



ITMB PUBLISHING LTD.

- **INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MAPS AND BOOKS**
- **ITM DISTRIBUTION**

**12300 Bridgeport Road
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AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #8 OF 2017 – August – New Titles: see below for details

INTRODUCTION

For us, the summer months are an opportunity for us to work on developing new artwork as well as completing updating of titles of which we have run out of copies. At the moment, we are updating a dozen titles, which is normal for us, and moving forward with new titles for the fall. The first six months of 2017 involved a lot of travel for us and we are happy to be staying at home during the hot summer season.

ITMB AS A PUBLISHER

Anyone reading this newsletter knows that ITMB publishes maps. How many maps? The current total is 523, but the number of titles is much less because many maps are double-sided, with different maps at different scales on opposite sides of the sheet. We are always looking at new touristic areas to map, but we also have to accept that some maps that we have published in the past do not attract a sufficient market base to justify a new edition. We keep the artwork handy, of course, because what goes around, comes around. We were in Italy last month, and were pleased to see hordes of tourists in Florence. As a result, we are considering re-doing our map of that city, using our own artwork this time, and combining it with a map of Tuscany on the reverse side. I know, there are lots of maps of both Florence/Firenze and Tuscany already available, but I don't know of one that combines the two maps into one!

Similarly, we were impressed with Sardinia when we visited it. The island is developing into a European resort destination and the government has done an excellent job of improving roads and facilities needed by everyone, making the island more attractive still. We haven't started anything yet, but are toying with doing an ITM map of Sardinia. Similarly, we spent a bit of time in the Pyrenees during our recent trip and gathered some useful information that will be added to the next edition. We also were impressed by the south coast of France and are looking into possibilities of preparing a map covering both Provence and the Riviera area. Such concepts take months to germinate and flower, so don't expect anything coming out during 2017, but don't be surprised if a map of the Normandy/Brittany area is released either! We were there in March and found the maps we used inadequate.

What makes ITMB different than any other map publisher is our willingness to develop new and exciting artwork of different parts of the world. In addition to new maps of popular European destinations, we are also preparing new artwork for the Amtrak rail network in the USA, and a rail atlas for Japan, a new map combining the Yukon with neighbouring NWT (the Northwest Territories), and a city map of Tel Aviv. Thus, distributors, retailers, libraries, and interested individuals can look forward to an on-going stream of brand new titles coming from ITMB, as well as new editions coming on a regular basis. Who else is doing as much in mapping?

ITMB AS A DISTRIBUTOR

Naturally, much of each newsletter concerns recent developments specific to ITMB's publishing responsibilities, but it is pertinent to remind North American/Australasian customers that ITMB also is the North American/Australasian distributor of maps for a wide range of publishing houses. AA, A-Z, BC Forest Service, Borch, Canada Map Office, Collins, Franco Maps, Freytag & Berndt, Geographic Maps, Gizimaps, GTR Maps, Hema, GM Johnson, IGN, Magna Carta, Maps International, Marco Polo, Michelin, National Geographic Society, Nelles, Nicolson, Ordnance Survey, Rayworld, Replogle Globes, Routemaster, and Touring Club Italiano are all available to retailers, libraries, governmental organizations, and individuals within our market area. Readers may not be familiar with some of these lines, or may not be aware that we can supply paper maps from such lines, but all these lines are held in stock in our warehouse and we would be pleased to provide you with lists of maps available from each publishing house. Just enquire! Thousands of map titles are available to you from our well-stocked warehouse from publishers all over the world. Just ask!

ITMB AS A RETAILER

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ITMB got its start in 1980 as a normal, bricks and mortar store, albeit one specializing in public documents and reports (legislation, statistical reports, UN and OECD reports, and publications produced by a wide range of governmental organizations, think tanks, museums, and research institutes). Believe it or not, there was a good, steady demand for such intellectual material. However, we kept finding a steady stream of customers asking us for maps of other cities or destinations. As a new retail operation, we were particularly sensitive to what the market wanted, so we introduced Rolph McNally maps of Canadian destinations. This very soon resulted in a demand being expressed for American destinations, and so we started stocking Rand McNally titles of the USA. It wasn't long before someone asked me for a map of London, England. Even I was amazed to discover that, at that time, no one anywhere in North America was importing and marketing maps of London or other European destinations. Incredible, but true!

