

Historical Edition

Chinook Club of America and KJ Krammes, copyright 2017

2017 marks the 100th birthday of the father, and namesake, of our breed, Chinook! For a breed only 100 years old, Chinooks have had an influence on American history over this last century. Join us in celebrating the life and times of the father of the Breed and all that happened, is happening and will happen because of a tawny, strong, gentle giant of a dog, to whom all of us owe so much! So, let's take a look back at this amazing dog.....

Chinook's destiny was tied to exploration. You won't know Chinook without knowing Arthur T. Walden. Arthur Treadwell Walden, was an author and explorer in his own right. Born 1871 in Indianapolis, Walden, the son of an Episcopal Minister, lived in Minnesota and later Boston. Disliking city life, Arthur move to his family's country home in Tamworth NH after he completed school. There, he became the farm manager of Wonalancet, the 1300 acre inn and farm of Kate Sleeper, the daughter of a prominent Bostonian.



Arthur Treadwell Walden

At 24, restless and looking for adventure, Walden flipped a coin to decide between heading to South America or Alaska. He headed for Alaska in 1896. Walden traveled north, up the Inside Passage and over the Chilkoot Pass, down the Yukon River through the fearsome Whitehorse Rapids and downriver to Circle City. Driven by the adventure, Walden took every job that came his way: prospector, logger, stevedore, river pilot, and the job that he most enjoyed, "dog punching" (hauling freight by dog-

sled). He later wrote a book about his time in Alaska and called it "*Dog Puncher in the Yukon*". His colorful descriptions of his adventures gave his book an enduring quality and it is still considered a northland classic. Walden's favorite lead dog during this time, was a large Husky cross that he named "Chinook" after the warm winter winds.



Rev. Treadwell Walden



The Chinook **ADVOCATE**

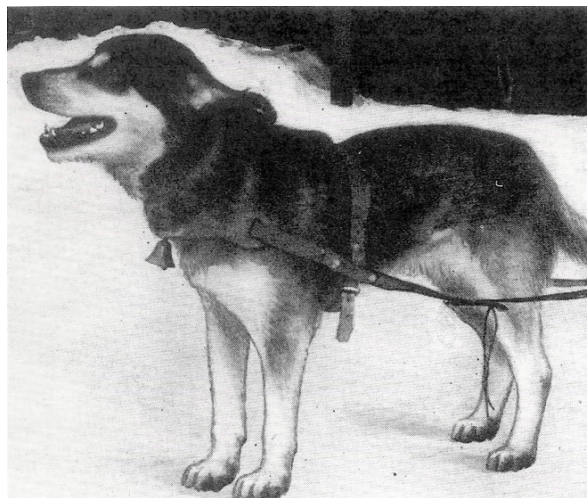
Walden returned to Wonalancet six years later, and in December of 1902, he and Kate Sleeper married. He brought a variety of dogs to Wonalancet Farm and began breeding for dogs that possessed his ideal combination of strength, endurance, speed, and good nature. He put together a team of four half-bred St. Bernards in 1910; they were reportedly the first sled dog team to work in New England since the Deerfield (MA) Massacre of the French and Indian War, in 1703!

Chinook's own parentage was tied to exploration, as well. His dam, Ningo, was a Greenland Husky (now known as the Inuit Dog) and the granddaughter of Polaris, Admiral Robert Peary's lead sled dog on his 1909 trip to the North Pole. His sire, Kim, was a large mastiff mix Walden had picked up as a stray.



Katherine Sleeper Walden

The breeding produced 3 pups born on January 17, 1917. Walden called them Rikki, Tikki and Tavi after the characters in Rudyard Kipling's popular *Jungle Book*. Walden soon realized the intelligence of these pups, and finding the names Rikki and Tikki unworkable when calling them, renamed them Chinook and Hootchinoo after two outstanding lead dogs he had owned in Alaska. Walden first used Hootchinoo as his lead dog but it was a full year later before Walden tried Chinook in lead position, and the unassuming Chinook astounded everyone with his intelligence, understanding, and trail sense. Walden was so taken with this dog that Chinook became Walden's most trusted leader, foundation sire of his continued kennel lines, and his constant companion.



