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**12300 Bridgeport Road
Richmond, BC
CANADA V6V 1J5
TEL: (604) 273-1400
FAX: (604) 273-1488
E-mail: Jack@itmb.com**

AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #3 OF 2018 – March – New Titles: see below for details

INTRODUCTION

March may have come in like a lamb, but it has been an extremely turbulent month. Politically, it has been disastrous, but I'll avoid commenting. Lan left for Vietnam in mid-March and I flew to Shanghai a week later. By the time you read this, we should be somewhere between Japan and China, having just visited Hiroshima and Kochi, and are preparing for a bus tour of central China (Suzhou, Wuxi, and Hangzhou). Better get used to names such as these. Each of these cities is over five million in population, larger than just about any urban areas in Europe or America. Are they touristically interesting? We'll have to report back on that in next month's newsletter.

YET ANOTHER NEW YEAR

New Year celebrations are commonly held in the 'western' world at midnight on December 31st. I've never been a big fan of celebrating the change from one year to the next, but I usually watch the Times Square festivities on TV. As our family is heavily Vietnamese, we also celebrate Tet, the Vietnamese equivalent of Chinese New Year, and held at more or less the same time. Our family also celebrates Persian New Year, which this year falls in mid-March. We do so because, being the global family that we are, Lan's sister married a Canadian of Iranian background, so we now have a whole bunch of new relatives. Anyway, Happy New Year, for the third and final time.

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

Listening to the news or reading newspapers can easily lead one to believe that the entire world is in turmoil and that there are relatively few 'safe' places to travel. It isn't the case of course, because news media do tend to over-dramatize issues to attract your attention. For example, North Korea is arguably the safest country in the world to visit as a tourist, in spite of the vitriol heaped on it by the Americans. Russia, which in my opinion is a nasty dictatorship, continues to be popular with tourists. I'm sure that it would be more popular if it would only stop poisoning retired spies and their families, but our map series on Russia sells very well. Egypt, on the other hand has been a pariah state for the last few years and most firms, including ITMB, have discontinued marketing maps of that lovely country due to limited interest. Surprisingly, after we found a few copies of our Egypt map and let our distributors know, we sold out in no time – perhaps that's a message to re-introduce our famous ITM map of Egypt. China is quite popular at the moment, enjoying a tourism boom and a good hold on the tour group market. Vietnam has been popular for the past decade. The USA, once popular with international tourists, appears to have lost favour. Tourism declined by 5.5% last year, and given the insane political rhetoric emanating from the current administration and their supporters, it is understandable why tens of millions of international travellers are avoiding America. Canada is fairly popular at the moment, as is Greenland, but Iceland is one of the most popular travel destinations in the world at the moment. Central America, for a long time regarded as unsafe, has gained a lot of favourable comment as a friendly and warm travel area, whereas Venezuela has slid into becoming a no-go area of incredible misery. Cuba, once reviled, is adapting to a tourism boom that Trump tried to stop and failed. My point is that today's troubled countries, and there are way too many, will become attractive to tourism in the future. Even now, a quiet revolution of sorts is starting to change Saudi Arabia, one of the most closed societies on earth. Just recently, I met a Canadian who had gained entry to that country as a tourist – something unthinkable five years ago. There are a lot of exciting places to visit, and ITMB is pleased to be the foremost publisher of maps of countries and cities around the world.

ANOTHER DUMB CROOK

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This happened just today, so I don't have all the details clear, but it appears that a crook broke into a house somewhere in suburban Canada when no one was at home in the morning. He made himself at home and took his time deciding what to take. He didn't hear the outside door open as the householder arrived back home from hockey practice, but he found out quickly enough when he was slammed across the face with that most-Canadian war implement, the hockey stick. Reeling from the blows, he managed to stab the house owner in the leg with a screwdriver and bolt from the house, with the owner in hot pursuit, screaming bloody murder and calling 911 to say he'd been stabbed and was chasing his assailant. I can just imagine the reaction of the dispatcher! At last report, police were looking for a man with severe facial lacerations and a couple of missing teeth. He shouldn't be hard to find, as he is also soaked in his own blood. The house owner was treated for his injuries and warned about attacking someone with a lethal weapon. Well, anyone who has watched a roughhouse on the ice knows what I mean; there's a reason everyone drops their sticks before becoming involved in a battle royal!

