



ITMB PUBLISHING LTD.

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

**12300 Bridgeport Road
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AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #6 OF 2018 – End of June – New Titles: see below for details

INTRODUCTION

This is our last month to get artwork to the printers before we leave on a busy summer of exploration. Our lives have changed dramatically since last year, when the rigours of years of hard travelling resulted in a near-death trauma resulting in hospitalization and a slow recovery. Since recovering, we have been travelling in a more genteel fashion more appropriate than the backpacking lifestyle of earlier years, and have been taking fewer, though longer, trips. In July, Johnny is liberated from school for two months, so the whole family is off to explore Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. He'll no doubt prefer to lounge by the hotel pool and play with kids his own age, but we welcome this opportunity to update our mapping information on this important part of Mexico. This will entail thousands of kilometers of driving, but I enjoy seeing a country from behind the wheel, provided that the car is air-conditioned! We have another trip planned for later in July as well, but I'll leave that for next month's newsletter.

GMJ MAPS CONTINUES TO CHURN OUT EXCELLENT CANADIAN AND AMERICAN MAPS

One of the real success stories coming out of the debacle caused by the Great Recession of 2007 to 2012 is the evolution of Guy Johnson Maps into one of the great map publishing ventures of modern times. The Great Recession was devastating for the map industry. The recession hit the United States hard, fast, and brutally. Long-established firms like Map Link and Treaty Oak fell apart, dragging down dozens of publishers with them. Well known publishing houses like American Map Company, Hagstrom, Mapsco, and Thomas Brothers floundered and the echoes of their passing devastated the retail map industry as well as the publishing industry. With few exceptions, the map publishing industry was wiped out in America by the recession. It was a brutal time; something scarring everyone in business at that time. Sure, AAA maps survived, as did National Geographic, thanks to membership fees, and Rand McNally survived as a brand name, but without its cartography or printing operations. The situation in Europe went through some dire crises as well, but I want to focus on the North American reality because, out of the devastation, regeneration emerged with a vengeance only in this part of the world.

Demand for printed paper maps did not suddenly disappear with the advent of the Great Recession. This is important to emphasize. The recession caught many American map publishing and distributing firms with their pants down: heavily indebted to banks, over-extended in production capacity, carrying far too many slow-paying accounts, over-staffed with far too many high-paid executives doing far too little (Map Link in particular) and asleep at the corporate wheel. Customer demand didn't evaporate, but the supply side disintegrated almost completely in America and very quickly, leaving a huge vacuum. New firms did not emerge to fill the gap created by the collapse of publishers and distributors alike. ITMB was able to re-build its distribution system inside the USA, but within the USA no one emerged as a savior. What happened was that someone already in the trade, with vision, came to the forefront, realized an opportunity, and invested heavily in brand new artwork, believing in the basic fundamentals of never-ending demand for paper maps by the buying/using public.

GMJ Maps, based in Vancouver, Canada, started receiving fairly urgent-sounding requests from jobbers (those wonderful souls who provide maps to truck stops, convenience stores, and gas stations all over America). I remember Guy telling me about one call, from a jobber in Chico, California, hoping that Guy could supply him with a city map of Chico. "Sure" said Guy "how many?" Guy was floored by learning that he needed 60,000 folded paper maps right away and a further 60,000 in six months' time. Further calls came from Rand McNally, AAA, and other big buyers as well as several local jobbers and the resultant orders for millions of copies of paper maps kept Guy's staff busy for the next several years, developing maps of hundreds of cities all over the USA, benefitting ITMB in the process, as we distribute GMJ maps. Most Rand McNally maps are now GMJ Maps under the Rand cover; ditto for AAA, or are marketed by those firms under the GMJ cover. This is a revolutionary change from pre-2007 reality!

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Anyone who thinks that paper maps are over-the-hill and past their due dates had better not get into a discussion of that subject with either Guy or myself. Last year, Guy submitted a proposal to AAA (the American Automobile Association) and CAA (its Canadian counterpart) to provide both organizations with paper travel maps for the next several years for a wide range of Canadian cities and provinces, as well as continuing to supply US titles. Their acceptance has moved GMJ into the forefront of map publishing in North America. At a time when most other publishing firms are contracting, shutting down, or stagnating, GMJ is expanding steadily. Brand new artwork for Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and cities in between are coming out faster than I could have imagined to be possible. New distributors are coming forward in the Maritimes, in BC and in between. Institutional buyers, such as AAA, BC Ferries, and Rand McNally outlets now fill their display shelves with GMJ artwork. Just this week, new maps of Ontario and Manitoba were released. I predict that GMJ will need to expand their warehouse in the near future! ITMB distributes the GMJ map line, and all titles are listed in our web store (I've lost track, but there are about 600 titles published so far). Check out our web site for the latest titles!

