

CA on C.A.

The second C.A. designates Chris Arvetis—artist, designer, vice president of Rand McNally & Company.

Designer type v.p.'s aren't nearly as rare as they used to be, except perhaps in such well-established, well-known firms as Rand McNally. But this is only one of the unusual aspects of Chris' successful career, one that he didn't even choose for himself.

Chris Arvetis, boy piano player, at thirteen was already set firmly in the direction of a career in music. That was before the summer afternoon when he took a short cut to his Chicago home. Running late, Chris decided on impulse to make up a little time by 'hitching' a slow freight opportunistically traveling along his route. It turned out to be a fast freight that was gathering speed rather than slowing at the anticipated point of disembarkation. Cost of the ride: his left arm, his musical career and a lot of readjustment. (If you don't think he came all the way back, you should have seen him handle a four-speeds-forward sports car through the mountains of northern Greece. I used two hands just to hold on. But more about the Greek side of Arvetis later.)

Says Chris today, "If it had to happen, I'm glad it happened in Illinois." This reference is to the excellent Illinois State Rehabilitation Program for the handicapped.

When Arvetis first investigated its possibilities for his own situation, he had only a vague idea of what his future should be.

"In considering professions where being short one hand would work no special hardship, I had pretty much decided on law," is the way he put it; "but it was no fixation."

The results of the Program's exhaustive testing revealed no special Arvetis' aptitude in this direction. He was, to his surprise, encouraged to accept a scholarship in art.

Somewhat apprehensively, he accepted and was duly enrolled at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. The scholarship took care of all expenses—living, tuition, books, supplies. The only requirement was that he maintain high marks. He vividly recalls the nervous strain he was under, but he got the marks and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Afterward, he went on to the Art Center in Los Angeles for two years of graduate study under Alvin Lustig. This too was covered by a state scholarship.

Returning to Chicago in the summer of 1949, Arvetis began the long translation of training into career. Relatively short stints at Consolidated Book Publishers (promotion design) and Stensgaard Display Company (display design) preceded what he considers a significant 13-month association with Albert Kner at Container Corporation's Design Laboratory.

A growing desire to become more involved with typographic design—plus the feeling that publishing offered a more rewarding avenue of development—led Chris to Rand McNally in 1952.

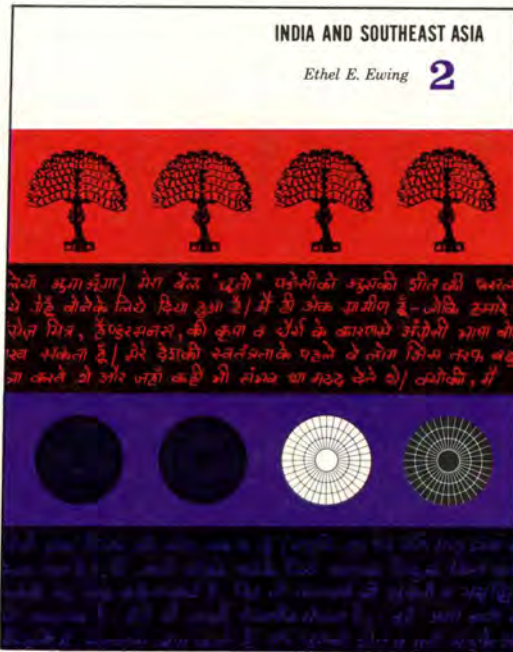
In terms of big moves on the organizational chart, Arvetis became art director of Rand McNally in 1954 and vice president in 1964. In between these official advancements was a solid decade of interaction in which the company and the man left visible marks on each other.

"I'm sure most of the marks are on me," Chris responded to this assessment. "No designer, however brashly disposed, is likely to arbitrarily reshape the output of a company with the background of achievement enjoyed by Rand McNally. In the first place, there was no need for arbitrary actions. What we have here is a large and continuing design opportunity. Such an opportunity should be basic to any substantial publishing situation, but conditions don't always permit it."

The background of achievement Arvetis speaks of is easy enough to verify. The company was founded in 1858, a partnership of Andrew McNally and William H. Rand, described by its first ad as "railroad and commercial printers." While initial production emphasis was on railroad tickets, the business soon expanded to include timetables, travel literature, annual reports (for railroads) and books. Mapmaking didn't begin until 1872, the year following the great Chicago fire. That renowned conflagration, by the way, burned the thriving partnership's headquarters to the ground. But three days later it was business as usual in rented quarters on West Randolph Street.

