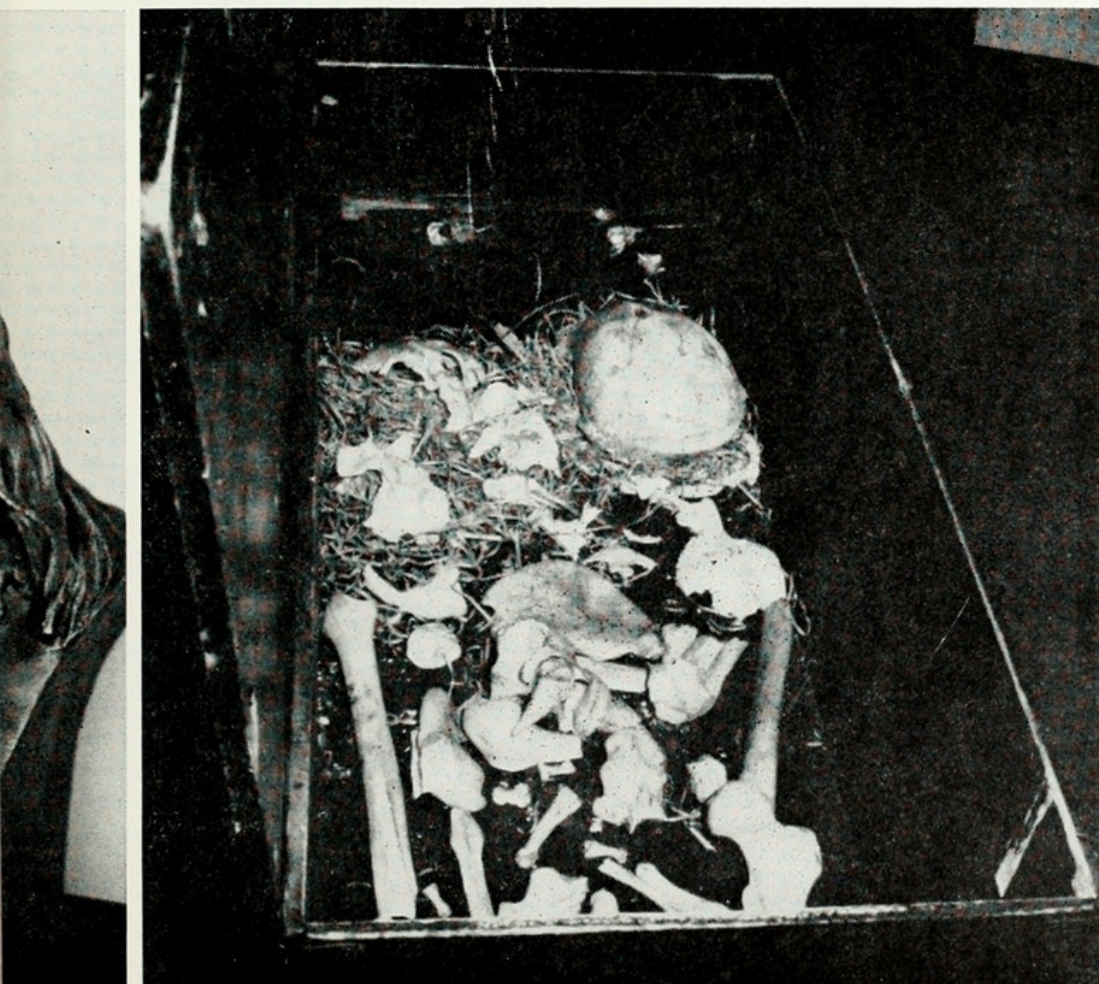




Photos at left: cave at Choukoutien, near Peking, where first Peking Man fossils were found in 1926; reconstruction of Peking Man in museum at Choukoutien; taken in June 1972 by Willis Barnstone.

Dr. Barnstone is Professor of Comparative Literature, Indiana University. His recent book *The Poems of Mao Tse-tung* was a Book-of-the-Month Club alternate selection earlier this year.

Photo below: some of long-lost Peking Man fossils?



The missing Peking Man fossils are half-a-million-year-old remains from about forty individuals of a species of man now classified as *Homo erectus* that were excavated from a cave near Peking beginning in 1926. In 1941 they were removed from the Peking Union Medical College for safekeeping, and went underground again December 8, 1941, the day after Pearl Harbor. They have been lost to the scientific world ever since.

The whole story—as much as is known—was told by Dr. Harry Shapiro, Curator Emeritus of Physical Anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History, in the November 1971 issue of *Natural History*. Apparently U.S. Marines who were interned as prisoners of war by the Japanese kept at least some of the fossils hidden from their captors for several years. Then those too disappeared.

Last month—September 1 to be exact—the photo at left was brought to Field Museum and shown to Dr. Glen Cole, Associate Curator of Prehistory. He was asked, "Could these possibly be some of the fossils of Peking Man?" Thus another chapter of the story may have started to unfold.