What I did was to prepare a window display, showing maps from a particular map publishing line (using maps from my own stock of maps gained through my own travels), photograph it, and send the photo, with a nice covering letter, to the publisher in Europe, saying that I was selling their maps as per the enclosed photo, but was experiencing difficulties with obtaining inventory. Could I order directly from them or could they provide me with the contact information of their North American distributor? Believe it or not, I did this 15 times, to fifteen different publishing houses in Europe. Guess what happened? 14 out of the 15 wrote back, enthusiastically welcoming me and offering me North American rights to market their map lines. The only line to refuse to supply was Kummerly & Frey, which later went bankrupt and was purchased through the court system by the Mairs Group of Germany.

My intent was to obtain merchandise to sell in my own store; what I soon discovered was that I needed to order in bulk to afford the shipping costs. This was far beyond my financial means, so I had to find other stores selling maps in order to make it financially feasible to supply my own store. Does this make sense? In other words, I wanted maps for my store, but had to order so many copies in order to justify shipping costs that I needed other stores to share the burden. Is that how most distribution companies begin? Needless to say, as a start-up company myself, I had no idea if there were other stores selling maps. I mean, logically, if I was doing so, there must be other stores somewhere doing the same thing. How on earth would I find them? There were no computers, no data bases, no companies selling lists at that time, so how could I find stores selling maps in other North American cities?

I went to my local telephone company and discovered that they kept phone directories for every city in North America. They used these massively thick books to help subscribers find people in other cities in the era before computers stored data. If you knew that John Doe lived in Des Moines, Iowa, you could go to BC Tel and look in the phone directory for that city and find the phone number for John Doe. That's how we found information in the days before computers; seems incredibly slow and time-consuming, but that's how we did things in the early 1980s. It's only 37 years ago, but for most of you reading this article, it must seem like the dinosaur age. I looked in the yellow pages of directories all over North America and discovered retail map stores in just about every major city. I then phoned each of these stores and much to my surprise, sold my entire initial shipment over the phone before it had had a chance to arrive in Vancouver! I kept enough inventory to provide display copies in my own store and happily sold the rest to retailers in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Minnesota, San Diego, Chicago, and Miami at little more than cost. Little did I realize that those same stores would sell out of copies and want more! That hadn't occurred to me. Of course, once my initial orders passed through the system, I ordered, and paid for, even more inventory, which I displayed and sold in my retail store for local customers, and used to fill orders from other stores. These arrived at such a rate that I was hard-pressed to keep my own shelves stocked or have time to concentrate on what I believed to be my core business – my retail operation!

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Furthermore, these other stores, from all over North America, and my own customers, kept asking me for maps I didn't have and couldn't obtain from European or North American suppliers. In 1982, I discovered a way to get into China, which at that time was closed to Westerners. That's a story in itself but, until I was arrested and given a state trial in Beijing, I travelled surreptitiously around China for three weeks, gaining distribution rights for the entire world for maps produced by China. Great fun! On the same trip, I worked deals with twelve companies in Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, the Philippines, India, and Thailand to supply me with maps of Asian destinations for my poor little retail store. Not surprisingly, once I let them know, other stores wanted these same maps, so I found it very difficult to keep my own shelves stocked yet again. (Enough for now; I just wanted briefly to note how ITMB operated as a retail venture and I got carried away - that's retail!)

PROPERTY VALUES AND TRAVEL

Many cities are currently experiencing rapidly increasing property values. In Vancouver City, for example, the average single-family house now costs \$1.6 million, and news sources report that not a single house is listed for sale at lower than \$1 million. That is an astounding increase over the past few years. When we sold our house in Vancouver six years ago, it was the first house in the east half of the city to sell for more than a million; now it is worth twice what we received. Such increases are happening in San Francisco, New York, London, Paris, and even in China. We're all complaining, but nobody seems to have a handle on why this is happening.

Foreign buyers, notably from China, are often blamed for higher prices, and some governments have reacted by imposing a special tax for non-residents. This does not seem to effect the market, as prices continue to rise. Our local television station has been talking a lot about why foreigners buy a residential property and came up with an interesting statistic related to the USA. In 2016, Chinese buyers purchased \$33 Billion in residential property investments in the United States. This seems like a large number until one realizes it is only 3% of all purchases. The reason sensible Chinese are 'parking' their money outside of China is well-documented, and the Chinese government is extremely concerned about the outflow of money from the country, but are seemingly oblivious to the reasons explaining why so many Chinese have so little confidence in their country's future.