Kim (left) Ningo and Chinook

The Chinook ADVOCATE

With Chinook's offspring, Walden was finally getting the quality of dogs that he was seeking. In 1920 his new line of "Husky half-breds" (as he called them), made their debut at the Gorham, NH winter carnival, and he started seriously promoting dog sledding for draft, recreation, and sport, as well as for freighting supplies to logging camps. Racing in New England began a year later, at the 1921 Gorham carnival. There were few entries (two teams of three dogs each, over a six mile course) and Walden lost! But interest was building. He convinced the Brown Paper Company of Berlin, NH to sponsor the first Eastern International Dog Derby in 1922. Four teams competed in this 123 mile race; and Walden, with Chinook in lead, won hands down. Competition was keen, however; and Walden realized that Chinook, weighing just over 100 pounds in fit working condition, was too massive an animal to continue leading winning race teams. He started breeding Chinook with an eye for lighter boned, faster offspring, who still carried Chinook's intelligence and trademark coloration.

Disaster struck in 1923, a distemper outbreak in the Chinook Kennel killed Walden's entire racing team, except Chinook. Walden took two years off from serious competition to concentrate on breeding another competitive team, but never stopped supporting the sport. In 1924, the New England Sled Dog Club (NESDC) held its organizational meeting in the Waldens' home and elected Arthur Walden its first president. The NESDC is still actively promoting sled dog racing today and Walden is credited for bringing the sport of sled dog racing to New England.



"Adventurer Arthur T. Walden with his sled dog Chinook at the Winter Carnival in Portland, Maine. This photograph was published on the front page of the Portland Evening Express on February 11, 1922



Arthur Walden giving rides on Meredith Bay for Carnival

The Chinook ADVOCATE

In 1925, Walden returned to racing with a young but promising team of Chinook's sons, proclaiming his Chinook/shepherd crosses as his ideal for strength and stamina. The popularity of Walden's "Chinook dogs" was growing; boosted by his January 1926 win at the Poland Spring, Maine race. Interest was such that Walden was beginning to sell a few matched teams of his dogs to other racers as well.

In March of 1926, Walden and his team set out on an adventure that he had been considering for years, but most people considered impossible: the first ascent of Mount Washington, the



highest peak in the eastern United States, by dog team. While turned back by a blizzard on the first attempt, Walden and his team, with an aging Chinook in lead, successfully made the 8 miles to the summit in 8 hours time!

The Chinook dogs' popularity among the racing community was short lived, however. Siberian Huskies took center stage



Chinook team International Dog Sled Race,
120 miles Berlin NH 2-6-22

after their part in the 1925 Nome Serum Run, delivering diphtheria vaccine during an outbreak. At The Poland Spring race of January 1927, Siberians proved themselves much faster than anything the New Englanders had to offer and gained instant popularity. A breeding kennel in Maine was established to supply Siberian Huskies to the racers in New England, and interest in Walden's dogs waned.



Walden's first Chinook team

The Chinook **ADVOCATE**

CHINOOK



Chinook

Wonalancet, N. H.



