

2. Early Years

Early Years

1908 – 1959

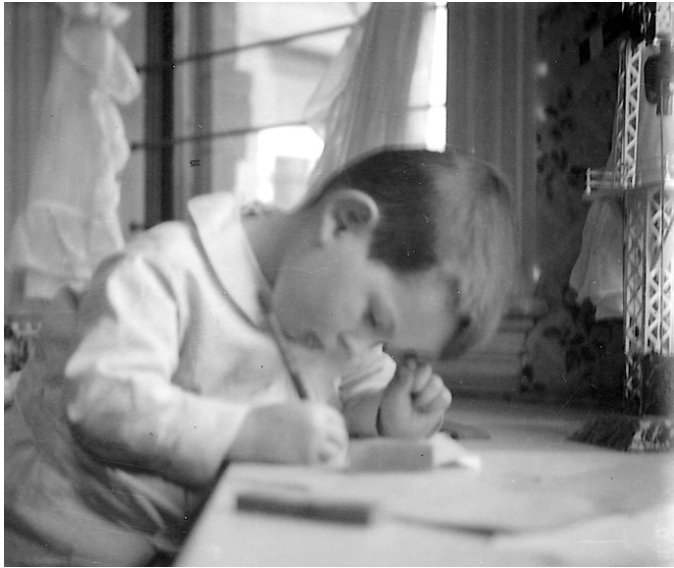
Charles Greenough Chase was born June 3, 1908 in Boston, Massachusetts to Dr. Walter Greenough Chase (May 30, 1859–January 27, 1919) and Fannie Thaxter Hubbard Chase (February 10, 1875–January 24, 1939). He was named for his paternal grandfather, a successful Boston merchant in the tea importing business. His sister, Judith Thaxter Chase, was born in 1910.

Their father was a Harvard graduate (1882) who then attended Harvard Law School for a year before venturing into a successful business career, establishing and managing the Mason Regulator Company (1883–1983) in Boston. He traveled extensively and became an expert amateur photographer. That skill piqued his interest in the developing X-ray technology and its applications to medicine. He achieved his M.D. from Harvard (1901), spending 1900–1901 at Johns Hopkins Medical School. While he never practiced medicine, he lectured and traveled widely in medical circles in this country and around the world.

Their mother, born in Liverpool, England, was the daughter of Joseph Tucker Hubbard and Fannie Thaxter Scott, who hailed from Charleston, SC. She was a graduate of Miss Smith's School. When and where she met her husband is unknown. *Who's Who* of 1914–1915 states that she was “against woman suffrage.” They were married in October 1906 and traveled around the world before settling in their new home on Marlborough Street in Boston. It was here where their children were born and raised, with the exception of 1916–1917 which they spent in Charleston, and where the family lived most of the year. Come spring, they ventured north to enjoy each summer in Wiscasset, Maine in an 1852 home that once belonged to their mother's grandfather, Captain Jonathan Edwards Scott.

Theirs was both a privileged and a creative family. Walter Chase pioneered the application of moving pictures to the study of epilepsy, allowing physicians to witness the varying intensity of seizures. Chippy's mother wrote the comprehensive 600-page history, *Wiscasset in Pownalborough*, published (posthumously) in 1941. His sister Judy, then in her early thirties, no doubt helped with the writing as their mother aged, and probably saw to the final publication. Judith Chase Churchill became a nationally known journalist, writing in New York for *Life*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *McCall's*, and other national magazines.

Photos taken by his father show young Charles with toys—an erector set and a train, perhaps signaling an interest in things mechanical.



2.1 (Walter G. Chase photo)



2.2 (Walter G. Chase photo)

Walter Chase was a keen photographer, taking photos of the family mansion on High Street in Wiscasset, as well as a photo of Mark Twain on a trip to Bermuda.



2.3

16-18 High Street, Wiscasset (Walter G. Chase photo).



2.4

Dining Room, High Street Mansion (Walter G. Chase photo).



