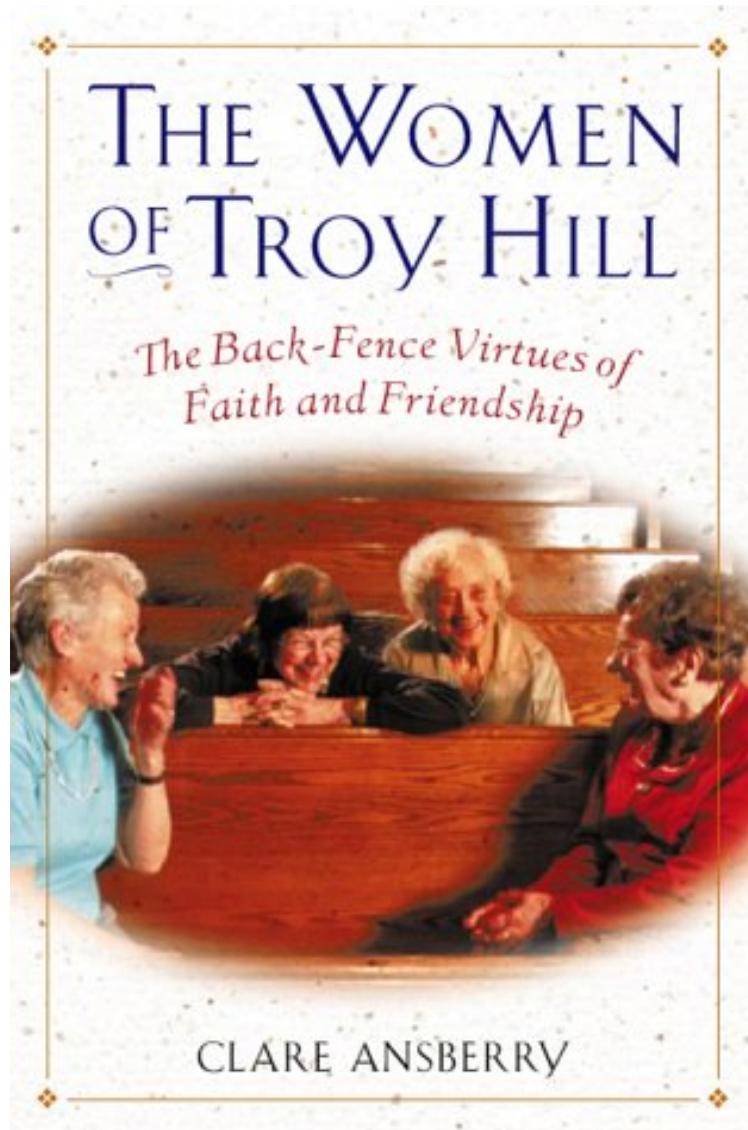


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## The Women of Troy Hill: The Back-Fence Virtues of Faith and Friendship

Clare Ansberry

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**Clare Ansberry : The Women of Troy Hill: The Back-Fence Virtues of Faith and Friendship** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Women of Troy Hill: The Back-Fence Virtues of Faith and Friendship:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you grew up in Pittsburgh - a must read!By r.diannel absolutely loved this book! As I am from Pittsburgh and had grown up in one of the area 'neighborhoods', it was so delightful to

read this book and see what it had been like to the generation before mine! All the things WE had taken for granted were only obtained thru their hard work - much like we can say about our children when they were growing up. The sense of family throughout the area was so heartwarming - anyone living there would do anything and everything for someone who needed help. Quite a refreshing book to read and I would highly recommend this book especially to Pittsburghers! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Worth your time to read -- slowly and with relish By Linda Williams If this book doesn't uplift you, you ain't got no upliftin' in you. Beautifully written. Wonderful, colorful, wise, dear and ordinary beings living ordinary extraordinary lives. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Troy Hill, PA By Carol Transaction went fine. Haven't actually read the book yet. Gave it to my mother to read who now gave it to my sister to read. My Grandparents immigrated to Troy Hill from Germany in the early 1900's. My Mom has come across a few familiar names in it.

