



ITMB PUBLISHING LTD.

- INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MAPS AND BOOKS
- ITM DISTRIBUTION

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AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #9 OF 2017 – late September – New Titles: see below for details

INTRODUCTION

Due to travel plans, this newsletter has to end its information-gathering stage by September 25th if it is to be sent out by the end of the month. Lan and I leave for a ten-day visit to Ukraine on the 26th before moving on to Germany and this year's Frankfurt Book Fair (Oct. 11-16) at the Messe, as usual. Our stand this year is 31 J 130, in the travel section. We will be there throughout the show and hope to meet as many of our distributors and retailers as possible. Please contact me at jack@itmb.com for a good meeting time.

GETTING ALONG

We don't normally include pictures in the Axis newsletter because some recipients have filters that block graphic material, probably to reduce porn, and we want our newsletter to reach recipients. This picture was forwarded to me recently and seems to be one of those eternally hopeful pleas trying to heal the deep breaches in American society that are proving to be so detrimental to that country. Someone paid to place this large billboard sign alongside one of Los Angeles' major motorways. The message is simple and heart-felt, even if Canadians wouldn't necessarily agree that we all 'get along' (makes us sound like calves being herded!). However, the message still resonates. Why can't we all just tolerate each other and get along with each other? Noble sentiment; hard to accomplish with a country's leadership so bitterly negative about people who are in the country (apparently, the Hell's Angels are all immigrants, according to today's tweet from on high) or trying to enter the country even as visitors, or who fervently disagree with the direction of political discourse by that country's leader (i.e. North Korea).

[leave room for picture]



TRAVEL DESTINATION OF THE MOMENT

Thanks to an excellently-made movie, significant attention is being paid to the town of Dunkerque, or Dunkirk in English, in northern France. Its moment of fame happened in 1940, as the retreating British and French armies were being forced into a smaller and smaller perimeter by German troops. Unfortunately, Dunkirk had only one pier, or mole, for ships of a shallow draft to load troops, and Britain had precious few such ships. Its entire army was in France and Churchill was determined to get them back. Without them, Britain could not have continued fighting against Germany and world history would be very different than what evolved.

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The movie focusses on those few days when 400,000 British and French troops were literally in the ocean, standing in long lines, waiting for salvation and praying for a miracle. Filmed on site, using thousands of extras recruited from the local population, the massive exercise extracted first 250,000 Brits and then 100,000 French men of military age. Dunkirk is a living example of a true miracle. The film is well-worth seeing, but so is Dunkirk itself. Literally, the course of world history would have changed dramatically had the Brits not been able to pull off an almost impossible extraction of an entire army, using small requisitioned yachts and sailing craft that sailed back and forth across the Channel for four days, saving lives at great personal risk.

The German military command was confident that all they had to do was wait for starvation and lack of ammunition to convince the British commanders to surrender, so they stopped advancing, not wanting to risk losing valuable tanks and men. French troops maintained a strong perimeter around the city, keeping the Germans from seeing what was happening. The Luftwaffe did harass troops on the beaches, and tried to sink as many large ships as they could, and this is graphically portrayed in the movie, but lost so many aircraft to British Spitfires that Goering limited activity to ineffectual strafing attacks. What no one could have anticipated was that the Channel would remain unusually calm throughout this exercise, allowing thousands of pleasure craft to sail hundreds of miles across what would normally be a very dangerous stretch of water and bring home an army, twenty men at a time, under fire. It was an amazing feat, and you can see it for yourself; Dunkirk is much the same as it was in 1940, and welcomes visitors. Add it to your bucket list of places to see; it's not often you can see a miracle!

TRAVEL DESTINATIONS BEST AVOIDED AT THE MOMENT

Sadly, Mother Nature is wreaking havoc in the world at the moment. Here in America, news media was highly focused on Tropical Storm Harvey that swept over Houston and various parts of southern Texas and Louisiana in early September and then on Hurricane Irma, which devastated several Caribbean islands and Florida and now Hurricane Maria. There have been devastating floods in India, the biggest fire in Los Angeles' history, and enormous forest fires in both Washington State and in British Columbia. Brief reports have reached me regarding wildfires in Spain, but frankly, my plate is full just contemplating the disasters related above.

Hundreds of people have been killed and tens of thousands displaced from their homes in various parts of the world (I forgot to mention the largest earthquake to hit Mexico in a century; also in September). Is there a message here? Donnie Trump is quick to blame China for global warming and climate change, but it is hard to see how any country could be blamed for earthquakes and hurricanes. One does have to admit, however, that some of the disastrous after-effects could have been averted if people (i.e. responsible governing authorities) only followed common sense. For example, apparently Houston has no planning authority. This astounds me as a town planner by training, but apparently anyone can build anything they want so long as they own the land, including building houses on flood plains, and they have. Harvey might have been more extreme than most hurricanes, but its damage would have been far less severe if Houston itself forbade anyone from building in a flood plain. It's just common sense.