It started this summer when five Americans on a cultural tour of China visited the Peking Man Museum at the site where the fossils were first found. Its director told them how important recovery of the fossils would be to the Chinese. The experience inspired the poem "The Cave of the Peking Man" by one member of the group. It inspired the leader of the tour, Christopher G. Janus, to set in motion events which led to his bringing the photo to Dr. Cole. Mr. Janus's chronology of those events is on the next page.—Editor.

THE SEARCH FOR PEKING MAN

Christopher G. Janus

The first real breakthrough in the more than 25-year search for the Peking Man fossils could be a photograph I received recently from a woman in New York who claims she has in her possession a footlocker left her by her late husband, a Marine, containing some of the fossils of Peking Man.

The black and white photo shows an open wooden footlocker containing what appear to be a nearly complete skull, part of another skull, a fragment of a pelvis, two distinct leg bones, and at least 20 other bone fragments.

The Greek Heritage Foundation offered a \$5,000 reward in June to anyone in the world for information leading to the recovery and return of the Peking Man fossils to the Chinese. The photo and numerous other leads received since then are apparently in response to this reward offer. It all started when I and four other Foundation representatives made a 17-day visit to China.

This is the chronology of what has happened.

June 8, 1972. Visit to Peking Man Museum in Choukoutien, outside of Peking, where Wu Xing-chih, Museum Director, told us story of missing Peking Man fossils and how the Chinese regard them as among their most priceless historical treasures. He asked our help in finding them.

June 16. Arrived in Hong Kong, where at press conference I announced that the Greek Heritage Foundation offers \$5,000 reward to anyone in the world giving information leading to return of Peking Man fossils to China.

June 19. Arrived Tokyo. Reward offer is repeated and story is carried on wire services.

June 27. Met with Dr. Harry Shapiro (Emeritus Chairman of Department of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History) for lunch at Club 21, having learned about his interest in

Peking Man fossils and his recent magazine article on them.

June 27. Received call at Harvard Club from woman who claims she has valuable information on Peking Man.

June 28. Met with Mr. Herman Davis, who with Dr. W. T. Foley was last known Marine to be with footlockers after Japanese capture. Davis gave me map he drew of Holcomb Prison Camp at Chinwangtao, where he last saw footlockers during World War II.

June 28. Met woman on 102nd floor Empire State Observatory, who showed me 5" x 7" picture of a footlocker allegedly containing Peking Man fossils. Won't reveal her name and scared off by photographer taking pictures at observatory.

July 17. Received letter from Colonel John White from San Francisco, who was one of Marines in China at time of capture. Offers to help in search for Peking Man so long as it does not conflict with book he is writing on subject.

August 1. Lunch with Dr. Shapiro at American Museum of Natural History to see his casts of Peking Man fossils. Invite him to come to China with us on October 14 to search for Peking Man.

August 2. Lunch with Dr. W. T. Foley, now a heart surgeon at Cornell Medical Center, who was entrusted with



Wu Xing-chih, Director of Peking Man Museum in Choukoutien.

footlockers for transport to U.S. before captured by Japanese. Commends our search and suggests we somehow run story in China offering \$5,000 reward for information on Peking Man. We invite him and Mr. Davis also to come to China with us October 14 as our guests to help in search for Peking Man in sites of former prison camps.

August 4. Ran front-page 2-line ad in *New York Times* asking "Empire State Observatory Woman" to phone me.

August 6. Received telephone call in Winnetka from "Empire State Woman" asking for a letter relieving her of all possible liability regarding her possession of Peking Man footlocker and asking for \$500,000 for delivery of footlocker.

August 11. Received photo in mail—no return address or identification—of footlocker containing fossils. Picture is similar to one shown me by woman at Empire State Building.

August 12. Sent letter regarding \$5,000 reward for information on Peking Man to 135 living Marines who were in Peking area at time Japanese captured them.

August 18. Sent representative of Greek Heritage Foundation to Dayton, Ohio to attend reunion August 19 and 20 of U.S. Marines captured in China at time of loss of Peking Man.

August 29. Sent copies of picture of fossils to Director of Peking Man Museum in Choukoutien and other officials in China, and also copies of picture to Dr. Shapiro and Dr. Foley for comment.

September 1. Took copy of picture to Field Museum of Natural History and showed to Dr. Glen Cole. He said if the skull is a fossil rather than a cast, it *could* be Peking Man—it is kind Peking Man had—very different from a modern skull. He also said some of the other bones are not human, and some that could be human weren't found at Choukoutien. He thought photo looks promising and urges pursuing the matter.

Christopher G. Janus is an investment banker with Bache & Co. and president of The Greek Heritage Foundation.



Janus, Christopher G. 1972. "The Search for Peking Man." *Field Museum of Natural History bulletin* 43(9), 9–10.

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