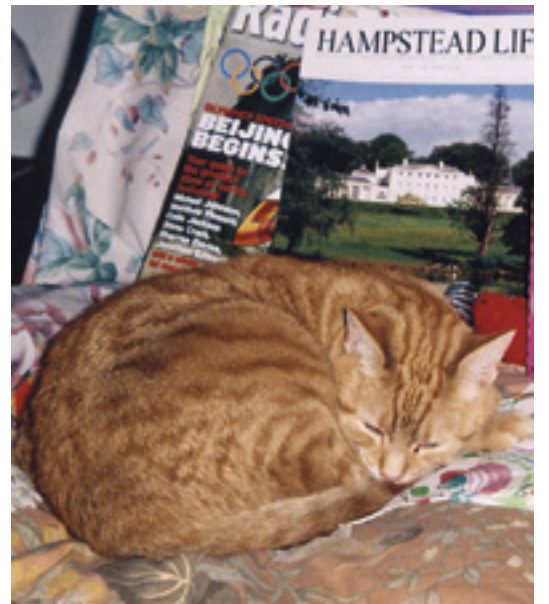
Whenever I mention to a Suburb friend that I am going to tea with Barbara Wardley their eyes seem to glaze over as they immediately think of the delicious home-baking that I will be treated to – sumptuous scones, cakes ranging from sponge to simnel and perhaps a savoury or two.

As we settled down to tea (accompanied by her traditional rich Christmas cake, complete with marzipan and icing) on a bitterly cold December afternoon, I learnt that her interest in cookery dated back to her early years. When she was in her mid-teens she asked her father if she could learn more on the subject but unfortunately he died suddenly when Barbara was only fifteen. However, her mother managed to obtain a grant which enabled Barbara to spend four enjoyable terms at Miss

Randall's School of Domestic Economy in Eastbourne (whenever I am with Barbara I think of steam trains, Miss Marple and times when manners were 'de rigueur'). As she revealed, she would have liked to pursue a career in nursing, but her hopes were dashed after she contracted a very nasty virus which persisted for some long time. Instead she became a highly-skilled medical, then legal, shorthand typist.

Born in Northwood, overlooking Mount Vernon Hospital, Barbara moved to the Suburb in 1975, although she was already familiar with the area having a grandfather who had a grocers shop in Childs Hill since the late 1880's.

Barbara participates in a wide variety of Suburb activities. She is a committee member of Fellowship and enjoys the talks at Fellowship House on Tuesday afternoons; she is an active member of the HGS Horticultural Society (winning prizes for her skills both with flowers and plants and for her baking) she also helps at the Free Church as well as belonging to its choir. She is a keen supporter of the RSPCA, RSPB and Cats Protection. Indeed, as we finish our tea and chat I am aware that the small, furry ginger cat on the cushion has hardly moved since I arrived, so I ask Barbara how Katie is getting along (I had met the two cats which Barbara had previously owned), she replied, "Oh, I'm ever so fond of Katie but I do feel she is becoming the boss." I am sure that all Suburb cat owners will understand that state of affairs!



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