GEM TREK MAPS

Here's another success story. Roger and Donna Nelson ran Map Town as a retail venture in downtown Calgary for many years. They also published a successful line of local recreation maps of the Banff and Lake Louise areas of the Canadian Rockies, called Gem Trek Maps. Eventually, they wanted to ease into retirement, so sold Map Town to Terry Starkey, who has been running it ever since. However, Donna wasn't keen to sit around watching grass grow, so she carried on with Gem Trek. I've just learned that, after a further decade, the Nelsons have finally decided to call it quits and have sold Gem Trek to Summerthought Publishing, a recreational book marketing firm based in Banff, Alberta. The map line has been distributed in Europe for a number of years by Craenen bvba in Herent, Belgium, and the new owner of Gem Trek will continue to supply them. For those here in North America, Gem Trek maps can be ordered from Summerthought at P.O. Box 2309, Banff AB (that's what the post office thinks Alberta should be called!) T1L 1C1 or, even more easily, by contacting Andrew at 403 762-0535 or at info@summerthought.com. The Gem Trek maps have been successful for the past thirty or so years and include such titles as Banff National Park, Lake Louise, and specific areas within the parks. Congratulations to Andrew for taking over this successful line and many thanks to Donna and Roger for many years of sterling service to bringing useful and interesting maps to the buying public.

LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE

Like many of us, I have been appalled by the cruel and inhumane treatment of little children by American authorities at the southern border in recent weeks. Separating children from their parents, imprisoning the children, and holding children hostage to coercing their parents to signing documents agreeing to 'voluntary' deportation in exchange for getting their children back is a travesty of human decency. Fortunately, human common sense is coalescing and administration officials are starting realize that they have created a monstrous situation that will cost many millions of dollars and much effort to sort out. It will be sorted out. The 'issue' is not so much a case of improper entry into another country as it is an unfolding human problem. Nor is the USA alone in experiencing migrations of people. Governments everywhere are experiencing crisis-like situations related to masses of people seeking to flee oppressive lifestyles seeking sanctuary. No one casually decides to uproot themselves and cross thousands of miles of hostile territory merely to find a better-paying job.

Is the situation facing America unique? No, of course not. Italy is fed up with being the recipient of refugees fleeing poverty and oppression in North Africa by crossing the Mediterranean. So is Malta. So is Hungary. So is Serbia. So are most European countries. Israel is being hard-pressed to figure out what to do about tens of thousands of unwanted Sudanese. Bangladesh has hundreds of thousands of desperate refugees crossing from Myanmar. Venezuela has 170,000 refugees fleeing chaos inside their country.

The American response, lacking any sense of human morality, is to set up prison camps on military bases for 20,000 expected future improper arrivals. Great. What do they plan to do with number 20,001? More prisons?

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The world is going through a period of great instability. Tens of millions of people are on the move, seeking sanctuary from fear and oppression, or fleeing abject and unrelenting poverty such as the western world can scarcely imagine. Europe is trying to alleviate the flow by bribing countries of origin to accept back those fleeing. Sealing one's borders against anyone entering generally doesn't work. There is nothing inherently wrong with advocating tight border security, but as the Soviets learned, it didn't stop people from leaving! America is being torn apart by opposing points of view related to immigration and the rights of refugees/asylum seekers that are being widely disseminated around the world by media outlets – to the great detriment of the United States.

Mass migrations of people are not going to stop just because one or two government officials sign proclamations. One stops migrations by providing sound government at home and employment prospects locally. The entire purpose of bringing Mexico into NAFTA was to create work opportunities within Mexico to stop the (at the time) seemingly never-ending flow of Mexican migrants into the USA that was causing economic dislocation. Generally, NAFTA has provided sufficient work opportunities within Mexico that the flow of migrants from that country has decreased significantly; that benefit is dangerously close to being wiped out. Alienate Mexico? Alienate Canada? Destroy NAFTA? Raise trade barriers against Europe? Damage relations with all of Asia by walking away from agreements negotiated by the USA? Impose tariffs that punish Americans? Beware of what you ask for; you might get it!

IS THE TRAVEL MARKET FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGING?

