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FAX: (604) 273-1488
E-mail: Jack@itmb.com

AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #1 OF 2019 – January – New Titles: see below for details

INTRODUCTION

Whoopie! A new year. With Trump unravelling the US and world economy as quickly as he can, it's anyone's guess as to what 2019 will bring, but it is bound to be another huge roller coaster ride. All we can do is hope for the best, but I'm not entering this last year of the decade with optimism. My investments are way down, the daily news reports are full of negativism, and too many countries are no-go areas for travel. To start the year, Lan and I spent a week in Tuscany in late January; both for enjoyment, and to see whether we should re-introduce our map of that area in the near future. That's more or less business as usual, for us. Details follow.

A WEDDING IN A MAP STORE

This is a bit unusual, but of course there is a story attached.

A friend of ours, Kevin and our niece, Van, from Hanoi obtained a marriage licence from London Drugstore (I kid you not!) and arranged for a Commissioner of Oaths to perform the ceremony. Where to hold the wedding? Well, where else but ITMB's map store! Actually, it happened in a room off the store, but who's counting? A wedding in a map store – that's a first!

Van and Kevin celebrated their marriage in our map store Friday, Jan. 18, 2019



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ONE OF THOSE SAD ANNOUNCEMENTS ONE MUST MAKE

In the joy of happiness of a couple just starting their lives together, there sometimes comes sad news from another quarter. It is with deep regret and sadness that I wish to advise you of the unexpected passing of Katrien Craenen on January 11th. She and Marc founded Craenen Bvba in Herent, Belgium and built it into a powerhouse of map distribution, and into publishing wall maps and travel-associated items. Marc and Katrien were visiting Mauritius over Christmas, when Katrien suffered a brain aneurism and had to be hospitalized. In an effort to provide better medical facilities, Marc flew her to Johannesburg, where she remained comatose until slipping away peacefully and without pain, with Marc and his daughter at her side. Katrien was one of those effervescent personalities much beloved by family and colleagues in the map trade. We wish to extend our sincere condolences to Marc, his family, and all the Craenen employees.

A TRIP TO TUSCANY

We are on every travel seller's mailing list. That's because we travel so much – Booking.com, Gate One Travel, Signature Cruises, Priceline – they all want us to travel with them, and every so often a bargain appears that is too good to pass up. Gate One offered a week in Tuscany, Italy, with flight from New York City (JFK) on Delta, car rental for a week, four-star accommodation at the Grand Hotel in Montecatini, and return flight to NYC from Milan, all for \$599 each. It seemed like a bargain, so off we went! We had to arrange our own flight into JFK to connect with the flight to Milan, which we did on Avion points, so no additional costs were incurred. Naturally, there were costs on the trip; gas, for example, is expensive. As we are still on the trip as this newsletter is being prepared for sending out, any comments about the trip itself will have to wait for next month's Axis!

THE FORGOTTEN LEGION

The interesting thing about history, for me, are the details that are often left out of history books as being of secondary importance. Here's a story that has little to do with the travel industry in today's world, but might pique your curiosity. In the days when Rome was still a republic, but tottering, which would be a couple of generation before the time the calendar was changing from BC to AD, the leaders of Rome were elected. Before Julius Caesar invaded barbaric Britain, he was making his mark subduing those nasty Gauls that didn't particularly want the Roman army in what is now France, and building a power base. There were three powerful men in Roman politics at that time – Caesar, Clodius Pulcher, and Crassus – all Tribunes and all wanting to be top dog. Caesar's strength was in the west, Clodius' was in Rome itself, and Crassus controlled the eastern regions of the empire.

