



## **ITMB PUBLISHING LTD.**

- **INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MAPS AND BOOKS**
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**AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #9 OF 2018 – End of September – New Titles: see below for details**

### **INTRODUCTION**

After a very heavy summer season of travelling, Lan and I are enjoying a three-week break between trips. We will be flying to London at the end of September, and participating in the Frankfurt Book Fair October 10-14. We hope to meet as many retailers and colleagues in the map trade as possible at that time. Several new titles that arrived during September and are expected in early October are included in this month's newsletter and will be available for viewing at our Stand 3.1 J 130. We also note below highlights from our travels.

### **A PROPHECY FROM 1920**

A regular reader of this newsletter kindly forwarded to me an article written in the Baltimore Evening Sun on July 26, 1920, by M. L. Mencken, whom I assume to be one of the newspaper's noted journalists/editors of that era. It goes like this: "As democracy is perfected, the office of the President represents more and more closely the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day, the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire at last, and the White House will be occupied by a downright fool and complete narcissistic moron." Spoken almost a hundred years ago, this statement rings very true today. How did someone a century ago foresee the trend of mediocrity that would best reflect American political leadership in the future? Disapproval level among non-party stalwarts equals 69% as of Day 600; unfit to serve is 55%. No wonder you-know-who is peeved!

### **EVERY MAP OF THE WORLD IS NOW OUT OF DATE; DITTO FOR MAPS OF EUROPE**

It has finally happened. Greece and Macedonia (officially called The Former Part of Yugoslavia called Macedonia) have reached a compromise. The former Yugoslav entity will be officially known as North Macedonia as of October 1<sup>st</sup>. Countries rarely change names. The break-up of the Soviet empire resulted in thousands of place name changes as newly-independent entities rushed to de-Russify imposed names created by the Russians, but country names generally didn't change. As part of the overall collapse, Yugoslavia disintegrated completely, leading to a reasonably peaceful exit for Slovenia, a bloody war in most of the rest of the country, and entities unrecognized to this day. One of these is the entity that decided to call itself Macedonia. Well, it made sense, considering that almost all of it was the former Yugoslav province of Macedonia, but Greece objected very forcefully. Greece already had a province called Macedonia and felt that it had the right, historically, to the exclusive use of that word. The immediate effect, for map makers, will be to change all maps that name the former entity of Yugoslavia to record the name North Macedonia. Thus, we all can look forward to new editions of world maps and maps of Europe to record the new name. It will also necessitate changing the seating arrangements at the United Nations to fit the existing member into the N section. Whatever maps of the country that exist will also have to be withdrawn and replaced by new editions. Fortunately, ITMB does not publish a map of North Macedonia, but probably will now that this issue is resolved. In the longer term, long-stalled plans for the country to join NATO and the EU are moving forward. NATO has been keen to add North Macedonia to its alliance for a very long time, and I think it is safe to say that North Macedonia will be a member of NATO fairly quickly. Joining the European Union may take a little longer, but the country has applied to join and has already done a lot to align its legalities to European practices, so I do not foresee a long delay in negotiating membership being an issue. This will finally consolidate the EU as an entity, providing a sound ground link with Greece. Now, if the Europeans would finally accept that Kosovo will never re-unite with Serbia, both of those entities could move forward and do the same as North Macedonia. Well, that may prove to be a bit sticky, but one can hope.

**ITMB IS A FAMILY BUSINESS**

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Since ITMB was founded almost 40 years ago, it has grown from a small retail store into a world-wide publishing and marketing venture. During this time, many millions of maps have been sold, and the travel market has been well-served by more than 600 published map titles over the years. As travel patterns have changed, particularly as a result of the 9/11 attacks and the upheavals caused by the Great Recession, ITMB has managed to continue publishing brand new titles and updated editions with regularity. However, there comes a time when even the most stalwart entrepreneur needs to recognize the passage of time and change the way things have been managed for the past four decades. We have prepared for the next step in the evolution of our company. A few years ago, Lan and I formed a family trust to bring our daughter and son-in-law into the business as future owners. In 2018, we had to modify our trust agreement so significantly in order to comply with altered federal legislation that we essentially rolled it into a new trust agreement. As a result, our two companies, ITMB Publishing Ltd. And Jaclan Holdings Ltd., are now owned jointly by the four adult family members seen in the picture below, with Jack and Lan retaining control as Trustees. What this means in practical terms is that Jack retains overall general control, Lan remains in charge of cartographic production, Linh is in charge of sales and customer service, and Phuong is in charge of financial matters and administration.

This picture was taken in northern Norway, during our recent trip to Europe. For those who don't know us, Jack is the white-haired individual who looks different, and Lan is the good-looking one on the left. Linh and Phuong are the attractive couple, with Johnny (age 8) and Kenzie (age 4) growing like weeds and enjoying childhood.