It would not be possible to answer a question as broad as the entire travel industry with a simple yes or no, but essentially, the answer has to be yes. The investment required for a start-up new business can be formidable, whether one is talking about a new hotel, an airline company, or a map publishing business. Deep pockets are required and few start-ups last more than a year or two. The past decade has seen a massive shift of emphasis into consolidations to help with economies of scale, caused partly by the Great Recession, but also by aging demographics. Gone are the days when a college student could work part-time and pay for his education and still have enough left over to afford a three-week vacation in Europe each summer, as I did. Nowadays, students emerging from the end of the education cycle are far more concerned with finding a job and paying down debt than they are in taking a gap year to explore Africa or Asia. Travel is more affordable these days, to a wider audience, than it was when I was in my twenties, but the number of potential customers in each generation is smaller.

It isn't just economics or demographics; the ability to travel across Africa or Central Asia or the Middle East is far more dangerous than it was when I was a young and foolish traveller. People are still travelling, of course, either by backpacking or by taking advantage of cheap airlines, or if older, by going on cruises or tours or flying somewhere and renting a car (or perhaps a bicycle or RV), but the numbers just aren't there to develop a business model without investing heavily and expecting a modest return (with the probable exception of cruise lines).

The fundamental shift, and I believe that there has been one, is that the generation that matured in the early '70s is the largest generation ever to exist in world history. The next generation is about 20% smaller in number, and the one after that is 10% smaller again. Those over 65 years now are the largest demographic component in Europe, North America, and the rest of the developed world. The older one becomes, the less likely it is that one will undertake an arduous journey, such as hitch-hiking around Europe, staying in hostels, or travelling from London to Cape Town in the back of an obsolete Bedford army truck. This is a generalization statement, of course, but statistically, those who were 20 in 1970 are now 78 and those individuals are reaching the end of their active travel days. Those who love to travel and explore never lose that love, but physically and financially, the method of travel has to be appropriate to an aging population, while still attractive to a somewhat younger generation.

Cruising is expanding at a huge rate, not as deck-chair viewers of ocean waves, but as fun places to hang out on board, combined with port stops in exotic places. Group tours offer a land-based 'cruise' by bus or train, and of course resorts now cater for specialty groups, such as families, retirees, and couples enjoying a week's break. The internet makes it easy to book air tickets, hotels, and rental cars, and travel bargains are relatively easy to find. We just booked a week-long trip to Tuscany, including return airfare from NYC, hotels with breakfast included, and a rental car with unlimited mileage, for only \$550 each. We have just booked our return air-trip to London in September for \$585 each. Such bargains are readily available for those with internet access.

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Most travel options currently being offered were not available when I was exploring the world in the late '60s. The question now really becomes which way you prefer – travelling solo, with a companion, or in a group. The answer to that question would take more space than a newsletter of this nature could hope to have, but in future times, it should be possible to touch on options. We're all in the travel industry; we all have a vested interest in considering how that industry is changing. If we want to grow our businesses, we have to not only be aware of changing patterns, but understand them. Those that change survive; those that don't are already dead from the neck up.

A SCOTTISH STORY

A Saudi Arabian prince recently needed heart surgery, but it seems that his blood type was extremely rare. Eventually, a Scot was located who had the same blood type and he agreed to be a donor. The surgery was successful, and the grateful prince sent the Scottish donor a BMW car, a diamond necklace for his wife, and a cheque for a million dollars. A few months later, the prince needed a follow-up operation and the Scot agreed to donate more blood. This time, he received a thank you card and a box of chocolates. He contacted the prince to ask why this second donation was much less gratefully acknowledged, and the sheik advised "After all, laddie," he said, "I now have Scottish blood in me veins!"

AN ERROR IN A PRESS RELEASE

Our recent press release for our newly-released map of Reykjavik noted that the city was the capital of Ireland instead of being the capital of Iceland. We apologize for the error, which was caught by just one reader. I don't know whether to be pleased that someone contacted us, or appalled that no one else noticed!

THE PASSAGE OF TIME

Intellectually, we all know that we're aging, but emotionally we still tend to think of ourselves as we were when we were younger. It usually takes a wedding of a niece one hasn't seen since childhood and is still vividly remembered as when last seen as a child, or a daughter's tenth wedding anniversary, or an invitation to a golden anniversary to bring home the passage of time. Such an event happened to me this week. My university invited me to attend a dinner commemorating the 50th anniversary of my graduating from university. Has it really been half a century? Impossible! I remember it like yesterday. I remember most my amazement at being accepted as a student in 1964, as my high school grades were not very good. I loved university and its influence has channeled my life.