Crassus decided that his best route to power was to win a big military victory by conquering what is today Iran, called Parthia in 53BC. He funded a huge army and marched eastwards. Interesting though the details of the campaign might be, suffice to say that his army was defeated at the Battle of Carrhae, close to the upper reaches of the Euphrates River. Crassus was executed after being captured. Pliny the Elder, one of the greatest historians of all time, noted that the Roman survivors were sent to Margiana, in modern-day Turkmenistan, instead of being killed (as was normal in those days). What Pliny did not note was that the captured Romans constituted an entire legion of 10,000 men. The Persians allowed them to live provided they serve the rest of their lives as border guards on the eastern flank of Parthia. Margiana was 1,500 miles/2,200 kms east of anywhere Romans had ever gone. What happened then? In 36BC, the Chinese historian Ban Gu described a battle on the Silk Road fought by soldiers in a 'fish-scale' formation. This is unique in Chinese history and probably refers to a shield wall. Only Romans fought this way. This battle was 500 miles east of Margiana. Farther east, in China, there is a city called Liqian, which means Rome in ancient Chinese. It was founded about 79BC as a fortress city to guard China's western flank. A large number of local inhabitants have Caucasian features. Are these the descendants of the Forgotten Legion? Maybe; but a fascinating story, nonetheless. (Source: The Forgotten Legion, by Ben Kane, St. Martin's Press, 2008).

LATIN WORDS IN ENGLISH

As a result of reading the book noted above, it struck me that Latin is a lot more common in English than perhaps we realize. Here are a few examples:

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An atrium is the entranceway to a house, usually a small chamber just inside the doorway. We still call the entranceway area of a house the atrium.

A basilica was a plaza or forum fronting on a temple; it now refers to the religious building itself, but there is usually a plaza in front

Causus Belli – justification for war. We still use this term from 2,000 years ago.

A Cella was a Roman room without windows; now, it is a cellar.

Collegia meant colleagues, or collegial, and is the base for today's college

An editor was one who organized literary works, the same as in today's world

A frigidarium was a cold water pool; obviously refrigerator and frigid are modern derivatives

An hora was one hour. The Roman clock started at sunrise and was divided into two 12-hour periods. We use the same method today in most parts of the world, but start at midnight.

AM and PM are both Latin abbreviations for Ante Matins and Post Matins; still used after 2,000 years

i.e. and e.g. are Latin, as is etcetera and ad infinitum, and no doubt, dozens of other Latin words or concepts that have survived to this day in more or less and unchanged form. Pro bono is another. Latin is a basic underpinning of English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian – all the so-called Romance languages. So, if you want to ad lib something, it's Latin!

SOME LIGHT HUMOUR

An 8-year-old boy was asked how many women can a man marry? 'That's easy, sixteen!' Really; how so? 'For heaven's sake, just add it up.' He replied. Four better, four worse, four richer, four poorer!' OK, makes sense.

A Sunday school teacher asked her charges to draw pictures of their favourite Bible stories. One boy drew four people on a plane. When asked to interpret his picture, he said it was the flight to Egypt, with Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus – and Pontius the pilot.

A PRETTY STUPID CROOK

This story comes out of Birmingham, England. Two thieves broke into a house and stole several pieces of jewelry from an elderly woman. One of the pair, one Steven Reid, gave one of the rings to his girlfriend as an engagement ring. She accepted, but was suspicious, because the ring was far better than he could afford. Then, she happened to notice media reports of the robbery, including a picture of the ring, which had great sentimental value to the woman who had been robbed. The fiancée did what I hope any of us would do and turned her fiancé in to authorities. He is now doing jail time, the woman is thrilled to have her ring back, and the girl is looking for a new boyfriend. If there is a moral here, it is don't steal jewelry; it's usually too recognizable.

Here's a fun one out of Baltimore. An off-duty cop, who worked in the anti-drug squad, was out shopping for a car. He went on a test drive with the dealership's salesman. He was a bit surprised when the salesman asked him to stop at a location well-known to the policeman as being a location where illegal drugs were sold. Sure enough, the salesman bought a package of something he shouldn't have. The policeman promptly arrested the salesman and a well-known drug pusher. He then returned to the car dealership and regretfully told the owner that he was unable to justify buying a car from an establishment using drugs, thereby ensuring that the miscreant lost his job and any chance to work in the industry in the future.