The second largest purchasers of residential property in the USA are Canadians, who purchased \$19 Billion dollars' worth of real estate in what we call 'sunshine states' – notably Florida and Arizona. In most cases, it appears the reason is retirement living; presumably having sold the family home for a goodly chunk of money and deciding to live at least during the winter months in the sunny south. This does have the side effect of driving up housing prices in certain states for American buyers, regrettably, resulting in a shortage of housing in relation to demand – much as is being experienced in several more northerly cities in North America.

How does this relate to travel? Simply stated, the north-south reality that governs travel in North America is strengthening. More people from northern climes are moving south, for several months, then moving north for those months when the weather in the south is a tad too warm for comfort. Almost all of these individuals will be driving north to south and back. This is not a new phenomenon, but the number of people doing so is accelerating significantly, benefitting travel-related businesses along the way; gas stations, motels or RV parks, eateries etc. They will also be placing a certain amount of strain on infrastructure, mostly highways that is new and will hasten the process of upgrading connecting roads and commercial facilities. In its simplest format, millions more people are living a new lifestyle. The billions of dollars invested by Canadians is being duplicated by an even greater number of northern USAers doing the same thing. Living part-time in one part of America and part-time in another is nothing new as a concept; what IS new is the huge increase in numbers. Blame the baby boom of the 50s, but get ready for a whole new generation of oldies rolling along the highways and byways of America, or chilling out in the local Tim Horton's. There's no Timmie's, you say? There will be! We're moving into an entirely new world of travel for millions of North Americans and this will profoundly change travel over the next decade.

BEAR SEASON

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I noticed an article on our national news about bears foraging for food in Romania, being videotaped by locals, who were also taunting the poor bears. That's beside the point. The reason the article about two hungry bears was broadcast in Canada is that we have bears – lots and lots of bears. By co-incidence, a few days later, an article appeared in the Kelowna Daily Courier (Kelowna being a town in the interior of British Columbia that I happened to be visiting), noting that bears inter-acting with humans is way up this year. Thus far into 2017, conservation officers have received 8,900 calls regarding black bears and hundreds of calls regarding grizzly bears. This includes the routine stories about bears in the back yard and bears seeking goodies in waste receptacles, but also about bears breaking into houses and bears attacking people. The reason for the increased activity comes about because we had a late spring, resulting in the late ripening of the berries that are a normal part of a bear's diet. Bears unable to forage in the wild become hungry, and seek food where they can get it. Unfortunately, this often means human habitations. It is illegal to feed bears, for obvious reasons, but it is also illegal to leave edible materials where bears can reach them. Now that summer is well advanced and berries and fish that are the normal diet of bears are more plentiful, interactions with humans should decrease. We will still have a steady stream of stories about bears relaxing in someone's backyard swimming pool, or taking a nap on the back porch. We're quite used to bears in BC. We saw one in Whistler recently, ambling across the local golf course while a foursome teed up for the 13th green. Needless to say, the golfers merely waited until the bear disappeared into the forest and carried on with their golf game.

ONE MORE STORY, GEOGRAPHICALLY RELEVANT

Which country has the longest coastline? This was on this morning's news, and we know the news never lies (at least not in Canada). Exclude Antarctica, which isn't a country, and is mostly melting ice anyway, and the most likely suspects would probably be Australia, Indonesia, or Russia. Forget about the USA; its longest border by far is with Canada. Most countries would be too small to have world-class coastlines, so what's left, eh? That's right: Canada. The reason is that, even though our land mass is the second largest in the world and contains more fresh water than the rest of the world put together, our coastline is immense. Forget about Atlantic Canada and its convoluted shoreline, the coast of Labrador goes on forever. Then there are the coastlines of countless Arctic islands, most of which are huge, and start down the west coast, with its hundreds of fiords. Vancouver Island is larger than some countries, but it also has a very convoluted shoreline, bringing the figure, if memory serves, to 250,000 kms (might be under by a zero or two), but apparently Canada takes first place. Nice to be first at something!

CURRENT PROJECTS AND OUT OF STOCK ITEMS

Albania is out of copies. A new edition is in preparation; no ETA, but it shouldn't be too long.

Amazon Basin is almost out of stock and is being re-formatted into a new map. Once the current edition runs out, there will be a considerable time gap before the new version will be available; no ETA.

Brazil is almost out of stock. We are in the process of creating a new map, no ETA.

Canada is out of copies. We are preparing a new, double-sided map, which we feel will be more practical for visitors to this vast country, with all of Canada on one side, and popular segments of touristic interest on the reverse side. The artwork is well-developed and should go to press soon, but the ETA date is early 2018.

Delhi is out of copies. We are re-formatting this title into a double-sided map of the city on one side and the surrounding region on the reverse side. This takes time, so the ETA date is not yet known.