2.5

Mark Twain (Walter G. Chase photo).

Camp Chewonki

In 1918, Clarence Allen, a teacher in Boston, opened a boys' camp in Wiscasset. Chippy's father was in failing health and his wife enrolled their 10-year-old son for the summer session. On opening day, Mrs. Chase rowed young Chippy across Montsweag Creek to the newly established Camp Chewonki. Because other boys coming from afar were picked up at the train station, Chippy was literally the first camper to arrive.

Chewonki's emphasis on nature and coastal Maine outdoor activities clearly resonated with the boy. It was here that Chippy gained his appreciation and love of nature and the outdoors as a camper at Chewonki, as well as spending all his summers in Wiscasset.

We assume it was here that he learned to swim, row a boat, and sail. One acquaintance noted that throughout his life Chippy made a point of swimming at least once in every month of the year and in seasonable weather, daily. Later in life he told stories of how he and his friends would "borrow" the hand-pump car of the narrow-gauge railroad and head north towards Whitfield. Even then, he clearly was mischievous and enjoyed having a good time with his friends.

Clarence Allen emphasized nature studies at Chewonki. In the early 1930s he hired a young bird artist, Roger Tory Peterson, to teach nature studies as well as handle counselor responsibilities. Chippy became friends with Peterson and they both maintained a lifelong association with Camp Chewonki. Interestingly, they were the same age.

Allen encouraged Peterson to write and illustrate a bird guide, and probably made initial introductions to Houghton Mifflin Company, the Boston publisher of Peterson's first and subsequent books. Clarence Allen knew the value of art and recognized artistic talent. His brother, Frank Allen, operated a summer art school in nearby Boothbay Harbor. We assume that artistic projects were recognized as valuable at Chewonki. Clarence Allen acquired a couple of Chippy's early carvings.

During the 1930s, while living in Wiscasset, Chippy carved about 90 bird sculptures. Tim Ellis, whose father succeeded Allen as head of the camp, recalls that Chippy often visited Chewonki during the summer and participated in the Saturday night campfire gatherings.

Education

Chippy was educated at the best schools in New England. He attended St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire from 1922–1926. He excelled as a student, and it is not surprising that he went on to study mathematics at Harvard University, graduating in 1930. Chippy enrolled at Harvard Law School from 1930-1931 where he realized that law school would lead to an office job in Boston, and he decided that he did not want to be stuck in an office most of his working life, so after one year he left law school. Both his father and grandfather were Harvard graduates.

Just as important as his years of formal education so, too, were other life experiences and job opportunities that further shaped his character and informed his life's work as a sculptor of birds in wood.

1930s

Crew on Schooner Bowdoin

In the summer of 1930 (or 1931), after he graduated from Harvard, Chippy joined the crew on Captain Donald MacMillan's 88' schooner, "Bowdoin", sailing up the Davis Strait and exploring the Arctic along Labrador and Greenland's west coast. When asked how this experience came about, Chippy commented: "It was easy, mother just paid Captain Mac \$1,000 and I was part of the crew."

Donald B. MacMillan (1874–1970) was one of the most famous Arctic explorers of the early 1900s. He was part of the Robert E. Peary North Pole Expedition of 1909, and reached 84° 29' but had to turn back because of frozen heels. Peary reached the North Pole on April 6, 1909, several weeks after MacMillan left the party.

Imagine Chippy’s excitement when, in his early 20s, he was to spend two months at sea with Captain Mac, listening to stories of his Arctic exploration with Peary. For Chippy, with his ancestral maritime history, this was an eye-opening experience—here he was under sail, in an 88’ schooner, in the north Atlantic. This was his first experience with oceanic waves, and seabirds—puffins, petrels, gannets, shearwaters, and jaegers—birds he would later sculpt. Chippy’s memories of Sooty Shearwaters soaring over large oceanic waves inspired him to create a number of Shearwater sculptures.

This maritime expedition no doubt sparked his early interest in global travels. His father, who died when Chippy was 10, undoubtedly would have appreciated Chip’s lifelong enthusiasm to travel the world in search of new-to-him bird species.