**ANOTHER MAPPING COMPANY PASSES A SUCCESSFUL MARKER**

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The Backroads Mapbook product line has just passed its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary date. This company was founded by the Mussio brothers in 1993 in Vancouver to follow their passion for mapping out the thousands of kilometers of logging roads in British Columbia. The company thrived, and is today the largest such company in Canada; arguably, in the world, as the concept is not pertinent to most countries. All of Canada has seasonal, or back, roads and Mussio has expanded their range over the years to include mapping guide books for all provinces, CDs, detailed 1:75,000 scale maps, and a wealth of knowledge. ITMB has carried the line since its inception, and for several years was a distributor for Mussio, which is based in another Vancouver municipality, Coquitlam. Thus, Vancouver has the largest city map publisher in the world (G M Johnson), the largest travel map publisher (ITMB), and the largest recreational map book publisher (Mussio). All have been in business for more than a quarter century. For the sake of comprehensiveness, I should also add that Davenport Maps, in Victoria, has been publishing wall maps of BC and its major cities for at least the quarter century mark. Congratulations to all!

### **NORWAY**

During August, we enjoyed a rare family vacation on a cruise ship, sailing from Hamburg to the northern tip of Norway and back, with several port calls. For Lan and myself, the cruise was a business trip, as we were updating our map of Bergen, checking the accuracy of our map of Norway, and researching a new possible map for next year of the Spitsbergen island network. For Linh and Phuong, it was a welcome break from work, and for the grandkids, a chance to have lots of fun together. The cruise was with Norwegian Lines, and was quite pleasant, stopping at Leknes, Tromso, Honningsvaag, and Bergen, as well as going into Geiranger Fjord. The highlight was landing in the very far north and actually finding a rental vehicle that could transport all of us to Nordkapp, the most northerly point that one can drive to in Europe. For Johnny, the best part was putting his foot in the Arctic Ocean, becoming the first 8-year-old to do so in both Canada's side of the ocean and in Europe's in the same year.

The cruise, by the way, was affordable, and the best way to see Norway without having to drive many hours each day. Most European cruises are expensive by North American standards. This one cost \$1,300us each for an 11-day trip, including a good room, all the food one wants, evening entertainment, and day-long activities. This comes out to a tad over \$118 per day, which isn't bad! Add in several interesting port calls and it was a no-brainer! Most such cruises are more like \$2,300 per person, so we feel that we received a good trip for a good price. It is also a good place for kids, with special play areas just for them, and a teen area for older ones. We went through a storm on the return leg of the trip and our two young ones loved the sight of waves crashing over the bow and sending up spumes of water. No seasickness for them! They'll both be great sailors later in life.

### **SCANDINAVIA GENERALLY**

In addition to the cruise, we also spent some time driving in Denmark and Sweden, checking our map data and adding those little gems of travel that one only discovers when one is there. For example, we happened upon the town where candy canes originated, in central Sweden, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site where most Danish monarchs are buried. Johnny didn't particularly like the idea of people being buried inside a church! We believe that a travel map should show more than a road map does, so we seek out interesting and noteworthy locales to add flavour to our maps and encourage users to say "I didn't know that"! Every map should be able to include a story, because every country has one. Our ITM map of Denmark & Southern Sweden is surprisingly popular. We found our map of Norway to be quite accurate, and were able to note several improvements for the next map of Bergen. We didn't make it to Oslo or Stockholm on this trip, so that will justify a further trip to this part of the world next year!

### **EASTERN GERMANY**

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The last portion of our travels was to explore a part of Germany that is not as well-known as it should be. The former East Germany was inaccessible for many years under Soviet rule, and for many years thereafter was a giant construction area of renovation. Due to intensive fighting in the latter stages of WW2, most significant urban areas were leveled but have since been restored, such as the Neubrandenburg circular wall from 1300 and the Magdeburg Dom (cathedral). Sadly, providing housing resulted in many colourless apartment blocks in both cities. Many smaller towns were not affected by the fighting, such as Quedlinburg, a charming medieval market town south of Magdeburg which is well-worth several hours to explore. On this trip, we also drove through a portion of the Harz Mountains, which would classify as gently rolling hills in Canada, but are very scenic and worth further trips. We passed through Thale and Nordhausen, but were too pressed for time to do more than note them for a future trip. Our ITM map of Berlin and Eastern Germany was still the best we found for usability.

### **WORK IN PROGRESS ON CURRENT PROJECTS**

**The number of titles at press is shrinking as new titles arrive. However, other titles are almost out of copies. Work will continue on developing fresh artwork, but the pace of completing projects is long. Please note the following:**

Canada's Maritime Provinces is now out of inventory. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

France is close to being out of print. We are re-working this title into a rail/road map of France over the winter. The new map is scheduled for release in the spring of 2019.

Ho Chi Minh City/Saigon is now out of print. A new edition is at press and due in a couple of months.

Lesotho is now out of print indefinitely. We hope to publish a new map, combining Lesotho and Swaziland into a double-sided map in the spring of 2019.

Mauritania is now out of print. We are working on a new map, combining Mauritania with Mali; for release in the spring of 2019.

Morocco is now out of print. The artwork is at press and expected in late November.

Nigeria/Cameroun is now out of print. A new edition is being developed; no ETA at the moment.

North Korea is out of print indefinitely. In spite of recent political talks with the USA, the regime in charge of the country shows no signs of changing its behaviour, so the country remains extremely difficult to visit. We have decided to await developments and pause awhile before committing to a new edition.

