

**Tour Tip:** Tour #1 will visit the new Town Hall in Santa Clara to see the monuments and the mural

For a kid growing up on the ragged edge of a little town called St. George in the 1960s, it was major stuff when the California cousins came to visit. Our genes were similar, but the width and breadth of our worldviews varied immensely. We shared the same grandparents, but our horizons were as vastly different as the Pacific Ocean and Pine Valley Mountain. It was great fun getting together, but I always dreaded one part of it — the inevitable derogatory comments on what a small town I lived in. I took those comments personally. They cut clean to the bone. My only consolation was the comfort of knowing I didn't live in a really small town — like Santa Clara.

In fact, I had been spared that indignity by my grandfather Arthur K. Hafen who grew up in Santa Clara himself as the grandson of one of its original Swiss settlers, but moved to St. George to raise his family on Tabernacle Street, just a couple of blocks from his place of work as a professor at Dixie College. As a boy I was often asked if I was a "Clary" kid and I always quickly and curtly responded that I was not. I was a St. George boy, a city-slicker, not one of those small-townners from the other side of the Black Ridge. It was always a jolt to my pride when my California cousins reminded me that I was every bit the hick I thought those Santa Clara kids were. But there were long periods between visits and in the interim was plenty of time to revert to my imaginary standing as a boy about town. I took kindergarten through sixth grade with my fellow city boys at East Elementary on the southeast corner of St. George. It wasn't until I moved on to Woodward Junior High that I integrated with all the kids from the sticks — from the various backwaters of Washington, Leeds, Veyo, Gunlock, Ivins, and, yes, Santa Clara. We took seriously our responsibility to initiate them into metropolitan life.

The other day as I drove into Santa Clara, I marveled at the quaint beauty of what is still, 40 years Later, a small town compared to St. George. The giant old sycamore trees that distinguished the village through much of the 20th Century still stand, accented now by an artfully designed new streetscape. It struck me that for generations, people have been driving through Santa Clara and setting aside a soft spot in their hearts for the place. When old Highway 91 brought half the world

through town every year, few folks passed without stopping at one of the many fruit stands that stood bright and inviting beneath the sycamore bows.

Midway through town stood a large stone building where the Clary kids went to school and where they gathered on summer nights to play town bell and run free in the cool mist off the Santa Clara Creek (now known as the Santa Clara River). It has taken me decades to come to terms with it, but I realize now that they were most fortunate. There could have been no better place to grow up than in that tree-canopied little town along the Santa Clara Creek.

My wife, Debbie, was among the lucky ones. She grew up bunching onions in the patch down the lane, and working long summer afternoons in the family fruit

stand. Every spring, as May draws near, she recalls with fondness the May Day celebration at the school on the old town square. Everyone in town was there, all 250 of them. The students wore their bright new spring clothes and they braided the May pole, and danced to "Oh Johnny Oh" in the upstairs gym and played kickball on the dirt field and high-jumped over a

bar into a pit of sawdust and ate their picnic lunches in the glorious light that filtered through the sycamore leaves.

Not long ago the City of Santa Clara dedicated its new town hall on a new town square. The large and noble rock building carries the same lines and character of the old school that was torn down in the 1970s — but is much larger, mirroring the fact that what was once a quiet little stop on the road has become a significant suburbia. It is a building that reflects the spirit of a proud but practical community. It is a structure that symbolizes the courage, competence and faith of those who settled the place, and the hopes and plans for the future of those who inhabit it today.

One of the best decisions Debbie and I ever made was to build our family home in Santa Clara 23 years ago. For Debbie, it was a matter of literally coming home. For me, it was simply coming back to my roots. Our children are now spread around the globe, but none of them has ever been shy about declaring Santa Clara their home. Nowadays, when anyone asks if I'm a Clary boy, I proudly answer, yes. Fact is I have lived in Santa Clara more years now than I lived in St. George. And many of my California cousins can't wait until they can live here too. 🍷

# Small Town Pride

By Lyman Hafen

