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- **INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MAPS AND BOOKS**
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AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #6 OF 2017 – June/July – New Titles: see below for details

INTRODUCTION

For once, we've stayed at home for a complete month. Our adult children and grandkids have enjoyed a break from work, exploring the Rocky Mountains and Alberta, while we minded the business. We've been busy with various updating projects while enjoying a respite from our heavy travel itinerary for 2017. Not to worry, as you're reading this, we're in Europe again, in France this time, taking a Western Med cruise from Marseille to Majorca, Sardinia, and Genoa in Italy. This will be followed by a brief research trip to the Pyrenees to research the next edition of what is proving to be a popular map – the Pyrenees and Andorra. It's a tough life, but someone has to do it!

FAMILY LIFE

I realize that this is a mapping newsletter, but we don't have a lot of brilliant new travel information for this month's newsletter, and everyone is getting tired of Trump's rants and, believe me, no one wants to hear about the mad circus that is BC politics, so here's a couple of tidbits about new events. Graeme's new son now has a name – Martin Nitro (and yes, the Nitro is short for nitroglycerine) - He's all of 30 days old and not interested in anything more than sleeping, eating, and pooping. The family is taking him to Alberta for the summer, as Crystal has relatives there able to help out. Kenzie has started pre-school, being three, and at first he did NOT like it. After almost three years of being cuddled in a day care setting, suddenly having to get used to new people and a new routine did not sit well. He now likes his new pre-school, but he's showed us that he has a very determined personality. Johnny moves into Grade 2 in the fall. He enjoys playing the piano, but like most kids, hates to practice. He enjoys martial arts as well and I think the social interaction of meeting other kids is the main attraction. He decided to take up chess, which surprised everyone, and has stuck with it for six months. He often plays with Lan, who can still beat him most times, but he's learning. Now, if we could only teach him how to read...

MIDDLE EAST AND TRAVEL

A Greek philosopher once moaned "Africa, Africa; always something new out of Africa!" He was referring to the seemingly never-ending series of catastrophes that appears to beset that continent. Today, we say the same thing about the Eastern Mediterranean region, collectively called the Middle East. Between fighting in Syria, instability in Lebanon, terror attacks in Turkey, and fighting in Yemen, the region is unstable at best and just plain weird the rest of the time. Let's have a reality check. First, Israel is stable, is tourist friendly and a great travel destination. It has generally kept its nose clean regarding the terrible war going on next door in Syria, and maintains correct, if fragile relations with both Jordan and Egypt. Informally, it is gaining some back-door credibility from other Arabic states, and right now seems a peaceful haven for safe travel. ITMB publishes a country map and a map of the Holy Land and Jerusalem for the benefit of travellers.

Jordan, although actively engaged in fighting ISIS, is also a favoured nation in the region to visit; tourist friendly and home to one of the wonders of the world – Petra! Oman has kept out of the war between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, and is a safe, lovely, country to visit. Dubai has positioned itself as a tourism haven for western tourists and is a popular travel destination. Kuwait has kept its head down and focused on its own affairs ever since being liberated from Iraqi control. ITMB has maps of all three countries.

These are all positive signs. Even Turkey and Lebanon are not as unstable as the news media seem to indicate. However, the war in Syria continues to destabilize the region. The latest casualty is Qatar, which is tourist friendly but currently at odds with Saudi Arabia. It appears that the Qatari government paid a very large ransom to an ISIS unit to free various members of the Royal family, who had been captured while vacationing in Iraq. This did not sit well with Saudi Arabia or its close allies, who have broken diplomatic ties with Qatar. Borders are closed, citizens are being forcibly repatriated, airlines are shut down and short-term chaos reigns supreme. Iran must be laughing.

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Regardless, the main US military base in the region is in Qatar and the country remains open and friendly to tourists, so visitors should feel safe and welcome. You just can't travel to neighbouring Saudi (but then, you couldn't before now anyway). However, Yemen is caught between rival powers Iran and Saudi Arabia and is steadily being bombed into the stone age, thanks to billions of dollars of American military aid to the Saudis. This is tragic for the Yemeni people and yet another reminder that instability reigns supreme in this part of the world. ITMB publishes maps of all of these countries, so has a vested interest in seeing peaceful behaviour in the region.

CANADA HITS 150

Canada, as an independent nation, celebrated its 150th birthday on July 1st. Canada is one of the older nation states in the world as a political entity, pre-dating Germany (1871). After starting with the then-self-governing colonies of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Upper and Lower Canada (as southern Ontario and Quebec were then known) in 1867, Canada has matured over time into one of the strongest economies in the world, with a physical size that is the second largest in the world.

36.5 million individuals, from all over the world, make Canada a multicultural experience that is unlike any other country. Vancouver, where I live, has 115 ethnic groupings large enough to have their own cultural centres – and that's excluding the First Canadian ethnic groupings that are increasingly noticeable. Immigrants constitute 23% of our population and generally live together peacefully. The country has its own internal problems (what country doesn't?) but is seen internationally as a model country. This is a birthday anniversary that very few countries could match, so for the moment, let's let Canada get on with feeling good about itself and its many accomplishments.

That said, Canada shares one attribute with other developed nations and that is an aging population. The number of individuals over age 65 exceeds the number of children under the age of 15; a new statistic in the country's reality. More people are dying (generally, of natural causes) than are being born. While most seniors are healthy and many are still working productively, with each passing year there are fewer adults productively employed. This is a reality faced by most countries considered 'developed'.

CANADIANISMS

The joy of the English language is that different parts of the English-speaking world develop their unique 'slang'. Thus, "are you on the phone?" in England becomes "Could I have your phone number?" in America. Canadians are reputed to add "eh?" to the end of every sentence and to use the words "out and about" at every opportunity, as in: 'Where are you going? Out and about!' Here are a few more Canadianisms to celebrate 150:

1. We take instant play-back (or replay) of sporting events for granted today. The first such occasion was in 1955, during a Hockey Night in Canada game (that's what we call any night with a hockey game on; can you imagine someone in the UK saying Cricket Night in England! They'd certify him). Recording technology in those days was primitive by modern standards, but the producer came up with a 'wet-film' technique to replay a goal after only five minutes worth of tape processing. CBS introduced true instant replay in 1963.
2. The Caesar cocktail, being a Bloody Mary with clam-infused tomato juice (hence Mott's Clamato Juice, another Canadian first!) was first created in Calgary, Alberta.
3. Does the expression "I'll have a Double Double!" mean anything outside of Canada? It means a Tim Horton coffee order with two sugars and two creams. The expression is so widely used that the coffee chain has trademarked the phrase.
4. What on earth is a kerfuffle? It is commonly used across Canada and means a fuss or commotion.
5. 'Take off', as in I'm leaving is a common Canadian expression "Well, I'm going to take off." (i.e. I'm leaving). It can also be used negatively, as in 'Why don't you take off, eh!'
6. A chesterfield is a sofa in most countries; not here! If it seats three, it's a chesterfield!

AFFORDABLE LIVING

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There is actually an annual report tracking the most expensive cities in the world based on cost of living (The Mercer Report). This is used by multinational companies to determine relocation costs for moving employees and as a basis for 'danger pay' bonuses for living in remote areas. The 2017 report shows Vancouver as Canada's most expensive city, which comes as no surprise to those of us living here, closely followed by Toronto (at 107th and 119th in the survey). However, both cities seem positively bargain destinations when compared to the top five: Luanda, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Zurich and Singapore. New York City came in at 9th, Chicago at 32nd, and Portland at 115th. Tunis was reportedly the least expensive city. I bet they didn't survey Tuktoyaktuk!