Quito/Northern Ecuador is out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA is yet available. In the meantime, please use our Galapagos/Quito map.

Rio de Janeiro/East Coast of Brasil is almost out of copies. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Russia West/St. Petersburg is almost out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Rwanda/Burundi is almost out of print.. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Samoa/American Samoa is out of print indefinitely (3 copies left).

Singapore is out of print indefinitely.

Swaziland is out of stock. We are working on a new combined map of the country, along with Lesotho, for release in the spring of 2019.

Togo and Benin is now out of print. No decision has been made as to whether or not to re-do this title.

### **NEW RELEASES IN SEPTEMBER, 2018**

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**Denver and Colorado Travel Reference Map 1<sup>st</sup> Ed. 2018 1:10,000/1:750,000 ISBN 9781771292313 UPC 817712923134 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP** – This is a brand new title for ITMB. Denver, the ‘mile-high’ city on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, is a vibrant, fairly modern city. It is the state capital, and the gold-coated dome of the legislative building highlights the wealth and strength of the state. The Denver Zoo is becoming one of the great attractions of the city, as are the Center for Performing Arts and the Museum of Science and Nature. Larimer Square is the focal point for entertainment, and Coors Field for sports. Our map shows a wide-ranging number of accommodations and eateries, and notes all points of interest. The State of Colorado map fills the reverse side of the sheet and, due to the positioning of the state’s boundaries, nicely fills the 40x28 sheet size of the map. Small portions of neighbouring states show around the edges, but the focal point is definitely north-south Interstate 25 and east-west Interstate 70. Denver is, by far, the largest urban area in the state, but other familiar cities show well – Boulder, Colorado Springs, the ski resort of Vail, Kit Carson’s home town of Burlington, and the old mining town of Silverton. The map shows all motorways and highways and, as far as we can determine, every road going anywhere. Hundreds of wilderness campsites are shown, as well as RV parks, parks, ancient ruins, and natural features. **AVAILABLE**

**Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, & Tajikistan Travel Reference Map 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. 1:1,600,000/1:1,100,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771298490 UPC817712984906 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP** – Finally, our ITMB map of Uzbekistan is back in print! Tourism to the ‘Stans’ is increasing as these former parts of the Soviet Empire find their way in a changing world. This time, we have combined the country on one side, then, on the reverse side, we have expanded the artwork to show Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to good advantage. The map also includes excellent inset maps of Samarkand, Tashkent, Dushanbe, and Bishkek, which I’m sure all are familiar names. Needless to say, all three countries count as ‘adventure’ travel. Facilities are good in major cities, but roads are of an uncertain quality, and accommodations sparse. Still, this is an exceptionally interesting part of the world. The traditional Great Silk Road passed through this region, and to this day Tashkent is a major trading transfer point. Nine points of major interest are included, including the Ark-Citadel dating from 400BC, the Minaret of Kalta-Minor, and the great Caravanserai from the Middle Ages. **AVAILABLE**

**Western Europe Rail & Road Travel Reference Map 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2018 1:2,500,000 ISBN 9781771292603 UPC 817712926036 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP** – This is a new title for ITMB. It is a spin-off from our overall Europe Rail/Road map, and focusses on the western half of the European land mass at a much better scale than would be possible for all of Europe. Even at this scale, showing the rail lines and the major roads results in a map with a lot of information on it, but it meets the needs of those travelling around Europe by rail, which is its primary market. It can also be used by those driving, although it would be better for vehicle users to rely on individual country maps. Side 1 covers the British Isles, the Low Countries, Germany, Denmark, the Czech Republic, most of Poland, and southern Scandinavia. The second side covers the Iberian Peninsula, France, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Austria, Hungary, and the southern portion of Germany. Trains tend to be used by travellers in Europe for longer trips, say from Frankfurt to Rome, and for this reason our new map should find a good market. There has not been enough room on this map to show many touristically important sites, but where room exists, we have added UNESCO World Heritage sites, major churches, and most international airports. Coverage includes major ferry routes and includes the islands of Majorca, Menorca, Ibiza, Sardinia, Elba, and Corsica, Sicily, and Malta. As the EU evolves, passenger rail service is increasingly becoming a pan-European reality, but German trains running on French lines and Italian trains going north into Austria. This is a timely map; coming out at the beginning of a truly European rail system. **AVAILABLE**

**NEW RELEASE IN August, 2018**

**Jersey & Guernsey Travel Reference Map 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. 2018 on waterproof paper 1:18,000 ISBN 9781771293877 UPC 817712938770 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP** – **AVAILABLE**

**St. Lucia & Martinique Travel Reference Map 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. 2018 1:45,000/1:65,000 ISBN 9781771297073 UPC 817712970732 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP** – **AVAILABLE**

**Mongolia Travel Reference Map 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. on waterproof paper 1:1,800,000 IBN 9781771294614 UPC 817712946140 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP**

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**Kilimanjaro & Tanzania North Travel Reference Map 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. 2018 1:63,000/1:1,300,000 ISBN 978 1553414728  
UPC 815534147219 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP**

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