In a small neighborhood, perched atop a hill in Pittsburgh, thrives a world we think we have lost. The women of Troy Hill, now grand- and great-grandmothers, have lived here for the better part of the twentieth century. Most of the women were born here and married here; they raised their children here and buried their husbands (and some of their children) here; and their lives are a living testament to the old-fashioned values of service, friendship, faith, and sacrifice that younger, more restless and rushed generations have nearly forgotten. All over America, communities such as Troy Hill, made up largely of elderly women, are thriving. Clare Ansberry has discovered their secret to long and energetic lives. What Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie did for approaching death, Clare Ansberry's *The Women of Troy Hill* does for living full lives in the eighth and ninth decades.

From Publishers Weekly "For the most part, they know one another by face, name and by the colors of their winter coats, their paths crossing less from formal introduction than from spending a lifetime in such a little place." In describing this German-Catholic neighborhood high above Pittsburgh's city center, Ansberry (the bureau chief for the Wall Street Journal) skillfully evokes a microcosm of urban life, a place that has changed little over the greater part of the last century, inhabited mostly by older women in their 70s and 80s. Ansberry aims to get to know six of these women (she sees "bits and pieces of my own mother, her mother and sisters" in them) and to demonstrate how their collective knowledge of "what ultimately succeeds and what fails" is representative of the lives of elderly women across the U.S. Now the fastest-growing segment of our population. They describe themselves as women who "neighbored," meaning they have long occupied their time with looking in on the homebound, cooking for the recently bereaved and taking a leading role in a variety of church and neighborhood events. For example, Mary Wohleber, now widowed, fought with fierce determination to raise money to restore Troy Hill's chapel, but her interests have also taken her to such exotic locales as Sri Lanka, Tibet and Syria. Those interested in women's history and close-up shots of life in the U.S. will enjoy this anecdotal study of an insular community. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal This is a book about neighboring, caring, faith, and friendship in a section of Pittsburgh that is just two miles from the city center. Regardless of personal fortune or the lack of it, of education or success, in Troy Hill all are neighbors. Ansberry, the Pittsburgh bureau chief for the Wall Street Journal, presents an excellent and intimate look at the community, with its population of older people. The women in particular have made the "Hill" what it is. What matters is not wealth but how people deal with life's joys and struggles. The book is filled with little incidents such as Florence Klingman's taking a bus once a week to visit a woman from Troy Hill who now lives in a nursing home, even though they are not kin. The multitude of incidents build a clear picture of a community where character matters. The message resonates across all cultures and is poignantly illustrated by the people in this predominately German American Roman Catholic neighborhood. Highly recommended for all public libraries. D George Westerlund, formerly with Providence P.L. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Troy Hill is a neighborhood in Pittsburgh, and the women in these pages have lived there all their long lives. Mostly German, mostly Catholic, and mostly married, these women, now in their eighties and older, form a society of care, of interest, and of the exquisite pattern of daily, weekly, and seasonal cycles of food, church affairs, and family celebrations. "Men worked. Women neighbored" said Mildred Mares. Some of the chapters tell love stories, like that of Margaret and Joe, who sang each other's harmonies and exchanged mushy greeting cards through the decades. Some tell of family tragedies lived through: Edna, who figures she'll live so long as she has work to do, has buried all three of her sons and her husband. The sisters Cecilia and Loretta, still live above the funeral home their father once ran, using skills honed over decades to keep their families in touch and parish work humming. Each of these women's stories is part of the mosaic, a sunlit portrait of a place where being a neighbor spanned three generations and more. With all the detail of a New Yorker profile, Ansberry has turned the lives of these women into gorgeous domestic history, where china figurines and rosette pillows carry as much meaning, and more, as state documents and legal briefs. This is the kind of book that could generate tremendous word-of-mouth support, and certainly it will make a great choice for women's reading groups. Grace Anne DeCandido Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved