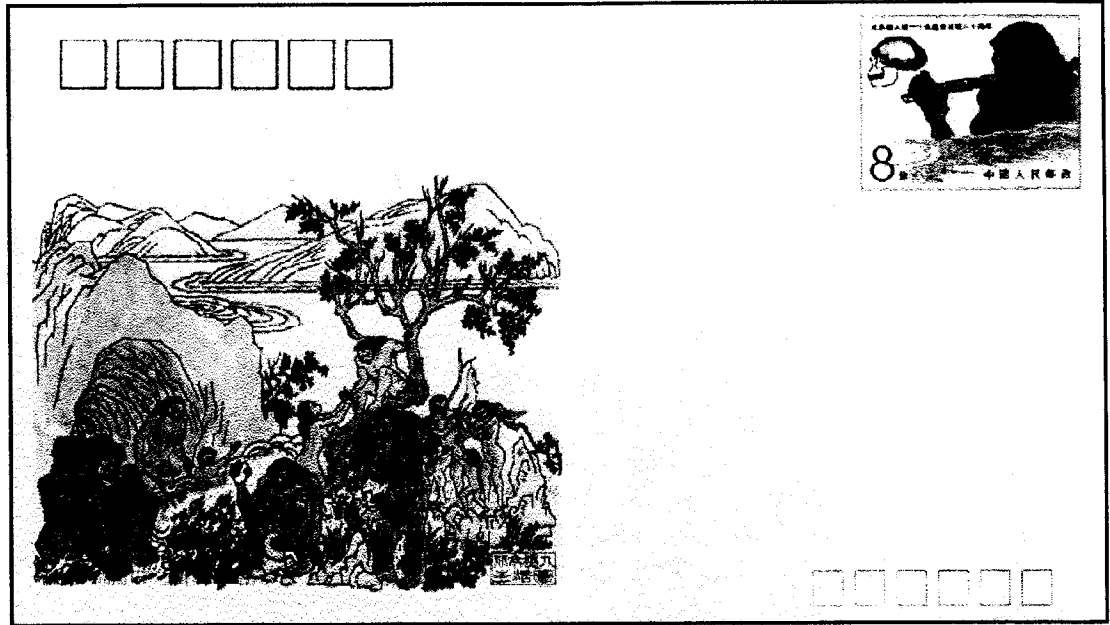


## FUN WITH RESEARCH

# Peking Man

By  
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I have gotten good leads to material which fits into my collections by looking carefully at thematic exhibits not in my fields of interest.

In critiquing my Israel pen friend's exhibit of the "Lion King" I saw a nice postal stationery item from the People's Democratic Republic of China depicting Peking Man in his chapter on Evolution.

I realized that Ron Berger's item would fit nicely into my display "Happy Chinese New Year" chapter on a short history of Chinese astronomy.

Turning to *Topical Time* I found an ad from Berti Sergio, Largo Asiago 26, P. O. Box 14, I-31033 Castel Franco, Italy. I sent him a photocopy of Ron's page. Within a few weeks I received the desired item on approval.

I find the dealers who advertise in *Topical Time* to be very helpful and understanding of thematic collector's want lists.

Turning the Chinese postal stationery item over I was pleased to find that the Ministry of Posts had printed thematic information in Chinese and English about the commemorative prestamped envelope (reproduced on the next page).

I also checked the listing in the Encyclopædia Britannica for Peking Man. Britannica is a great reference for any subject. There are two versions, the Micropædia which gives general information and the Macropædia that gives additional detail on selected subjects.

I was surprised at the different emphasis of these Chinese and British information sources. The Chinese issued the postal stationery item for the 60th anniversary of the discovery of the first skull of Peking Man

on 2 December 1929 at Zhoukoudian, Fangshan county near Beijing, the current name of Peking, by Pei Wenzhong (1904-1982).

Britannica gives the discovery credit to Davidson Black in 1927 for finding a single tooth. Turning to Britannica biographic information we find that Black was a Canadian physician and physical anthropologist. He served in China after World War I until his death as professor of embryology and neurology at the Peking Union Medical College.

Black had searched unsuccessfully for fossils of early man in Jehol, Northern China and Thailand. In 1927 at Chou-k'ou-tien, near Peking, he found a hominid lower molar. From this single tooth, Black inferred the existence of an unknown hominid. In 1932, he pointed out the close relationship between Peking Man and the Java Man.

Later excavations of the Chou-k'ou-tien cave have proven the accuracy of Black's theory.

Britannica does not mention the Chinese fossil discoveries or their discoverer, the Chinese scientist Pei Wenzhong. These discoveries included 14 skull-caps, several mandibles, facial bones and limb bones, along with the teeth of about 40 individuals.

The Chinese postal stationery writeup states that Peking Man is an important link in the evolution of mankind. And "from ape to man" is a major chapter in the study of the materialist conception of history of Marxism. The discovery of the first skull of Peking Man (*Homo erectus pekinensis*) "is a great contribution to the research of the evolution of mankind."

Britannica gives facts that these hominid fossils date to the Middle Pleistocene, perhaps 350,000 years