Rand McNally proceeded to grow up with the nation. Trade books, periodicals, textbooks and maps poured out

by Rhodes Patterson



in great and growing profusion from continually growing facilities. Among other traditions established in these early decades was one for *progressivism*. In 1883, they were hailed as the first Chicago printer to install electric lights in its pressroom.

Today, the romantic aura attending the ancient art of mapmaking still hovers around its contemporary practitioners. Perhaps this accounts for the general tendency to think of Rand McNally & Company as primarily mapmakers, virtually ignoring their pre-eminence and much greater sales volume in other areas of publishing and printing. While some of its early periodicals (notably *Prairie Farmer*) have been discontinued along the way, *Bankers Directory* and *Bankers Monthly* have been published continuously since 1876 and 1884 respectively. Rand McNally textbooks span virtually the entire educational spectrum, from elementary grades through college. Trade books cover a similarly broad range of non-fiction for children and adults, including some of the most opulent volumes available.

As though designing and printing its own highly diversified product line were not enough, the company provides a full range of fine printing services to customers in many fields. The scope of these activities has long since expanded the company's physical disposition far beyond its Chicago base—five plants and four major offices in the United States as well as operations in Mexico and West Germany.

All of this should convey something of the dimensions of Chris Arvetis' design responsibilities. Schematically, they cover all eight of the company's operating divisions. Often they may be more of the nature of consultation and advice rather than the production or purchasing of art. And they can be as unusual as visiting book fairs and companies in Europe in search of stimulation and new approaches.

You might well assume that his department of art and design would be whipsawed by the competitive exigencies of sales on the one hand and the hard lines of divisional procedures on the other. The fact that this is not the case is a tribute to the department's own well-preserved integrity. Rand McNally's present awareness of design in all of its product areas permits Arvetis to move freely across divisional lines to communicate with responsible executives on equal terms. Anyone familiar with corporate or company situations where design lacks the requisite status to make its point in high places can appreciate this.

"It doesn't mean that the design attitude always prevails," Chris hastens to point out, "but we get a hearing for our recommendations. I don't think anyone here doubts that design can make make real contributions."

As an example, Arvetis cited a revision his department did on a standard English guide, long issued in the traditional straightforward form. Along with the usual contemporizing through typographic restyling, etc., the rather large single volume was split into two volumes of less formidable



One of eight volumes of book, "Our Widening World"
 Brochure for Aero Performance, Inc.,
 Rand McNally affiliate

Direct mail promotion to history teachers for book "The Adventure of the American People." Upper mailer has English translation of Columbus' first report on the new world and enclosed a reproduction of original Castilian printing of letter written aboard the "Nina." Mailer below enclosed reproductions of tickets for the impeachment of President Johnson



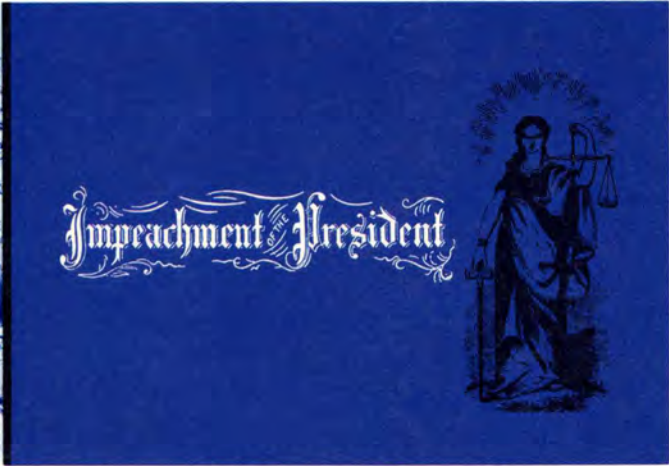
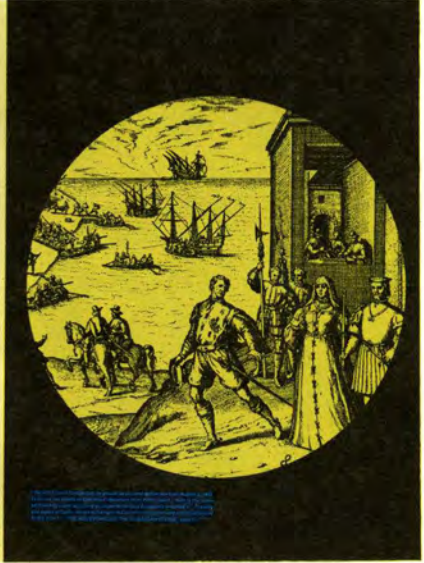
...the first day I discovered the great region of the Indies...