DUCKS AND SPRINGTIME

Every spring, the Vancouver media catches some helpful individual stopping traffic to enable a mother duck and her brood to cross a major street, usually in the vicinity of Stanley Park. This year, someone videotaped such a scene, with the somewhat unexpected turn of events wherein the male, in this case of a family of Canada Geese, attacked his would-be benefactor, knocking the poor man to the ground. Of course, the bird didn't understand that the man was only trying to help, and the camera zoomed in on one hapless gosling who was trying repeatedly to mount the curb and failing each time. I'm sure that many of the motorists in now-stopped cars wanted to assist him, but wisdom prevailed and the gosling eventually managed to mount the curb and re-join his family on his own. The family then moved sedately around other stopped cars to reach the other side of the four-lane roadway and the safety of the parkland they wanted to reach, with mother shepherding along the goslings protectively and daddy keeping a sharp eye out for anyone attempting to 'help'. The cars then resumed their journey after an interruption of five minutes.

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WHY ARE NORTH AMERICAN RAILWAY TRACKS STANDARD GAUGE?

What is Standard Gauge? When Americans first began building railway lines in the 1800s, they quickly realized that all lines had to be the same width for trains to operate uniformly, and adopted the English practice of making the distance between the rails 4 feet, eight and a half inches wide as a 'standard'. All rail lines in North America are, to this day, Standard Gauge, with the exception of some old mining or agricultural 'narrow gauge' lines. There was no reason to do so, as trains in England would never run in America, but it made sense – sort of, because it was 'done'; therefore, it made sense. Why was the arcane width of 8½" used? Why did England use such an odd number?

The reason why the English made railway lines of 4' 8½" wide was because urban tramways pulled by horses used this width. The trams used that arcane width because the jigs and tools used to make tram coaches were the same jigs and tools as were used to make carriages, wagons, and carts. Wagons, and carts, used this odd spacing so that the wheels would fit nicely into the ruts of old English roads and had done so for centuries. The 'ruts' or places for the wheels to fit had to be of a standard width for all the roads in England or no one could get around. That still begs the question of why that particular width was necessary. The old English roads had ruts because the roads were originally built by the Romans two thousand years earlier. Anyone who has ever seen an actual Roman road knows that the road always had two grooves, or ruts, with a hump in the centre. The spacing was universally the same throughout the Roman Empire for all Roman roads – in modern Imperial or American measurement systems, exactly 4 feet and eight and a half inches apart – so war chariots could run smoothly and not tip over. Nobody in all the time thereafter had bothered to change the Roman war chariot wheel widths.

The next time you ride on a railway or a rapid-transit rail line or a streetcar in those few cities still operating such mass transit people-carriers, thank the Roman Empire of 2,000 plus years ago for inventing the war chariot that allowed them to conquer the known world of its time and provide a legacy that has far outlasted their actual empire. You're riding on a modern war chariot!

WORK IN PROGRESS ON CURRENT PROJECTS

Bolivia is at press and no ETA is currently available..

Cook Islands is out of print indefinitely, but will return as one side of a twinned map of Tahiti and Cook Islands.

Georgia & Armenia suddenly had a surge in sales and is now out of print. A new edition is at press; no ETA is currently available. Armenia is still available as one side of Armenia & Azerbaijan

Indonesia is now out of print. A new edition is at press; expected in August.

Jersey and Guernsey, the replacement map for the two previous maps published by ITMB, using another firm's artwork, is now at press, which is good news; no ETA is currently available, but 'soon'.

The brand new ITMB title, Japan Railway Atlas, is delayed at press, due to page layout difficulties. As a result, it will not be arriving for another couple of months. Sorry, but these things happen.

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 out of print. A new edition is at press; this title has also been delayed, as the printed map was done on paper that was too thin and had to be printed again. No ETA is yet available.

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

Quito/Central Ecuador is out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA is yet available. Quito is still available as one side of Galapagos Islands, Quito and Guayaquil

Saint Lucia, now combined with Martinique as a combined map, is finally at press and should arrive in July.

Sao Paulo & Brasil South Coast is at press and due in late July or early August.

Samoa/American Samoa is out of print indefinitely.

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Singapore is out of print indefinitely.

Swaziland is close to depletion. Later this year, we hope to release a combined map of the country, along with Lesotho on the reverse side; no ETA.

Tahiti is almost out of print. The new edition of this interesting travel area, combined with a map of the Cook Islands on the reverse side (don't ask why!) ; no ETA.

USA Southwest is out of print. A new 3rd edition is at press and expected in late September.

Vancouver Northshore Hiking Trails is out of print. A new combined map that will include the Fraser Valley on the reverse side is being prepared, but no ETA is yet available.

