



About Jack

My short biography is that I grew up, so to speak, in the Panhandle, graduated from UT Law in 1972, licensed to practice law in 1972, and was immediately sucked into the gaping vacuum of the draft and became a US Army quartermaster officer for a while, eventually being sent across to the JAG office to try cases in federal court (non-military things that happen on a military base are federal court cases). I was discharged as a Captain, then came home and began practicing law in Austin, where my office and home have been ever since.

Law Stuff: I was in one of the earliest groups of attorneys for whom board specialization was granted, in my case in personal injury trial law. My lawyer specialty is products liability law, particularly aviation crashes, that arose out of my military experience and, hence, my unquestioned devotion to helicopter pilots. In the course of my practice I have been a co-designer or co-patentee of a mechanical modification to the Smith and Wesson service revolver (arising out of the death of a Travis County deputy sheriff in the middle 1980's) and of tail boom and tail rotor gear box assembly and pilot's operating manual for the Bell Jet Ranger helicopter and the discovery and elimination of a stress riser in the 3d stage turbine coupling of the C-30 jet engine of Sikorsky S-76 helicopters. I was selected by lawyers around Texas in 2003 as a Texas Super Lawyer. Wow for me.

Writing Stuff: I was the managing editor of the Texas International Law Journal law review while at the University of Texas Law School. From 1972 to 2008 I have published who knows how many articles on technical legal subjects, the most well-known of which tend to be associated with aviation legal problems such as the failure of Minimum Safe Altitude Alert and Intruder systems for aircraft flying on instruments (or, better said, crashing on instruments). I was the chairman of the State Bar of Texas Rules of Evidence Committee for three years and am on the State Bar Pattern Jury Instruction Committee. Your writing gets better when it has to be so accurate that lawyers and judges agree that it makes sense, which isn't often.

I intended to be a historian and novelist all the way back in the 1960's and 1970's before figuring out that one could not raise a family (at least couldn't feed a family) with those credentials, hence law school. But, the novels have been percolating in my head all those years and in 2003 I went to writing school during a summer break.

I attended writing school in St. Cere, France in 2003, along with Leeann Minogue, playwright, and Gem Stafford, winner of the Debut Dagger award.

My novel, *French Letters, Virginia's War*, launched here in Austin in February. Between February and July it was on the best seller list for Barnes and Noble and, locally, Book People. In July I went to Boston to try a very complicated law suit and now I am back in the business of visiting with people about *Virginia's War*. It is the first of three novels in a Texas Trilogy that begins during World War II, in 1944, and follows the lives of people who lived then and what they went through, and, later, what their lives and their children's lives became.

French Letters, Virginia's War is a finalist for the Anderson Foundation Willie Morris Award in honor of the author and teacher who was John Grisham's Mentor. The Award is for Best Novel of the South. It also is a finalist by the Military Writers Society of America for Best Historical Novel of the Year.

I am married to Alice London, a trial lawyer and chair of Annie's List, a group that seeks to elect women to the Texas House of Representatives (and has elected 11 in the last few years). Our daughter Michelle is head of the government department for Arlington Seguin High. Our son Jonathan is a director of music videos and has a couple of film projects under development in Los Angeles. Our son Paul has retired from the World Wrestling Entertainment as world tag team champion and is now living in LA studying to become an actor. We have one cat, Socks, who is quite fat.