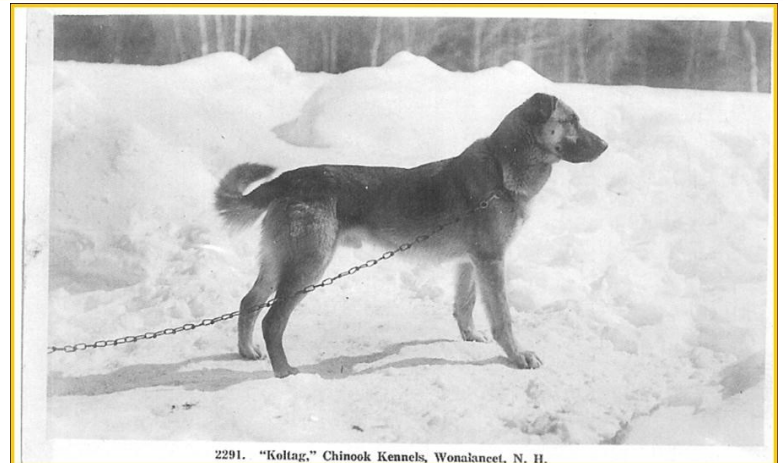
The Chinook **ADVOCATE**

CHINOOK'S OFFSPRING



2266. At Chinook Kennels, Wonalancet, N. H.

ARTHUR T. WALDEN



2291. "Koltag," Chinook Kennels, Wonalancet, N. H.



Puppies at Arthur Waldens 1925



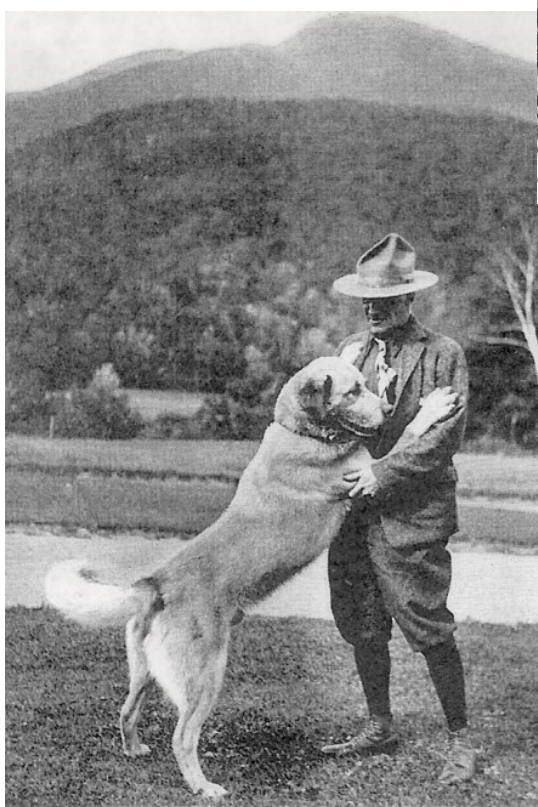
Chinook's Puppies.

Wonalancet, N. H.



The Chinook **ADVOCATE**

WALDEN AND CHINOOK



The Chinook **ADVOCATE**

Walden didn't dwell on the loss; but instead went seeking the next adventure. Hearing that Commander Richard E. Byrd was planning a two year expedition to Antarctica (BAE I), Walden volunteered; and even though at 58 he was well over the maximum age limit, he was selected as lead dog driver and trainer for the expedition. During the winter of 1927/28, dogs and drivers were assembled at the Waldens' Wonalancet Farm, and training began. Winter survival gear was also evaluated here in the harsh conditions of New Hampshire's White Mountains.



BAE I Team, Wonalancet NH

BAE I Team Training at Wonalancet
Goodale, Crocket, Vaughan, Byrd, Walden

When not in training, Walden and Chinook joined Admiral Byrd on the lecture circuit to raise funds. Walden's success promoting sled dog racing had brought him fame but it was Chinook's gentle temperament and beautiful looks that made him the crowd favorite.

Walden (left), Byrd &
Chinook (right)



The Stieff Company, manufacturers of high-end stuffed animals made a replica of Chinook, one of the few stuffed animals made by them of an living animal from America - it is the equivalent today of an action figure and just as popular!



The Chinook **ADVOCATE**

When Byrd's expedition departed in the summer of 1928, Chinook, now eleven years old, and fifteen **of his sons** were included among the nearly 100 dogs selected to provide surface transportation on the Antarctic ice.