2.6

Schooner Bowdoin under sail. (Maine Maritime Academy photo).

Following a year at Harvard Law School, Chippy returned to St. Paul’s School as a Master, from 1932–1934, to teach math and to supervise the boys in his residence hall. It was here that he first tried his hand at carving. Chippy told Hank what he learned at law school was that “working in Boston in an office did not look appealing to him, and he found a rural lifestyle much more appealing.”

1931 – 1934

After leaving law school Chippy worked in a bank according to a 1993 interview by Chase Reynolds Ewald who featured Chippy in her book, *Old Masters of New England*, published in Castine in 1994.

Chippy taught math at St. Pauls in Concord, New Hampshire from 1932- 1934.

Early Bird Carving

Chippy told Chase Reynolds Ewald in 1993 that his earliest carvings were of baseball players. Chippy was a lifelong fan of the Boston Red Sox that must have inspired him to whittle baseball players.

Chippy began bird sculpting in the 1930s when he as a math teacher at St. Paul’s School in Concord, New Hampshire. In 1977, he wrote: “My first bird (#1) was carved at SPS in 1933. I had the Lower West Dorm in the Old Lower. A boy, Bill Vaughan ’37, then a II Former, brought in a duck he’d carved out of wood and painted. I was impressed, and since I had on my mantel a stuffed partridge that I’d gotten hunting with Patsy Campbell [’07, Master ’07-53], I decided to carve a model of that in pine, which I did and did not paint. I’m on #314 now.”

So began, his “birds in art” career as a self-taught sculptor. By 1939, Chippy had carved over 80 birds. Most of the early birds were small, and their bases couldn’t accommodate more than his name and the date he completed the work. The earliest *numbered* sculpture identified to date is #83, completed in April, 1939. We have few records of Chippy’s early sculptures. At some point he began numbering every piece and continued to do so throughout his career. By December, 1940 he had completed #99, an average of about one bird each month.

Bath Iron Works

In 1935–1936, Chippy was employed at Bath Iron Works. This must have been an exciting time for him. The shipyard was building the J-class racing yacht “Ranger”, designed by internationally known yacht designer Starling Burgess. We presume Chippy was part of the team working on the yacht. No doubt his experience at Bath Ironworks working on ships gave Chippy insight into creating scale model drawings of boats, a skill he later employed to make patterns for his sculpture designs.

It was probably during this time that Chippy got to know Buckminster Fuller, a well-known designer and inventor whose family owned an island in Penobscot Bay. Fuller and Burgess were friends and partners in one of Fuller’s inventions. Chippy became good friends with Bucky.



2.7

“Ranger”, built at Bath Iron Works and launched on May 11, 1937, defeated the British 4-0 in the America’s Cup race just three months later. (Maine Maritime Museum photo).

When Chippy’s mother died in 1939, he and (we presume) his sister Judith inherited the Wiscasset property, along with sufficient funds for a comfortable life that allowed him to follow a career as an artist. In August of that year, and into the mid-1940s, he and Judith welcomed visitors to their house for the Wiscasset Open House Day activities. Much later, in August 1956, a *Portland Press Herald* article about the coming open house event included a photo of a

fireplace mantel in the Chase house. Two of Chippy's sculptures are displayed on the mantel. One appears to be #189 Osprey, completed in July of that year.

Chippy had by then obtained both private and commercial pilot licenses and in the summer of 1942 his Piper Cub was part of the Civil Air Patrol fleet doing forestry patrol for the Maine Forest Service. His flying experience gave him a strong knowledge of aerodynamics, which allowed him to understand more thoroughly how birds' wings functioned.

1940s

From 1942–1946 during World War II, Chippy served as Lieutenant JG in the US Navy's anti-submarine warfare division in the Mediterranean. On shore leave, he found opportunities to enjoy bird hunting with locals in Sicily! Chippy told Chase Reynolds Ewald in a 1993 interview that the Navy moved him around during the war from Cuba, Casablanca, Mediterranean, Hawaii, and Midway so that he was stationed in places that there was no action.

