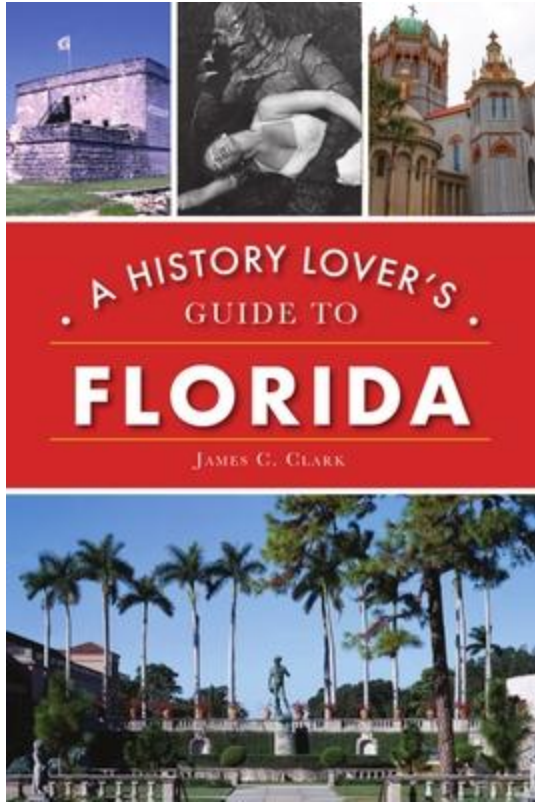




Jim Clark a Florida Journalist, Historian, Storyteller and Comics Writer. He died at 78 in Orlando.

Jim and I were competitors in the early 1980s in Central Florida, when Ad Age magazine called Florida "newspaper Heaven." Heaven and hell are a comparative term, depending on where you stand.

Jim managed the Orlando Sentinel, and I was at The Ledger, in Lakeland. Both of us were senior editors running our competitive newsrooms. We both managed highly profitable newspapers for two of America's largest newspaper publishing companies, Tribune Company in Chicago which owned the Orlando Sentinel and South Florida Sun-Sentinel and the New York Times Company which owned The Ledger and 10 other newspapers in Florida.

[Jim Clark dies at 78 in Orlando.](#)

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We both read competing editions every day and circulation numbers by the week. The Ledger gained circulation in Polk County and Central Florida by the thousands, mostly from the Orlando Sentinel and Tampa Tribune. However, a newspaper could hurt its competitor in other ways, by hiring away key talent. So, Jim and I talked about the ones who got away.

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By the mid-1980s much of the competition was over. The Ledger prevailed in what was left of newspaper heaven.

Fast forward to 1994 when I joined Tribune Company in Chicago as editor of international syndication. We were relaunching a Tribune owned comics property, Terry and the Pirates. I

needed a writer. Yesterday. I called Jim. He had written thousands of new stories and bought hundreds of comic strips in his newspaper career. He hadn't written a strip, yet he was a storyteller and historian. He jumped in.

Terry had a good run in a competitive syndication industry. After that, Jim built on his daily Orlando Sentinel column, Today in History, and expanded it for international syndication.

Competitors turned colleagues.

Jim is one of the best known Florida historians in a widely published author. I'm a book editor and publisher.

We talk neat books and the great writers and storytellers. And maybe the ones who got away.

—mark mathes

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[Book portfolio](#) of many of my 53 published books since 2015. Many as editor at regional independent Pelican Publishing in my hometown New Orleans.

[My website:](#) writing, editing, publishing website with tips, trends, Florida author news

My publishing career of 5 decades. [LinkedIn](#). Connect there?

[Interview I did about publishing trends](#) with author/podcaster Richard Bonte, one of my clients.

President of Sarasota Fiction Writers. I'll send you my most recent newsletter.