...the first day I discovered the great region of the Indies...

...the first day I discovered the great region of the Indies...

As I have you will be notified at the place...

As I have you will be notified at the place...





bulk. The efficacy of this somewhat radical design surgery was proved by a considerable improvement in sales.

The 12-man department makes its contributions in a variety of ways. These range from something as simple as the design of a brass stamp for an encyclopedia cover to a comprehensive and lengthy collaboration with an outside organization—*Life*, for example, on the design and production of an elaborate atlas. Above the product considerations, they also create promotional materials and concepts and presentations for sales purposes.

Despite traditional and technical constraints, it is in the cartographic area that Arvetis feels his department has offered some of its most productive benefits for the company.

"I have great respect for cartography and cartographers," Chris asserts, "and I moved very cautiously in this area until I was sure of my ground. Eventually I was certain that graphic and typographic design modifications could improve the effectiveness of maps without in any way diminishing cartographic fidelity. The problem then became one of proving it without upsetting too many people in the process."

Asked to elaborate on some of the design modifications he referred to, Arvetis said that his department essentially concentrates on the *look* of maps, type style and size, line weight, color, screen percentages, border treatments—always in close cooperation with the cartographers. One specific development was the combination of hypsometric tints—long standard in the industry—with shaded relief. This combination improved map effectiveness so much that it, too, became an industry standard.

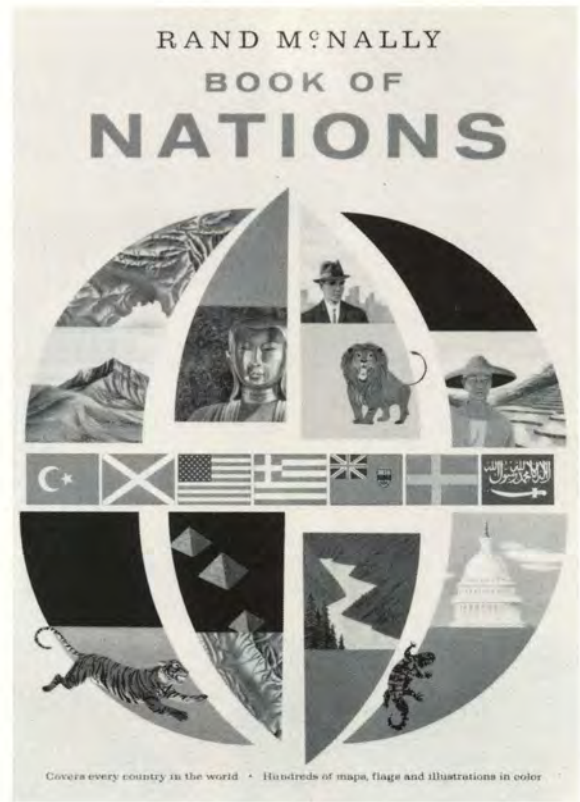
Arvetis handles his dual role of designer-executive with the ease and confidence one associates with a situation where man and job are well matched.

"I have no particular philosophy about design or designers," he said, "nor could I subscribe to a universal designer point of view. For myself, I would break it down very simply: I am addicted to order. To translate this addiction into something of value for this company, I have to listen to the ideas of many people, some quite foreign to my own. I try to understand, evaluate and then interpret them graphically. It's an interesting job."

That's a pretty good note to end on, but I promised to expand a bit on the Greek side of Arvetis. Like most Americans whose parents were born in Greece, he speaks Greek fluently. And his love of life, enthusiasm for discourse and penchant for unreserved involvement suggest the character of his forefathers. If a personal note may be admitted to the evidence: I had long been impressed by Chris on and around the Chicago scene; but my association with him for a month in Greece brought an unsuspected latent image into focus. I would characterize the Greek side of Arvetis as something akin to a younger, smoother Zorba. This is the kind of spirit that makes the difference—in men or designers.