Returning to Maine after his military service, Chippy lived in the family home in Wiscasset. From 1947–1951 he was part-owner and Treasurer of the Brunswick Flying Service, where he kept his airplane. Longtime friend and fellow Maine artist Stephen Etnier also enjoyed flying and had his own airplane. Their shared mutual interests included art and airplanes as well as time on the water.

Chippy became a member of the Wiscasset Fire Society and in January of 1947 he gave a talk and “showed colored slides which he took from his plane last summer and which included views in New Hampshire, New York, and Canada.” (*Portland Press Herald* 01/17/1947).

At some point after the war, Chippy met Elizabeth Lewis Carrington, of Richmond, Virginia. She attended Wheaton College in Massachusetts and while there are no records, we presume they met in the Boston area. In April 1948, they married in Richmond and settled in the Wiscasset house. A son, Carter, was born on January 29, 1949 in Portland.

Betty was supportive of Chippy's growing interest in bird carving and sculpting. In 1949 he participated in three exhibits—at the Farnsworth in Rockland, the Mint Museum in Charlotte, NC, and his first major show in New York at the American Museum of Natural History. Chippy said that a neighbor, we presume a Wiscasset neighbor, arranged for the American Museum of Natural History exhibition. We presume that Betty and Chippy's sister Judy, by then an established writer living in New York City, worked with Chippy on arrangements for the New York exhibition, scheduled to open on December 1. Chippy said that his wife Betty strongly encouraged him to pursue an artistic career in bird sculpture.

Then, on November 1, a month before the exhibition would open, the most horrible tragedy struck. Betty and infant Carter were flying to Richmond to visit her mother. A military jet plane crashed into the Eastern Airlines passenger plane over the Potomac River in Washington DC. All

55 on board the Eastern flight died. Only the Bolivian air officer who piloted the jet survived. Betty was 25, Carter not yet 1. Chippy was a widower at 41. When interviewed in 1993 by Chase Reynolds Ewald, Chippy said just had to get over Betty's death.

On December 1, Chippy's exhibition opened. The only records of the exhibition are AMNH archives and a *New York Times Magazine* article. See copy of NYT Magazine November 27, 1949 article on page 77. An Owl U02 on page 27 is the only crisp photo we have of a sculpture in the 1949 exhibition.

During this time, according to Chippy, David Graham came to Wiscasset for a weekend and stayed for five years. It was Graham who supplied Chippy with Ebony wood from Mexico.

1950s

At some point in late 1940s or early 1950s, Chippy opened a studio in the back of a neighbor's barn on High Street, just down the street from his family home. He devoted himself to sculpture. Because of his mathematics education and his earlier years at the Bath Iron Works as an engineer and designer, he was very precise in calculating the scale of the bird for each sculpture. Chippy loved the outdoors and was a natural sport hunter of ducks and partridge—so, naturally, many of his early sculptures were of ducks and upland game birds.

Chippy devoted himself to his sculpting, and following the success of the New York exhibition, he participated in several exhibitions in the mid-Atlantic and southern states. Art exhibitions were new to Chippy, as he had no formal art training and probably few art museum connections. It's highly likely that Betty had laid the groundwork for some of these exhibitions, and perhaps the Carrington family in Richmond helped later in finalizing arrangements. We also presume that Chippy's sister Judy helped with these exhibitions.

In 1950, Chippy participated in four exhibitions: at the Currier Gallery of Art, Manchester, NH in March; Audubon House in Boston, MA in April; the Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk, Maine, in June; and the Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in August.

In 1951, his work was exhibited at the Everhart Museum in Scranton, Pennsylvania throughout March–April; the Addison Gallery of American Art in Andover, Massachusetts, also in March–April; Kittery, Maine in June; and Lincolnville, Maine in August–September.