THE WORST-KEPT SECRET OF THE MAPPING INDUSTRY

After three phone calls from interested parties, I feel that I have to mention a "secret" that I have been privy to which isn't a secret. AAA, that venerable institution that has guided American motorists for something over a century, has announced that it has issued a contract to G M Johnson and Associates to develop and supply all maps for Canada to it (48 titles), starting in 2018. I've heard from Guy himself about this, so I know it is true (i.e. not some of Donnie's lies that he calls 'false news'). Guy asked me not to say anything in the Axis newsletter for now, but having received calls from Calgary and West Vancouver from other parties with some knowledge of this new deal, I feel that a basic announcement needs to be made at this time to keep imaginations in line with reality and forestall any fanciful discussion of what 'might' happen.

First, awarding contracts is a normal process that AAA goes through periodically. Second, this was an open presentation bidding process, available to all qualified cartographic publishing houses. Guy Johnson already supplies AAA with a wide range of titles related to the USA, so it is not surprising that his presentation for supplying Canadian titles was considered seriously by AAA and their Canadian counterpart, CAA. It is to his credit that his presentation won the approval of both AAA and CAA. Third, this will be a gradual implementation process, beginning in 2018, and taking two years to complete, not a sudden change, although the contract to supply is for a five year time frame, so new artwork will only be introduced on a gradual basis, starting next year. As I said above, this is a normal process, very good for GM Johnson of course, and obviously something that North American automobile clubs feel will benefit their members, but also something that has ramifications for our entire industry.

For readers unfamiliar with how the AAA and CAA market maps, the associations are divided into state and provincial organizations, as it would be impractical for services to be provided from one location. For example, in British Columbia, the BCAA signs up members for automotive services such as break-down assistance, much as AA in the United Kingdom and ADAC in Germany do.

The difference is that, unlike their European counterparts, automobile associations give away free paper maps of high quality to members who go into local offices and ask for them. Thus, if I wanted a map of Los Angeles, all I would have to do is go to my closest BCAA outlet (a ten-minute drive away), present my membership card and ask for the map. There are limitations to this service, of course; it is limited to Canadian and American destinations, and to cities or regional areas for which the association has a map. My point is that these maps are available only to members, for free, within reason, and only from outlets operated by the AAA or CAA. They are not available commercially.

Let's leave further comment for a time closer to the implementation of this new situation. It does have profound implications for the map industry and certainly propels GM Johnson and Associates into becoming one of the largest publishers of paper maps of North American destinations. Hearty congratulations to Guy and his team on winning this contract; we'll await further information on how this will impact on the industry at large. I am privy to a lot more information than I have provided here, and I can tell you that there will be HUGE implications!

McDONALD'S

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This has nothing to do with mapping, but in a way, it does. The beginnings of the McDonalds' fast-food chain was excellently portrayed in a recent movie, but naturally, details had to be left out to make the story fit within the limitations of a movie. One detail was McDonalds' first foray into the international field. 50 years ago, on June 1st, 1967, the first McDonald's outside of the USA opened in Richmond, BC, just a few blocks from where we live. With land values skyrocketing in the Vancouver area, when it came time to re-build the restaurant, the corporation decided to keep the property as a newly-rebuilt McDonald's, even though the site was much more valuable for housing. Call it nostalgia, but as the franchisee, Joe Guzzo, noted "The regional HQ was determined to keep this one site as a McD". McDonald's now has 1,400 restaurants in Canada, and 37,000 worldwide, and is one of the largest land owners in the world. Where does this story tie into mapping? First, it is a tourism destination, so is on our map, and secondly, it epitomizes the passion map makers feel to see a franchisee complete 42 years of dedication. Right on, Joe!

CURRENT PROJECTS AND OUT OF STOCK ITEMS

Albania is running low on inventory (62 copies left). A new edition is in preparation.

Amazon Basin is down to 24 copies and is being re-formatted into a new map; no ETA.

Brasil is at the end of its print run; about 20 copies left.

Canada is out of copies. A new edition is in preparation.