Conditions were severe when they arrived in Antarctica, and there was little time to unload the 500 tons of supplies and build their new "city", Little America, before the four month long "night" set in. Walden's own team of 13 dogs was the largest team that first summer and amazed everyone. Of Walden, Byrd wrote: "Seeing him rush his heavy loads along the trail, outstripping the younger men, it was difficult to believe he was an old man. He was 58 years old, but he had the determination and strength of youth." Of Chinook, Byrd wrote: "...there was no doubting the fact that



he was a great dog. ...Walden used him as kind of a "shock troop", throwing him into harness when the going turned very hard. Then the gallant heart of the old dog would rise above the years and pull with the glorious strength of a three-year-old." And of their team, Byrd wrote: "On January 17th (1929) Walden's single team of thirteen dogs moved 3,500 pounds of supplies from ship to base, a distance of 16 miles each trip, in two journeys. Walden's team was the backbone of our transport."



The Chinook **ADVOCATE**



The night after this record was set, Chinook woke Walden several times by putting his paw on Walden's shoulder. Each time, Walden gave Chinook a pat on the head and told him to lay back down. The next day, as Walden and his team left Little America, Chinook wandered away and was never found. Walden was devastated by the loss of his companion of so many years, and the disappointment was deepened by the fact that Walden was unable to honor his desire to bury Chinook in harness. BAE team members said that Walden aged 10 years that day and after that, he no longer ran along side the sleds.

Reports of Chinook's death made international news and dog lovers, sledding enthusiasts and all those following the Byrd expedition mourned the loss of one of the greatest lead sled dogs in history. In addition, at Walden's request, Route 113A from Tamworth to Wonalancet, New Hampshire, now bears the name "Chinook Trail" to honor his famous lead dog.

In 1931, Arthur Walden received the Congressional Medal for his part in Admiral Richard Byrd's Antarctic Expedition. Admiral Byrd and the rest of the team compiled a book of photos of the journey with Chinook and presented it to Walden.



CHINOOK



HIS PAW AUTOGRAPH
(Especially taken for Mowgli, July, 1928)

The Chinook ADVOCATE

This is
"CHINOOK"



1928 Ad for Chinook
Stuffed Dog

The Great Leader of Dog Teams A Wonderful Post Master in the Lands of Ice and Snow

"CHINOOK" first led the Sled Dogs in the icy cold land of Alaska where he helped his master deliver the mails. His sense of direction was so perfect that often when the trails were entirely covered with snow, his master relied upon "CHINOOK" to deliver the mail safely. Now

"CHINOOK" goes to the South Pole with Commander Byrd

"CHINOOK" will be the leader of 100 sled dogs. He is necessary to Commander Byrd for his keen sense of direction. "CHINOOK" can find the way. You can have your own

"CHINOOK"

Yellowish-gray with black markings, the same as the real

"CHINOOK"

Made of beautiful "Silk Pile Plush" colored to match his splendid coat. Every detail of the live "CHINOOK" is to be found in this replica, except his wonderful ability to lead the Sled Team. But he is all harnessed, just like the live sled dog. Comes in five sizes: from 9½" high x 13½" long, to 13½" high x 19" long, with three intermediary sizes.

To be had at all department stores and toy shops. If it cannot be had at your dealer's, send to

DAVIS & VOETSCH, INC.
Sole Distributors

45 East 17th Street New York, N. Y.

"CHINOOK" in Toy Form



CHINOOK

When Walden of New Hampshire was picked by Byrd for the South Pole trip, he said he would take Chinook, so that they could have "one more bat together."

By Henry Gillen

Up where the hills were green with pine
And snow was packed on the State highway,
Up where they mused by the roadway sign
To a kennel warm at the end of day,
A man and a dog with a bond between
Welded by war with storm and weather,
Nodded farewell to the hills of green
And wandered off for a bat together.

South, far south, where the hills are white,
With never a field of green nor tree,
And only the color of stars at night
And day after day the cold, green sea,
And only the sound of the grinding floes,
The singing runners and creaking leather,
They tugged the sledge on the ancient snows,
Having just one more bat together.

The man was gay, with the battle-light
In his eyes as he strained on an iron
thew;
The big dog bayed at the world of white
But down in his heart of hearts he knew
That age had called, and he did not moan;
He suddenly snapped the olden tether
And wandered off by himself alone
After their one last bat together.

Boston Sunday Post
January 27, 1929.

Poem written when
Chinook Died