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Here's one that's so stupid it's funny. In Peoria, Illinois, a married couple went on a two-day drinking binge. They still had enough common sense to know not to drive when intoxicated, so they gave the car keys to their daughter and instructed her to drive them home. The daughter was eleven years old. Like most kids of that age, she had seen lots of adults drive a car, so how hard could it be? Well, it was hard enough that she eventually crashed into a house, having hit the curb and losing control. Naturally, this brought the homeowner into the scene and he promptly called both the police and an ambulance, as the girl's mother had suffered several broken bones in the accident. Although the police could have charged the girl with driving without a licence, she was doing so with their permission, so they let her off – then arrested the parents for child abuse.

IT'S TRUE!

Ford Motor Company was planning to launch a brand new car, something most automobile companies tend not to do. They needed a name and hired poetess Marianne Moore to come up with poetic names for this proposed new car. She suggested Utopian Turtletop (I kid you not!), Andante con Moto, Pastelogram, Intelligent Bullet (I'm serious!), and Bullet Cloissonne (whatever that means!) before executives decided that poets were not good at naming cars. They held a Board meeting and decided to name the car after Henry Ford's son Edsel, and the rest is history. The car was not well-received and lost the company millions. The few cars that survived, however, are now avidly sought after by collectors. I wonder if Jay Leno owns one?

WORK IN PROGRESS ON CURRENT PROJECTS

We have 32 titles at the moment that have fewer than 100 copies left in stock. Most of these are being updated by Lan and her team of dedicated cartographers; others are being run down a bit further before we decide what to do. Please note the following:

Auckland/North Island has almost out of copies. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Brisbane is almost out of stock (10 copies left). It will be out of print indefinitely as we re-work the artwork.

British Columbia is almost out of print (4 copies left). The next edition has been printed and should be available in the spring of 2019.

France is now 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.

Japan South is now out of print. A new edition has been printed and is expected in the spring of 2019.

Jerusalem is almost out of print (29 copies). A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

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.

Malta/Gozo is almost out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Mumbai is almost out of stock. A new edition is planned for the spring of 2019.

Norway is almost out of print. A new edition is being prepared for release in March.

Paraguay is out of inventory. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Philippines is suddenly almost out of inventory (7 copies). A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Quebec is depleting quickly (35 copies left). A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

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

Santiago de Chile is now out of print. A new edition is in preparation; no ETA.

Slovakia/Hungary is almost out of inventory. We are preparing a new edition; no ETA.

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Somalia is almost out of print. We are preparing a new title called Somalia and the Horn of Africa for release in the spring of 2019.

NEW RELEASES IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

Due to the shipping delays that always seem to happen during the Christmas season, several maps we were expecting during December arrived in January. Thus, the two that did arrive in December are included in this list, which we are naming December/January.

Grand Canyon and Arizona Travel Reference Map 1st Ed 2019 on waterproof paper 1:90,000/1:1,000,000 ISBN 9781771293167 UPC 817712931672 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – This is a double-sided map, with a very good map of the State of Arizona on one side and an excellent exploratory map of the Grand Canyon on the other. The map can be marketed equally well as a State map or as a recreational/touristic map. Needless to say, the deep canyons carved by the Colorado River over millennia have created one of the great natural wonders of the world. This is a 'must-see-before-I-die' travel experience, visited by millions of people each year. Our map shows access areas, viewpoints, trails leading down to the valley floor, and the man-made attractions common to a major touristic site. The other side covers all of Arizona, with bits of Nevada, Utah, California, and Mexico and shows wilderness campgrounds, parks, attractions, and a large inset map of Flagstaff for those driving Route 66. The state has Tucson, Phoenix, Sedona, and lots of desert. The main attractions are highlighted. **AVAILABLE**