On April 9, 1952, *The Richmond News Leader* carried a short article about Chippy's upcoming exhibition of more than 20 works at the Rotunda Club. It also listed past exhibits, in addition to New York, throughout New England as well as Houston, Dallas, Scranton, PA, and Charlotte, NC. It is quite possible that Betty's family was supporting Chippy in the Richmond exhibit. He maintained a lifelong friendship with Betty's brother, Tazewell Carrington III. See section on Exhibitions.

Throughout the 1950s Chippy continued to be involved in civic affairs. He was named a Director of the Bath Area Civic Music Association (representing Wiscasset) by then Governor Sumner Sewall. He was an active member of the Lincoln County Museum. Director Mildred Burrage, herself a well-known Maine artist, wrote in the *Kennebec Journal* (12/29/1956):

“Charles G. Chase of Wiscasset, one of our members, has been appointed Curator of our Natural History Collection, which he is establishing with a gift of specimens of Lincoln County birds. He will shortly arrange an exhibition at the Museum. No one could be better fitted than Mr. Chase for this position as he is an ardent ornithologist, and a well-known carver of birds.”

His style evolved, unique and easily recognized—a realistic view of a bird in action, related directly to a base depicting the bird’s habitat. Each work was sculpted from a single piece of wood that Chippy selected to best represent the overall color of the species. Once completed, each sculpture was finely sanded and clearly finished to display the wood grain.



2.8

Wiscasset Library Exhibition, 1958 (Courtesy photo).

In 1958 Chippy exhibited many of his older sculptures from the late 1940s and 1950s at the Wiscasset Library.

The following photographs of Chippy's work from the late 1940s through the 1950s are arranged in a *suggested* chronological sequence. Some photos are dated and include the sculpture's number. Others are placed based on the studio setting clues in the photographs and the sculptural style.

From March 1949 to December 1959, Chippy produced 96 sculptures—it was his most productive decade.

Chippy's Early Bird Sculptures 1940s–1950s

In this series of photos, we see Chippy's work advance in complexity to remarkably well-designed sculptures that display birds in action and, through the design of larger bases, suggest more precisely the bird's environment and habitat. This was a transformative decade that established Chase's artistic style.



2.9

Duck, UN-01, June, 1936 is an example of Chippy's very early carvings. The rectangular base has some decorative carved lines and a raised hump, perhaps indicating a large aquatic plant leaf or seed pod. The wood has a reddish-brown color that suggests a species of mahogany. (Courtesy photo).



2.10

Male Pheasant, UN-02, November 1938

Male Pheasant, unnumbered, in a reddish-brown wood that is probably Mahogany or Black Walnut. The subject reflects Chippy's focus on his upland game hunting experience. The size of the pheasant with its long tail shows his interest in carving an attractive, flowing form, however the diminutive base lacks artistic creativity and is too small to fully document this piece on the underside. November 1938, Nickels-Sortwell House, Wiscasset. (Courtesy photo).



2.11

Hen Pheasant, UN-03

A simple carving, probably of a female Pheasant. The small rectangular base lacks creativity nor the space to record more than “C.G. Chase” and the abbreviated date he finished the work. In January of 1939, Chippy’s mother died; six months later, he turned 31. Throughout the year, he and his sister Judy were preoccupied with settling their mother’s estate. Judy, a journalist, had studied art in Munich, Germany in the late 1930s, and we wonder now what discussions Chippy and Judy had about art. Unnumbered, June 1939, Nickels-Sortwell House, Wiscasset. (Courtesy photo).



2.12

Canada Goose with Head Resting on Back, Black Walnut, #83, 1939

This is an important sculpture because it has “#83” scribed on the underside of the base, along with “C.G. Chase, April 1939”. This raises questions about Chippy’s approach to numbering his sculptures. We can speculate that he kept a record of his early sculptures, and in 1939 began adding the sequential numbers to his pieces. Clearly, he had produced 82 other works prior to this one, but without access to written records, we can only place the works in chronological order based on dates inscribed on the bases.