Edinburgh is temporarily out of stock. The printer sent an advance shipment of 200 copies, which have all sold. Following a query to our printer, it appears that the rest of the shipment was lost in transit. This has never happened to us before, but the reality of life is that it has happened. The printer has agreed to reprint the map and send us a fresh print run of the map as we presented it to him, but unfortunately, this will take time. We apologize to our customers trying to order this title. In almost 40 years in business, this is a first occurrence for us! We are doing our best to get this title back into availability as quickly as possible. Please be patient.

Kuala Lumpur is almost out of copies (14 left). A newly updated map is being prepared for release in 2018.

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Lesotho is now out of print. We are considering a new version, combining Lesotho and South Africa Southern into a double-sided map; no ETA.

Mexico South is now out of stock. A new edition is being prepared for release in 2018.

Mongolia is low on inventory. A new edition is at press for release in December, 2017.

Nova Scotia is out of copies. A new edition is at press and expected in October.

Saint Lucia is out of stock. Please order Saint Lucia/ Dominica instead

Sao Paulo is low on inventory. A new edition is being prepared for release in 2018.

Stockholm is low on inventory. Once copies deplete to zero, we will combine the up-dated city map with a new map of southern Sweden on the reverse side. This will probably be released in the spring of 2018.

USA as a country map is out of stock. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Uzbekistan is out of stock. Please order Uzbekistan/Kazakhstan instead.

Yukon is out of stock. A new edition has been printed, for release in December, 2017.

NEW TITLES THAT ARRIVED IN JULY, 2017

Bhutan and Northeast India Travel Reference Map 5th Ed. 2016 1:300,000/1:1,300,000 ISBN 9781771290845 UPC 81771290845 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Bhutan is a lovely country, but limits the number of visitors allowed to enter the country each year. Their reasoning seems to be that they only want 'high end' tourists who are willing to spend a minimum of \$250 per day for the privilege of seeing the country. Regardless, it is an interesting country, and popular enough that monetary constraints notwithstanding, is fully booked. As with past versions of our map, one side is dedicated to Bhutan itself, with inset maps of the Thimpu area (the capital) and the Paro area further to the west. The map is in considerable detail. The other side of the map sheet is equally useful, in that it covers that portion of India from Kolkata north to Sikkim and east to the actual border with China (not the 'fake' border shown on maps printed in China, which show all of northern India as being part of China). This is an important part of India, but not one well-travelled. Framed by the great Brahmaputra River, one can explore exotic Assam and Nagaland, or follow the Burmese border to Imphal and little-visited Aizawl. The map has a new ISBN, as we gradually switch over to our new prefix, but has the same cover picture and price as previously, so there will be easy to integrate on store shelves. **AVAILABLE**

NEW TITLES THAT ARRIVED IN AUGUST

Vancouver/Greater Vancouver Travel Reference Map on waterproof paper 1:20,000/1:50,000 7th Ed. 2017 ISBN 9781553415190 (same as currently) UPC 815534151919 \$9.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – As we live here, updating Vancouver is not only relatively easy, it is a treat to get out of the office and re-explore familiar yet exotic locales not normally seen by locals, who follow set routes to and from work and spend nice weekends out of the city if they can. Nevertheless, Vancouver is one of those world class cities that is extremely attractively located, has lots of touristic attractions, is safe to walk around in (low crime rate), and is the world's Number One cruise port. That's saying something. We've lived here for 40 years and have seen Vancouver grow into a world class city of 2,5 million souls from 115 countries. Diversity is a by-word here. Lan is on the Multicultural Society Board and regularly performs Vietnamese songs and dances to entertain and educate people about the richness of her cultural background. We even have Provincial and Federal Multicultural Cabinet Ministers whose job it is to promote and protect the multi-cultural diversity that makes Canada such a unique place to live. More importantly, everyone who comes here feels comfortable, making Vancouver the Number One travel destination for families and trans-gender people alike. This is a really unique city; a glimpse into the world of the next century, with the highest percentage of immigrants (defined as anyone born in another country but residing here now) in the world, at 50%. Chinese are our largest population component, so expect to see vibrant Chinatown entities in both Vancouver and Richmond. East Indian communities are a distant second, but very dominant in Surrey. Philipinos are third and rising fast, and Vietnamese are fourth – and virtually all of them speak two or three different languages. What a treasure! No wonder I came here on a six-month contract and stayed for 40 years!!!

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COMING IN SEPTEMBER

Nova Scotia & PEI

COMING IN OCTOBER

Thailand

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