Singapore & Malay Peninsula Travel Reference Map 2nd Ed. 2019 on stone paper 1:10,000/1:730,000 ISBN 9781771297080 UPC 817712970800 \$11.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Singapore is Asia as it should be: clean, modern, well-governed, efficient, and attractive. In this edition, which technically should be a first edition due to the transformation of the map into a double-sided one, includes for the first time, our detailed map of the part of Malaysia known as the Malay Peninsula, the 'mainland' portion of the country. Singapore and Malaysia are joined together by two motorway crossings and a train operated by Malaysian Railways. Side one of our map concentrates on the urbanized portion of Singapore and its attractions, with a large and detailed inset map of the country of Singapore. Side two covers all of the mainland portion of Malaysia to the Thai border and includes a large inset map of Kuala Lumpur. Motorways are common in Malaysia, and are portrayed on the map, as well as the older two-laned highway network. The map is not printed on paper, but on crushed stone mixed with recycled concrete. This is a relatively new technology, which is waterproof as well as durable and tear resistant. Stone paper is biodegradable, so is environmentally more friendly than plastic. ITMB is the only major map publishing house to use friendly 'paper'. **AVAILABLE**

World Educational Map 1ST ED, 2019 1:40,000,000 or so ISBN 9781553410911 UPC 815534109125 \$5.95cdn/us/Euro/GB – This is a place-mat-sized map of the world on two pieces of paper, provided in a plastic sleeve. It is designed to improve one's knowledge of geographical country names. Map 1 shows the world politically, with countries in differing colours, with the countries and capital cities all identified. Map 2 shows the same outlines but without the names being shown. The 'test' is to study the map with the names, then identify places on the unnamed map. While most of us in the trade would probably fare fairly well, students would find this challenging. This would be an excellent item for parents, teachers, or even adults to use as parlour games. It seems so easy, but how many people actually know where Iraq is, or Lesotho? **AVAILABLE**

While we're noting educational mapping projects, ITMB also offers the following in the same format:

Canada Educational Map 9781553410928

Europe Educational Map 9781553414865

United States Educational Map 9781553414858

Each one consists of two separate small sheets of paper about the size of a legal-sized sheet, in a plastic sleeve, and sells for \$5.95 or its equivalent in differing currencies. For this reason, the items are sold with no price shown. They're fun, they're educational, and they will definitely be of benefit to anyone using them. Quick, what's the capital of Armenia, or the State of Kentucky? **TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE!**

NEW RELEASES IN OCTOBER and NOVEMBER, 2018

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El Salvador & Southern Guatemala Travel Reference Map 6th Ed. 2019 1:270,000/1:457,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771292610 UPC 817712926104 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - AVAILABLE

Inflatable Physical Relief 16"/41cm, Clear (transparent ocean) Globe ISBN 9781553417910 - AVAILABLE

Inflatable Political 16"/41cm Light Blue Ocean Globe ISBN 9781771299954 retail for \$16.95 each cdn/us, and for E12.98 and 12.95GBP AVAILABLE

Victoria & Vancouver Island South Half Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2019 1:10,000/1:270,000 ISBN 9781771298698 UPC 817712986986 \$9.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

Tahiti & Cook Islands Travel Reference Map 2nd Ed. 2018 scale varies ISBN 9781771297974 UPC 817712979742 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, & Tajikistan Travel Reference Map 4th Ed. 2019 1:1,600,000/1:1,100,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771298490 UPC817712984906 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

Vancouver's North Shore Hiking Trails & Fraser Valley Travel Reference Map 7th Ed. 2019 1:40,000/1:250,000 ISBN 9781771298681 UPC 817712986818 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.96GBP – AVAILABLE

Western Europe Rail & Road Travel Reference Map 1st ed. 2018 1:2,500,000 ISBN 9781771292603 UPC 817712926036 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

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