WORK IN PROGRESS ON CURRENT PROJECTS

We are currently working on updating a large number of titles. Unfortunately, both Lan and Uji, our senior cartographer, are out of the country for the next three weeks. Projects will still move ahead, but we always find that progress is slower without Lan being present to clear snags quickly. We are expecting three more titles to arrive during March, but we wish to leave them on the Work in Progress list until they actually arrive. They will be included in the next Axis newsletter.

Cook Islands is out of print indefinitely.

Work is well underway for a brand new ITMB title, Japan Railway Atlas, coming this spring. No ETA at the moment. The current Japan Road Atlas is effectively out of print, with only 2 copies left in inventory.

Kuala Lumpur is now out of print. We are re-developing it into a new title for release later this year.

Lesotho is now out of print. We are working on a new map, combining Lesotho and Swaziland into a double-sided map; Swaziland is also getting low on inventory (see below).

Manhattan is effectively out of print (2 copies). A new edition is being prepared; no ETA is yet available.

Mexico City is out of stock and in the process of being updated. No ETA at the moment.

Morocco is now out of print. We are updating the artwork for release as a new edition later this year.

Namibia is out of stock and is being updated. No ETA is available at the moment.

Samoa/American Samoa is out of print indefinitely.

Swaziland is close to depletion (17 copies). While this is not a fast-selling map, we are working on a new map, combining this very nice country with Lesotho as a double-sided map. We will not, however, be releasing the new map until about three months after our inventory is depleted to zero. This is to enable our distributors enough time to sell through inventory that they may have on their shelves.

Uganda is out of stock until an updated revision can be completed. No ETA.

Yucatan Peninsula is, unfortunately, out of print during the travel season for visits to that part of the world. It is always regrettable when this happens, but we have experienced heavier demand for this title than expected, and inventory depleted very quickly. I'm afraid that it will take some time to update our mapping data and print a new edition; no ETA at the moment.

NEW RELEASES IN MARCH, 2018 (Please note February releases as well)

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Ontario Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 2018 1:1M (South)/1:1.5M (North) ISBN 9781771295901 UPC 81771299010 \$9.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Ontario is one of the largest provinces of Canada, equivalent in size to all of Europe. It naturally divides into two parts – the more southerly third and the much larger north. Its shape is determined by the Great Lakes, which form a natural boundary with the USA, but results in the most southerly portion of the province being on the same longitude as northern California. In fact, Detroit is actually north of Windsor, Ont. By North American standards, Ontario is loaded with history, having been settled by United Empire Loyalists fleeing the rebellion in the southern American colonies. Toronto, then called York, was raided and burned by American soldiers during the War of 1812, an act that led to the British sacking of Washington and the burning of the Presidential mansion (which was then painted white to hide the burn marks and has been known as the White House ever since). Yonge Street, built by my ancestors, is the longest street in the world, stretching north from Toronto's waterfront to Georgian Bay and then becoming the main highway through northern Ontario to join the province to Manitoba. This is also the capital of Canada, in Ottawa, and of Ontario, in Toronto. The province is also home to several great universities. In the north, three grand attractions are the giant Nickel in Sudbury, the giant Wawa Goose, and the grandest fur trading post in all of the Americas, Fort William (near Thunder Bay).

AVAILABLE

Warsaw & Eastern Poland Travel Reference Map 2nd Ed. 2018 1:9,000/1:650,000 ISBN 9781771298995 UPC 817712989956 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - This is, at the same time, our second edition updated map of Warsaw and a brand new title for ITMB, in that we have added a regional map of the eastern half of Poland to the second side of the map. This gives the end user two maps for the price of one by combining the many attractions of the city with its surrounding countryside. Anyone with a small amount of historical knowledge knows that Warsaw was largely destroyed during World War II. Many historic cities suffered this fate; in the case of Warsaw, the historic 'old town' was re-built more or less as it had been, with some road widenings changing things, and the rest of the city was re-created as a post-war urban area. The 'old town' is actually quite compact, so is shown in detail on an inset map, as is the greater Warsaw urban area. The urban map shows rail and metro lines/stations, tram lines, churches, theatres, the enormous Soviet-era cultural centre, hotels etc. The regional map covers a very large portion of eastern Poland, from the eastern borders to Lodz, and includes the roads leading to Krakow and Gdansk; altogether, a perfect map for those using Warsaw as a base and exploring the hinterland on short trips.