The creativity in this simple sculpture is the goose’s neck and head resting on its back. The base lacks imagination and the work appears more like a mounted specimen. Chippy cut away most all the wood, resulting in very simple base. This is the earliest numbered sculpture that we have located. #83. (Courtesy photo)



2.13

Standing Canada Goose, #99, December 1940.

This sculpture is similar in style to Canada Goose #83, created a year earlier, and with 15 other sculptures done in between. During this time period, Chase was living in the Wiscasset family home. His mother had passed away the year before and he and his younger sister Judy were probably dealing with settling the family estate. While this is a simple sculpture, note the addition of the eye, and the grass-like markings on the base. #99. (Courtesy photo)



2.14

Golden Pheasant Standing on Stump, #123, August 1949.

Chippy completed this sculpture four months before it was likely included in his first major exhibition at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. #123.
(Photo courtesy of Peter Cook)

1950s Formative Years

The 1950s were Chippy's most productive and formative years. Of the existing identified sculptures, and calculating from #119 dated March 1949 to #215 completed in December 1959, he completed just over 90 sculptures—deducting a few as-yet-unknown works created between April and December 1949. He averaged nine sculptures per year from 1950 to 1959.

During the 1950s, his sculptures evolved from straightforward designs resembling stuffed birds mounted on square blocks to very attractive and graceful birds displaying a variety of actions. The bases increasingly represented birds' habitats of water, mudflats, and marshes. The introduction of vegetation further suggested habitat and also provided more stability to the sculpture as a whole. One can see this dramatic design progression from sculptures shown in this section.

The late 1950s marked a major transition for Chippy.

In the summer of 1957 or 1958, he married Georgie Pratt of Boston and Prouts Neck, Maine. The ceremony took place at Camp Chewonki in Woolwich. Georgie's son, Philip Sharples, who was attending camp that summer, remembers the wedding especially because the newlyweds departed in a boat after the service!

Georgie would rent a summer cottage each year at Prouts Neck and it was she who introduced Chippy to Scarborough Marsh and Stratton Island—major birding sites. She was a member of the Maine Audubon Society and decades later, after their divorce, she authored the book *Stratton's Islands of Saco Bay: An Interwoven History, 1605–1993*. Chippy and Georgie had one son, Chuck, who resides in Maine.

Chippy enjoyed a lifelong friendship with Georgie's twin brothers, Herb and Davis. Herb was an avid birder and longtime member of Massachusetts Audubon Society. His wife, Pat, was a landscape architect and an accomplished watercolorist. Herb and Pat had a strong interest in birds, and they spent many happy times birding with Chippy.

Herb's twin brother, Davis, was curator of photography at Harvard's Fogg Museum. He was a keen photographer and undoubtedly gave Chippy tips on the "studio" shots of his sculptures.

In 1958, Chippy and Georgie purchased (from Judge Spinney) the 90-acre historic property on the Merepoint Road in Brunswick. It consisted of a large colonial home and barn on tidewater Miller's Creek. Georgie oversaw the renovation of an attached shed (off the kitchen) into a large living room with fireplace. It had an enclosed entrance from the yard, a small foyer area where Chippy would display dozens of his laminated photo plaques. He lived at the Merepoint property for the rest of his life.

In 1962, Chippy and Georgie sold the Wiscasset House on High Street. He and his sister Judy purchased separate properties on Montsweag Road in nearby Woolwich. In the early 1960s Chippy had a small building constructed to serve as his sculpting workshop. It was here that he perfected his woodworking skills for the next 30 years.

During the late 1950s, Chippy's sculptures grew in size and complexity of design. He began acquiring whole logs that would allow him to create much larger sculptures.



2.15

American Bald Eagle, Black Walnut, #119, 17", March 1949.

This American Bald Eagle, sitting atop a substantial square base of a tree trunk and branch, shows significant growth in Chippy's design and sculpting skill. The base design is similar to Owl U20.