Similarly, it is quite evident that many municipalities have been very slack with regard to ensuring that dams are safe, that sewers are large enough to carry away surplus water, that pumps to drain water are in working condition, and that mass evacuations can be carried out without chaos resulting. All of this is stating the obvious, but what have recent disasters taught us? Fairly recently built hotels in Oaxaca collapsed in an earthquake; they weren't seismically sound. They should have been. Pumps in New Orleans were, in many cases, inoperable. Why? Housing in most of the Caribbean collapsed as soon as Irma started blowing; we know why, but that's not the answer. The answer is to build accommodation strong enough to stand up to nature's fury. It can be done. Storms of this nature are bound to re-occur more frequently and with even greater intensity.

Until the lesson that climate change has already changed our current reality sinks in, we are bound to see more devastating re-occurrences of what nature can throw at us with little warning. In the short term, a dozen Caribbean islands will suffer a downturn in tourism, and in their lifestyles, while re-building takes place. Houston will take several years to re-build, but hasn't learned its lesson yet. This is the third time that Houston has been on the receiving end of enormous storms over just the past decade. Re-building isn't enough; changing the way buildings are built and the places buildings can be built is essential, but I doubt it will happen. In the meantime, avoid Houston, avoid Florida, avoid the northern Caribbean islands – and wait for the next blockbuster disaster to hit.

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WHY IS ITMB OUT OF STOCK OF TITLES?

The most common query I receive is 'why are certain titles out of stock?' My normal response is to reassure the questioner that such and such a title has been delayed at press, which is usually the case, but the answer is sometimes more complicated than that. In the early 2000s, ITMB expanded its product range rapidly by adding a lot of titles that had ITMB covers but were really artwork owned by others. This is called 'licensed artwork'. It worked as a marketing ploy, but created huge difficulties further down the road. Firm after firm ceased business during the Great Recession. This left ITMB with inventory in the short term that could not be replicated by the firms owning the artwork.

As a business, we faced several unpalatable choices. We could approach other firms and use their artwork under our cover, but this meant risking repeating the same situation we were already facing. We could discontinue 150 titles from our range, but this would result in losing our dominant position in the map trade and reverting to being a specialist regional publisher of maps of limited portions of the world. This was not an attractive option either.

The third option, and the one we chose, was to create our own original artwork for many of the titles we could no longer obtain from other firms. This necessitated an investment of millions of dollars at a time when most map publishing firms were declining, market needs were changing, and electronic firms were boasting that one no longer needed a paper map: google could do anything! We now know that the market for paper maps is surviving the propaganda put forth by electronic giants wanting to convince consumers that only their approach could meet the needs of consumers, much as the book industry is surviving. Many map publishers bought into the nonsense that paper maps were obsolete and downsized or went out of business. Collins is a case in point. They abandoned the Bartholomew line for the sake of the vision of becoming one of the electronic giants and disintegrated in the process. Cartographia, in Hungary, went the same route, so did Insight and a dozen other firms. ITMB went in the opposite direction, investing in new artwork and in supporting paper map production.

Yes, that sounds noble, but it involved investment funds that we did not have, at a time of great financial constraint (just try and convince a hard-nosed bank that publishing paper maps in an electronic age makes sense!). Fortunately, we had sufficient inventory in stock that we could focus on a few titles at a time, and replace licensed artwork with our own at a steady, but do-able rate, usually. The nub of our situation to this day is the word 'usually'. We have to keep our titles using ITMB's own original artwork updated and in print; that is our Number One priority. We then had to prioritize which of the licensed artwork to re-do, using original source data and working from the easiest to do to the most difficult. Please keep in mind that artwork development costs upwards of \$20,000 per map and that each new completed mapping artwork takes up to a year to produce. Over the past five years, Lan and her team of dedicated cartographers have completed 100 brand new maps. No other firm in the world has done so much new cartography in such a short time period. This was accomplished while keeping existing titles updated and reprinted.

New titles continue to come out of this replacing-licensed-artwork process; the end is not yet upon us. We recently depleted our inventory of Jersey and Guernsey, two excellent and steady-selling titles. Both were licensed artwork. Lan's team is working on a new title to keep these attractive touristic destinations in the ITMB family, but they will be unavailable for several months while original artwork is prepared. A new ITMB map of Poland has just been released, after being unavailable for two years. A new map of Warsaw and Eastern Poland is at press. A new map of Venice will be released in the near future after being out of print for three years. Florence, Ireland, and Dublin are still unavailable, although undeniably attractive titles, simply because we can't do everything that others expect as quickly as the market demands. We regret this, but we are doing our best to provide the marketplace with quality artwork of destinations of interest. The maps will be released when they are ready, and not a day sooner!

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A further complication in keeping titles in print is something we can do little to overcome. We are not printing as many copies per title as was the case a generation ago. This saves money needed to produce artwork, but results in occasional delays at press. To keep printing quantities up, we frequently print six or seven titles at a time. This can result in delays in receiving individual titles. We normally receive half a dozen pallets worth of maps in one shipment. Immediately below this article is a listing of what is unavailable, or about to become unavailable, and I'm sorry to say that the list is too long. Most of these titles are at press, and will arrive in the near future. Regrettably, there is little I can do to speed up the process except remain patient.