AVAILABLE

World Wall Map (smaller size) Antique (brown ocean) Political Version (comes flat only) 2nd Ed. 2018 1:50,000,000 (33x20") ISBN 9781771298940 (No UPC code) \$14.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – ITMB has published four maps of the world for the past several years. All are political in format, and vary only by size of page sheet and colouration. ITMB has been selling maps as a retail venture for 38 years now, and the demand for a map of the world is constant. We accept that there are many excellent world maps on the market by a variety of firms, but we also accept that, as a major publisher of maps, we need to offer our designs to the world as well. This is the smaller sheet size version, using traditional brownish shades for the ocean. **AVAILABLE**

World Wall Map (smaller size) Modern (blue ocean) Political Version (comes flat only) 2nd Ed. 2018 1:50,000,000 (33x20") ISBN 9781771298933 (No UPC code) \$14.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – This is the second of four versions of our ITMB World map that we are profiling this month. The other two will be noted next month. This particular version is the partner to the one noted immediately above. The information on both is identical; only the colouration is different. Some people like maps with traditional brownish ocean colouring, and others prefer the more modern blue ocean colouring. Both are excellent maps. This size is appropriate for customers having space limitations to display a map on a wall. It is also good for using as a desk covering. Both versions noted here can be laminated, either by ourselves or by any store with laminating equipment. We do not have a separate ISBN for either map, laminated, just a higher price. **AVAILABLE**

NEW RELEASES IN FEBRUARY, 2018

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Calgary & Southern Alberta Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2018 1:10,000/1:1,000,000 ISBN 9781771291637 UPC 817712916372 \$9.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – This is a brand new title for ITMB. Calgary is the focus of Canada's oil industry, the largest city in Alberta, and a major travel hub for international flights. It is the destination of choice for Europeans planning to travel around Western Canada. The city was founded due to the rail line being pushed westward to meet the line being constructed from Vancouver eastward, creating North America's only trans-continental rail line. The annual Stampede Rodeo held there each July is a highlight of the city's busy program. The second side of the map covers the southern half of the Province of Alberta and a bit of BC, with an excellent inset map of the town of Banff, and another of the Province's capital, Edmonton. This map would be perfect for the short-term visitor wishing to explore from the American border to the top of Jasper National Park, and from western Saskatchewan to British Columbia; excellent road coverage, and all attractions noted. **AVAILABLE**

Laos Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2018 1:750,000 ISBN 9781771294379 UPC 817712943798 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – After a number of years, ITMB is pleased to re-introduce Laos as a country map instead of as a map shared with Cambodia at a less generous scale. ITMB actually first published map of this country in 1996, so this map is the second edition of Laos for bibliographic purposes, but none of our staff except myself were around in those days, so they accidentally thought this was our first effort. Sorry about that, libraries. For those who care, the original ISBN was 0921463928 and at that time, Lan was just arriving in Canada to take charge of our cartographic production. Anyway, we're very pleased to introduce you to this new, double-sided, map at a great scale, with fantastic detail. To me, the north side is the most interesting, covering the portion of Laos from Vientiane, the capital, to the Chinese border. Detailed inset maps of Vientiane and Louang Prabang, the temple city, are included on this side, as are bits of both Thailand and Vietnam. The south portion fills the other side of the sheet, including a goodly portion of Vietnam, showing all border crossings. Much of Thailand has had to be obscured, unfortunately, to make room for the place names index, but the immediate border areas are shown, including the rail line south from Vientiane. In an interesting departure from previous ITMB maps, the back cover consists of a detailed inset map of Vientiane at 1:16,000 scale, making it easy to use in the city without having to unfold the map sheet. Laos, as a country, has an exceptionally rich history, with the exotic Plain of Jars, the enormous temples, and in its involvement in the Vietnam War. This is a country well worth a visit and now it has a map enticing everyone to visit! **AVAILABLE**

Ontario Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 2018 1:1,000,000 (South)/1:1,500,000 (North) ISBN 9781771295901 UPC 817712959010 \$9.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – This map has been printed and is on its way to us for delivery in early March. A detailed description will be included in next month's Axis newsletter.

Patagonia & Tierra del Fuego Travel Reference Map 5th Ed. 2018 1:2,20000/1:750,000 ISBN 9781771296137 UPC 817712961372 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – The southern third of South America consists of a mountainous western portion, a vast grassland prairie-like expanse, and a wild southern tip – collectively known as Patagonia. Significant road improvements by both Argentina and Chile in recent years make driving much easier than was the case as recently as 2000. Side 1 covers everything from Bahia Blanca southwards, and side 2 expands the very interesting Tierra del Fuego series of islands to good advantage. Naturally, Cape Horn is included, as is an inset map of Ushuaia and another of the Falklands. Top attractions are also noted. **AVAILABLE**

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