From 1940 to 1949, Chippy completed only 20 sculptures. He served in the Navy during World War II from August, 1942 to March, 1946, and thereafter was adjusting to life back in the U.S. #119. (Bonhamskinner.com) #119.



2.16

Bufflehead Taking Flight and Mounted on Base, Black Walnut, U34

During the 1940s and 1950s, one of Chippy's favorite activities was duck hunting. The indented coastline around Wiscasset was prime wetland habitat for waterfowl and duck hunting. This Bufflehead displays a common posture for ducks—it jumps upward to take flight. This early sculpture suggests Chippy was experimenting with different base styles. It likely was carved from a single block of wood and the base stained for contrast. But it's also possible the bird and the bottom square base are separate pieces. U34.



2.17

Ruffed Grouse Standing on Log, Black Walnut, U25.

Upland game hunting was another passion of Chippy's—hunting for partridge (also called Ruffed Grouse) especially. It was a favorite bird that he often sculpted over his long career. This early work has a square base with the sharp edges. The Grouse shows details of the shoulder “ruffs” and head crest. It stands on a small mount, perhaps suggestive of a log. (Ivan Flye photo).U25.



2.18

Cormorant on Buoy Spreading Wings, U09.

Cormorants are common coastal seabirds, and Chippy would observe them often when boating around Wiscasset. Cormorants spread their wings to dry after being in the water for hours. This pose creates an attractive form, characteristic of the coastal bird and its environment. It is one of the few sculptures for which Chippy created a large base. It appears that the cormorant is mounted on a separate base, not unlike U34 Bufflehead. U09.



2.19

Curlew with Outstretched Wings, Black Walnut, U30.

Shorebirds caught Chippy's attention whenever he visited coastal areas. He learned to appreciate birds as a young boy attending Camp Chewonki in Wiscasset. This Curlew has attractive, very thin, curved wings. The base shows increasing artistic creativity—a sloping surface, right angular cutting, and small gouge cuts creating texture. U30.



2.20

Hawk Standing on Stump, U38.

An early sculpture of a Hawk, most likely, standing on a tree stump carved into the sloping surface of a square base. Chippy created several sculptures during this period using tree stump base designs. Note the square, sharp edges. The bird is supported only by its two thin legs, cut across the wood grain, rendering it structurally weak. U38.



2.21

American Bald Eagle with Outstretched Wings, Standing on Tree Stump, U37.

The square base with its sharp right angles suggests this is a late 1940s or early 1950s sculpture, and perhaps one of Chippy's first eagles—a subject that he would choose many times during his career. The upwardly curving wings convey a strong sense of action and motion. (CORNEL Photo). U37.



2.22

Great Horned Owl Standing on Tree Stump, U40.

An early owl with slightly stylized face and eyes. The turned head implies action and alertness.

While the square base is indicative of an early piece, its angles and curves suggest Chippy's growing creativity with a sculpture's foundation. The base design is similar to Eagle #119, 1949. Note the detailed carving of the owl's claws. U40.



2.23

Owl Sitting on Tree Stump, U02.

This owl sculpture reveals Chippy's growing design skill. The face, shape and posture are more realistic. The claws are clearly defined and more appealing. The base is large and prominent with an expanded tree trunk and roots. The rounding of the base's edges show that Chippy was introducing further refinements. Exhibited at American Museum of Natural History, 1949. (Ivan Flye Photo). This is the only crisp photo of one of the sculptures in the 1949 Exhibition. U02.



2.24

Duck Taking Flight, U16.

This duck taking flight is an earlier piece, indicated by the simple round base. The two legs make this large-bodied sculpture very delicate and fragile. U16.



2.25

Sparrow Hawk Spreading Wings, Black Walnut, U01.

Carving thin horizontal wings and tail against the wood grain is a great challenge for any woodworker, and Chippy succeeded. Note the fine eyes and bill carved into the hard Black Walnut wood. This sculpture displays the action of a hawk ready to take flight. The shape of the base's tree branch or stump is similar in design to sculptures created in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The similar photography of this Sparrow Hawk and U04 Cormorant below suggests they were done around the same time. (Douglas Photo Shop, Bath, Maine) U01.