NEW RELEASES IN JUNE, 2018

Kuala Lumpur & Malay Peninsula Travel Reference Map 2nd Ed. 2018 1:10,000/1:730,000 9781771294102 UPC 817712941022 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Technically, this could be considered a first edition map, as it represents the first time that we have published a map of the Malay Peninsula, but our recent research trip to Malaysia convinced us that the rural mainland of the countryside surrounding spread-out Kuala Lumpur (known locally as KL, of course) is more an extension of KL's influence than something someone could visit without including KL. The reverse side that should meet anyone's needs for travel covering the entire mainland portion of Malaysia. The city side covers four essential components of KL: the Railway Station (which was moved to the southern area of KL to reduce congestion and provide easy access to the airport), the traditional commercial district known as Little India, the main commercial district (known as Chow Kit) and the new City Centre area, where the twin Petronas Towers (see cover picture) dominate the skyline and Malaysia's booming economy. KL is far too spread out to include the entire urban area on one map, so we have included an inset map covering Klang, Batu, Kajang, and the airport, which is south of Putrajaya. The peninsula side of the map includes a detailed inset map of Singapore, to the south, and a portion of Thailand to the north. Formerly the British possession of Malaya, the peninsula can now be divided into three portions – those areas west of the central mountain chain, those east of the mountains, and Penang.

Reykjavik & SW Iceland Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2018 1:10,000/1:330,000 ISBN 9781553413851 UPC 815534138576 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – We are pleased to announce a brand new title for ITMB. Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland and is an interesting city in its own right. We have placed it on one side of the sheet and it looks very good. It includes the international airport (the port of entry for almost everyone visiting Iceland) and includes a good range of hotels, which is very necessary, due to the country's booming tourism industry. The central core of the city is well-portrayed and the scale is such as to allow us to impose 'footprints' of all the buildings in the city (one of the wonders now available thanks to satellite imagery). We have also added a listing of the top 10 attractions within the city area, such as the largest church in Iceland, the Jonnsson Sculpture Garden, and the historic Old Harbour. The reverse side of the map covers essentially the southwestern quarter of Iceland, from Keflavik in the far west to partway across the vast Vatnajokull Icefield and north to the town of Stykkisholmur. The map shows all known places of accommodation, including youth hostels, and touristic attractions such as the famous Geysir, the volcanic water eruption that occurs every six minutes and is a 'must see' for everyone visiting the country. The map also shows the ten most popular attractions on the island, including the Golden Circle Route of 300 kms through Pingvellir National Park and the Gullfoss waterfall area. This is an excellent map for those concentrating on this portion of Iceland. We have visited all of these attractions and can guarantee that Iceland is a marvelous travel destination. **AVAILABLE**

NEW RELEASES IN MAY, 2018

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Southern BC/Alberta Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2018 1:1,000,000 ISBN 9781771297059 UPC 817712970596 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - ITMB, being based in Vancouver, BC, understandably has a local/regional market for our map line. We have a map of Western Canada, as well as an atlas, a very nice map of BC itself, a map of the south half of BC, and a map of part of BC combined with Washington State. What we did not have, until now, was a map covering the most touristically-visited part of all of Canada – namely, the southern halves of both British Columbia and its neighbour, Alberta, with a small amount of Washington State, Idaho, and Montana (to assist those heading north and needing to know about border crossings). Therefore, ITMB is pleased to announce the release of Southern BC and Alberta. Side One covers BC from the US border (with a carry-on to Seattle) north to Prince George and east to the Alberta border, with a carry-on to Calgary. All of Vancouver Island, the Okanagan Valley, and the Rocky Mountain National Parks of Banff and Jasper, are included. The map is rich with wilderness campsite (almost 1,000 are shown, ski areas, fishing areas, even gas stations in more remote parts of the vast province. Side Two covers Alberta from somewhat north of Edmonton (the provincial capital) to the American border and a bit beyond, and from the Rocky Mountains east to a bit beyond the Saskatchewan border. This side focusses on the movement from the high Rockies to the foothills and plains of the enormous Canadian Prairies. The highlights of this side of the map are showcased in our Top Attractions guide and include such world-class features as the Drumheller Dinosaur Museum, the world's best pre-historic museum, to the Columbia Icefield, one of the few in the world easily accessible to walk on. Naturally, the road network, train lines, urban areas, parks, and numerous attractions (who could pass up visiting Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump?) are all clearly shown.
AVAILABLE

NEW RELEASES IN April, 2018

Morocco Travel Reference Map 4th Ed. 2018 1:1,100,000/1:1,150,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771294638 UPC 817712946386 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

World Wall Map (large size) Political Version 59x35" (blue ocean) 1:27,000,000 ISBN 9781771298957

World Wall Map (large size) Antique Version 59x35" (brown ocean) 1:27,000,000 ISBN 9781771298964

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