Delhi is out of copies. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Iran/Tehran is effectively out of copies and is being updated; no ETA.

Kuala Lumpur is almost out of copies (11 left). A newly updated map is being prepared.

Kyoto/Western Japan is almost out of copies (20 left). A newly updated map is being prepared.

Los Angeles has suddenly depleted more than expected; a new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Mexico South is getting low on copies (4 copies), so a new edition will be needed before summer.

Nova Scotia is out of copies. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Saint Lucia is running out of copies (43 left). A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Sao Paulo is running out of copies (38 left). A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Surinam/French Guiana is running low on copies (80 left). Preliminary updating is underway.

USA Pacific Coast is out of copies. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

USA as a country map is just about out of stock (2 copies left). A new edition is underway; no ETA.

Uzbekistan is now down to 40 copies and is being updated; no ETA.

NEW TITLES FOR MAY, 2017

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Idaho, Montana, & Wyoming Travel Reference Map 1ST Ed. 2017 1:1,000,000 ISBN 9781771293600 UPC 817712936004 \$9.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – The northern mountain states of the USA are now the most recent portion of ITMB's re-mapping of the USA for travel. We had to include a small portion of Washington State and Oregon, due to the shape of Idaho, but the double-sided sheet covers the three states with very little room left over. Side 1 stretches from the Alberta border to Salt Lake City, in Utah, and from and from west of Spokane to Helena, MT. The 2nd side covers from the Canadian border south to Cheyenne, and is essentially a map of Montana and Wyoming. As such, this is the most detailed map of this region of the USA ever published, and pretty much completes our mapping of the western half of the continental USA. We have also added a new feature – a list of the most popular sites – for those with limited time, showing such well-known features as Glacier National Park and the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. We would be happy to expand this list, which highlights the top attractions with a red box. **AVAILABLE**

Mexico's Pacific Coast & Guadalajara Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 2017 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**

Poland Travel Reference Map 2nd Ed. 2017 1:650,000 ISBN 9781771296175 UPC 817712961754 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – ITMB is very pleased to re-introduce Poland as a map. In the European category, the country ranks as one of the success stories of post-Soviet Eastern Europe and a valued asset of the EU. This is a double-sided map, with an inset of central Warsaw included on side 2. The map shows the entire country in detail, including the latest information on Poland's increasingly sophisticated network of motorways. It is a large country, rich in history and touristic appeal. Our map includes dozens of castles, points of interest, and places where accommodations might be found. As Poland is now reasonably prosperous, we have included hundreds of gas station symbols, merely to encourage visitors that the country is not only safe to visit, but doing so will not present difficulties. With this map, we complete our comprehensive coverage of Europe using our own original artwork. The two sides divide the country into western and eastern portions, with about a half pleat's worth of overlap so the map can be conveniently used. Poland has great tourist potential and we hope that this new map will find favour with end users. **AVAILABLE**

Scottish Castles/Whisky Distilleries Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2017 1:370,000 ISBN 9781771297028 UPC 817712970282 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – What does the word 'Scotland' mean to first-time visitors to the country? The history of the nation is fascinating and, being of Scottish ancestry myself, the castles and battlefields that have shaped Scottish history for a thousand years is a big attraction. On this map, we have emphasized the top ten 'must see' castles, including my clan home, Eileen Donan (Mackenzie clan). These have been highlighted in blue and we would be happy to add more wonderful castles open to the public in future editions. The top whisky distilleries of the nation are actually a huge tourist attraction, with tours and sampling sessions and deserve emphasis for this reason alone! They are highlighted in magenta and, again, we would be happy to add more in the next edition – hic! For good measure, we have added a list of the top 'other' attractions of Scotland, such as Loch Ness and Robert Burns' birthplace. The joy of this map is that it is an excellent road/rail map of Scotland, based thematically, double-sided, with two separate covers (one focused on castles, the other for distilleries, so can be marketed in two different ways. This is a bit of a new direction for ITMB, in that this type of map is oriented thematically, but it is a lovely-looking map and we hope it will fill a market niche. **AVAILABLE**