RAND McNALLY & COMPANY 410 East Van Ness Street, San Francisco, California
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Covers for employee publication
 Mailer for world history textbook "Our Widening World"
 featured a letter written in Yoruba, an explanation of
 the language and an English translation
 Cover for a children's atlas
 One of the innumerable custom treatments of road maps



ABOUT THE LANGUAGE

The enclosed letter was written in Yoruba. Yoruba is spoken by some 8,000,000 people who live in western Nigeria, and is one of the major languages in West Africa. English is the official language of Nigeria and has influenced Yoruba in many ways. The Yoruba alphabet has 25 letters and resembles our own alphabet. The letters of the alphabet are as follows:

a b d e e
f g gb h i
j k l m n
o o p r s
s t u w y

Ore mi ara Amerika. Mo fi dagbaye kanna ti njo nso Gbisi. Ilu mi yijaba nitoripe ko si ede gbogbo Nigeria dppolopọ ania amik so nrisiyi. Ni Ila-Bran Nigeria miran ni awon ara wa nso.

Nigeria di ominira ti ojo Awon obi mi mu ni lo si Eko Ominiran. Awon so ba emi yi ni awon so. Ejo nla ti jo yi tomeda tagna njo gge. Ni igbe won re asia Gbisi si ila ti a





Awa ja, tughon a ko ja ijaba Gbisi fi fun wa gge bi ominira to da, awon si ajawo' olori wa ni aye lati ko bi a tamiwamu yi. Nigbat akoko lati Babafin nira isiwopo gbe ayi a dabi Kanada ti Awa paju awon Gbisi si njemi le won fun ironfuro ati imar

Mo fe ko iwe yi ni ede mo mpo to nrisiyi. Ni ile-iwe a ni Yoruba. Nrisiyi ti emi wa Gbogbo ako wa, ni Gbisi ni; si wipe mo si nge apite pufe ni iwe mi ki emi ki o ba le wo Mo ro pe emi yio di oluko.

Awon obi mi tirako lati lo si ile. Eke kekere ti, ni igbe eke yig. On nise fun isanwo ti o ba nri awon aluru ti awon On a mi sope. Ihu wa ko le lo ko mi iwe. Nrisiyi dppolopọ olu mi dan pe ihu mi aye juub nafaizulu wa ki





 Hail Fall  for fulfillment of Spring's promise of bountiful dividends from tree and stalk and vine  for green coolness turned hot with chromatic extravagancies too bright to believe
for clean skies crisp with the fuel for vigor, soft with the afterglow of Summer gone  Symbolically, this whole wonderful season is presented to you by the Veritone Company where fulfillment of
the promise of fine printing, at sensible prices, is yours for the assigning in all seasons.

 **VERITONE**

SEPTEMBER
Sunday

	1	2	3	4	5	
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

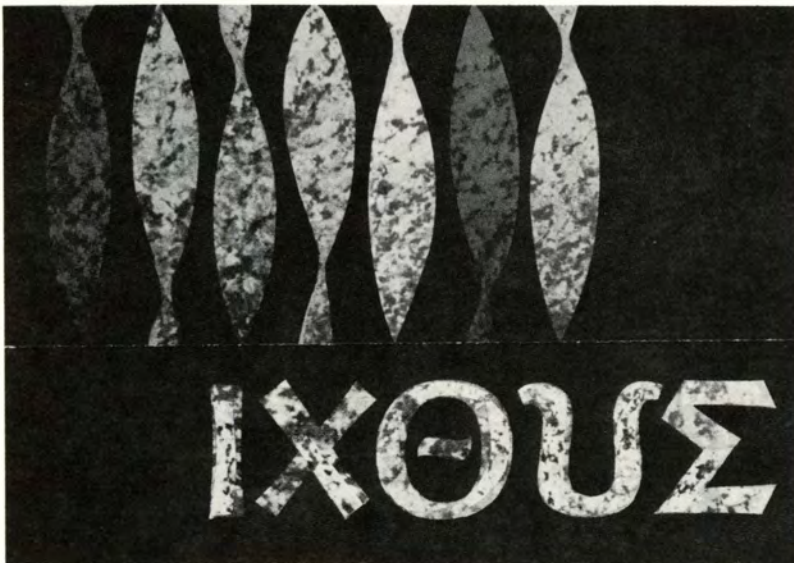
OCTOBER
Sunday

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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOVEMBER
Sunday