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.

Brasil 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.

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. Swaziland is also getting low on inventory.

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

Mongolia is low on inventory.

Saint Lucia is out of stock. Please order Dominica & St. Lucia instead.

Sao Paulo is almost out of copies. A new, double-sided map is being prepared for release in 2018.

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

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

NEW TILES THAT ARRIVED IN SEPTEMBER

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Armenia & Azerbaijan Travel Reference Map 6th Ed. 2016 1:430,000 ISBN 9781771290265 UPC 817712902658 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – It is unfortunate that these two neighbouring countries dislike each other so much, because both are lovely countries to visit. Due to the way the two became separate political entities, both have enclaves surrounded by the other and it is impossible to map one without mapping both (unless one wipes out roads leading through the other's territory, resuming the roads and towns once it returns to the politically correct entity. The two have to be mapped as one, and visited as one; internally, the Armenians tend to inhabit the western third and portions of the centre, the Azeri most of the rest of the area, with enclaves of Avars, Lezgins, Cachuri, and Talys in specific areas. A second problem with mapping the two countries is that each insists that roads that used to be main transportation conduits were severed during the nationalistic creation of both entities, but both sides insist that these non-usable roads are still the main, or national, highways. Which ones are open, which ones have new by-pass routes, and which are closed is exceptionally difficult to record. We have done our best, and in our opinion, our map is more realistic than others on the market. Of course, the map shows points of interest, museums, churches of note, historic sites, airports etc. Detailed inset maps of Yerevan (capital of Armenia) and Baku (Azerbaijan) are included. **AVAILABLE**

Antarctica & Tierra del Fuego Travel Reference Map 5th ed. 1:7,000,000/1:750,000 ISBN 9781771290074 UPC 817712900746 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Antarctica remains one of the most fascinating places on earth. It is possible to visit the continent during the 'summer' months of January/February, by ship. We did so on an Azumara liner (625 passengers), but Holland America has also used one of their larger ships to go there. Regardless, Antarctica retains a degree of wonder unsurpassed by any other part of the globe. This map is our fifth (5th) edition, so there is on-going demand for this title. This edition has Antarctica on one side and Tierra del Fuego on the other, since most ships heading across the Drake Passage originate in Ushuaia, Argentina. This edition is also unique in that we portray loss of permanent ice since the last edition. Global warming is melting the ice cover quite quickly, both visibly above the surface and by warmer ocean currents melting the underside of ice shelves. This should cause a carving off of a huge piece of ice in the near future that is about the size of Prince Edward Island in Canada. We also find that our Antarctica map is used by a lot of elementary students in the preparation of school projects (no doubt thanks to their parents' searching of the internet to find material). Finally, please note that the ISBN has changed, and the cover picture, but not the price. **AVAILABLE**

NEW TITLES THAT ARRIVED IN AUGUST

Mexico's Pacific Coast & Guadalajara Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 1:1,500,000/1:10,000 ISBN 9781771293112 UPC 817712931122 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Mexico continues to be a very popular travel destination, and its Pacific (or west) coast continues to attract millions of visitors each year. Side 1 covers from Mazatlán south to east of Salina Cruz, including the resort towns of Puerto Vallarta and Acapulco. Due to the shape of Mexico, Mexico City and Oaxaca are also on this side and inset maps of both cities is included. Naturally, the map includes the road network of the region, touristic sites, and gas stations in out-of-the-way places. Side 2, provides a full-sized map of Guadalajara, Mexico's second-largest city and a wonderful destination for a visit. The city centre contains not only a magnificent cathedral and civic square, it also contains the Mercado Libertad, the largest such market in Latin America, perhaps in the world. In this edition, we have added two 'Top Attractions' lists, with the primary sites of interest noted by a red box, such as San Juan de Allende and its baroque Spanish architecture. **AVAILABLE**

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Nova Scotia/PEI Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 1:380,000 ISBN 9781553412359 UPC 815534123541 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – This third edition of what is proving to be a popular, no change in ISBN or price. Nova Scotia is one of the most historic provinces of Canada, having become British as a result of military conquest in the 1740s. Initially, the British distrusted the Acadian settlers and moved many of them to French settlements in Louisiana, which was then a huge area of land. Some of the Acadians stayed in the South, becoming known as ‘Cajuns’; others eventually found their way back north. The fortress of Louisburg, on Cape Breton, was state of the art for its time, but was seized by the British anyway and used throughout the American revolutionary war as a bastion of British strength. The fortress has been restored and is now a national monument. Lunenburg, and Halifax are both very interesting cities to visit, and Peggy’s Cove is probably in more people’s photo albums than any place in North America, outside of Niagara Falls. This is an excellent map as well to portray Canada’s smallest province, Prince Edward Island, the ‘home’ of both Canadian confederation and of the famous Anne of Green Gables, the fictional heroine of Lucy Maud Montgomery’s novels. **AVAILABLE**

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!!!

COMING IN OCTOBER

Australia East Coast

Venice & Northern Italy 2nd Ed. 2018 on waterproof paper

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