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Wales & SW England Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2017 1:300,000 ISBN 9781771298988 UPC 817712989888 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Finally, we have been able to create our own map of the lovely country of Wales. I use the word 'country' in its truest sense, as Wales was invaded and taken over by the English centuries ago. Regardless, the Welsh language and Welsh culture continue to flourish, although English is commonly spoken. We have visited Wales on several occasions and find that the attractions are so numerous that we could never see them all. There are too many castles to count, but some of the best preserved in the British Isles are in Wales, notable Caernarfon, but nearby Harlech is a World Heritage Site. St. David's must be one of the smallest and loveliest cathedrals in the world, and Tintern Abbey ruins among the most poignant anywhere. We took Johnny to Abergavenny for lunch in March, not that it made any difference; he just pined for a McDonalds. This map is double-sided, with Wales on one side and the West Country (southwest England) graces the other side. Excellent coverage of Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset is provided, along with a fair portion of Dorset and Wiltshire. The eastern extreme of the map is Salisbury/Swindon, so a lot of ground is still being covered. The peculiar way that motorways are designated means that 'true' motorways are shown in blue while equally good non-motorways are in green casing, with not a tinker's difference between them. My own favourite place is Mousehole, on Mount's Bay; Tintagel ranks a close second. The map is loaded with touristic attractions; both well-known and more local. For something really unusual, visit Hay-on-Wye, west of Hereford. It is actually in England, smack on the border, and its claim to fame is that it is the world's largest concentration of bookstores – an amazing place! This was obviously a fun map to make, as it includes so many 'favourite' places. This map will be invaluable for anyone visiting Wales!
AVAILABLE

Western Canada Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2017 on waterproof paper 1:2,000,000/1:1,400,000 ISBN 9781771291606 UPC817712916068 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – This is actually our second attempt at mapping the western portion of Canada; the first covered everything from northwestern Ontario to the Pacific Ocean and, while it was an excellent map, the scale that such a huge area covered necessitated severe problems. In this version, all of British Columbia, Alberta, and the Yukon have been mapped from fresh digital data and presented at 1:1.4T scale. This would have been impossible when we prepared the first map. The Northwest Territories portion had to be compressed in two ways; first, the scale is 1:2M; second, only the portion with roads is shown. This is still an extremely large area. One has to consider the actual size of Canada when designing a map. Most countries in Europe would fit into this area, which only covers 20% of Canada. The Fort McMurray forest fire of a year ago covered an area larger than France, and Cyprus would fit nicely into Great Slave Lake, if it had Malta to keep it company. Because size is so important when mapping Canada, we compromised and followed the norms used by our competitors in deciding what 'Western' meant to potential buyers, who are probably visitors to this country and are unaware of its vastness. The norm appears to be the two westernmost provinces of BC and Alberta and the Yukon Territory. Given that parameter, the map fits nicely as a double-sided map, with the provinces on one side and the two territories on the other. I should advise that more detailed separate provincial/territorial maps are available. Roads are shown, but the new road under construction north of Inuvik is being created under extremely trying circumstances, and until it is actually open to traffic, we have opted to show it as a winter road only. Once this marvel of tundra engineering is open for vehicle use, it will be possible to drive from the Arctic Ocean to the Panama Canal, something that is not possible to do now. Please note that the Western Canada Travel Atlas continues in print, as its book format allows us to portray a larger area of coverage. **AVAILABLE**

NEW TITLES EXPECTED IN JULY, 2017 (descriptions in next month's newsletter)

Iran and Tehran ISBN 9781553419597 (same as currently)

Kyoto and Japan West 9781771294096

Scotland 9781553411000 (same as currently)

USA Pacific Coast 9781553412465 (same as currently)

Vancouver/Greater Vancouver (TBA)

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