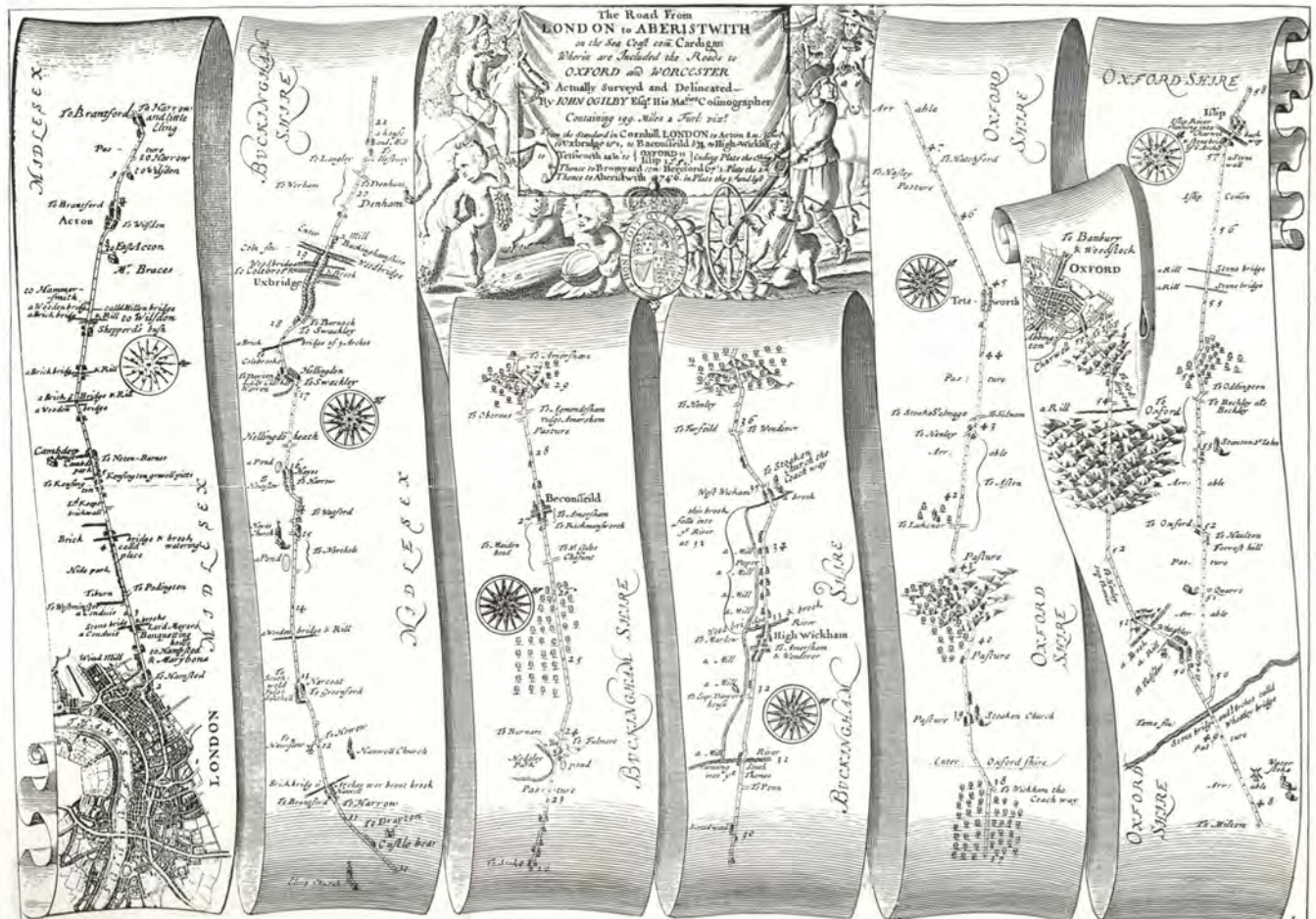
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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29	30					

Poster for Rand McNally subsidiary,
The Veritone Company
Rand McNally letterhead
Brochure for 75" geophysical globe
Personal Christmas card
English textbook



Each year, Arvetis designs the Rand McNally Christmas greeting around a rare antique map chosen for both interest and visual appearance. These keepsake maps are reproduced with great care and sensitivity, sometimes requiring six or seven printing colors to duplicate the hand coloring of the originals. On this page is Chris' cover and line plate for a seventeenth century English road map reproduced from John Ogilby's atlas, *Brittania*. On the facing page are two other maps from this series. Captayn John Smith's map of Virginia was reproduced through the courtesy of Princeton University. The armillary sphere is from an engraving in the cosmographical atlas of Andreas Cellarius, Amsterdam, 1660.

We proceed then,
as in all Direct Roads,
from the Standard
in Cornhil, LONDON



Road map number one from the 1675 edition of John Ogilby's *Brittania*



Reproduction of King William's map, engraved by J. Blaeu, 1670.