2.26

Cormorant Standing on Rock, Black Walnut, U41.

Chippy sculpted a number of Cormorants during his career. The sharp angle of the body and turned neck capture the viewer's attention. The base design is advanced, with an angular rock and waves. The waves are rough and unpolished, creating a pleasing contrast. Chippy would often burnish the lightly sanded wood of wave forms with a Sperm Whale's tooth, an artifact from his families' maritime history. U41.



2.27

Cormorant Drying Wings, Black Walnut, U80

Cormorants were commonly seen in the coastal waters around Wiscasset, and Chippy featured them in numerous sculptures in the 1940s and 1950s. This photo accompanied Down East magazine's 1961 article on Chippy. Note the choppy waves dashing on sharp angular rocks. This piece was probably done in the late 1950s or early 1960s, when he began using large sections from whole logs. A photo of this sculpture was included in the 1961 Down East magazine article. (Down East photo). U80.



2.28

Flamingo with Head on Ground, U08.

Chippy visited Florida frequently in the early 1950s. It was here he began photographing birds with a 16mm movie camera. He became familiar with Flamingos and was inspired to sculpt the unusually shaped wading bird species. This Flamingo has three points of contact with the base, making it a stronger sculpture. U08.



2.29

Flamingo on Nest, African Cherry, October, 1952, #153

This sculpture was among the 35 pieces of Chippy's work exhibited in 1951 at the Everhart Museum in Scranton, PA. Publicity in the local press described the works as ranging in height from 3 to 15 inches. This piece is in the collection of the Everhart Museum. (Courtesy of the Everhart Museum, Scranton, Pennsylvania.) #153.



2.30

Ruffed Grouse Standing on Sloping Base, U15

An early Ruffed Grouse sculpture that is simple in design. The base shows more creative aspects of irregular shape and steeply sloping front, with curving raised edge. Many of the birds in the sculptures during the 1950s have spread legs. This sculpture was in the 1958 exhibition at the Wiscasset Public Library. (Courtesy photo). U15.



2.31

Ruffed Grouse with Wings Curving Forward in Drumming Position, Black Walnut, U39.

A male Ruffed Grouse displaying courtship drumming posture. This rear view shows significant design creativity, particularly in the base. The tail rests on a circular element, suggestive of a fallen log, and the base's surrounding edge is very thin with sloping lines. The shoulder ruffs are raised, the head cocked, and the head crest feathers are prominent. The wings are open and curved forward for the male's drumming performance. U39.



2.32

Fan-tailed Pigeon (?) with erect fantail, U35.

This sculpture, likely from the 1950s, demonstrates that Chippy was experimenting with light colored wood and a stylized base design of a hollow oval shape. U35.



2.33

Hawk Attacking Ruffed Grouse, Black Walnut, U43.

This is the most dramatic, action-orientated sculpture that Chippy created in the 1950s. Many of his birds from this period have eyes carved into the wood. The angular base with sloping sides is characteristic of his early to mid-1950s design. U43.



2.34

American Bald Eagle Spreading Wings, #180.

A very strong design of an eagle screaming. This sculpture is full of action—bill open with tongue sticking out, wings swirling around in different directions, legs and feet widely spread apart. The abstract base is similar to “Hawk Attacking Ruffed Grouse.” (Douglas Photo Shop, Bath, Maine). #180.



2.35

Vulture Soaring, Black Walnut, U45

Chippy was introduced to vultures during his trips to Florida and to the Richmond, Virginia region in the late 1940s. This is one of two mobile sculptures for which we have a photo. Chippy fell in love with vultures, and used them as subjects for many sculptures. (Douglas Photo Shop, Bath, Maine). U45.



2.36

Dovekie Soaring over Wave, Black Walnut, U44.

The Dovekie soaring over an ocean wave is one of Chippy's initial seabird sculptures. He first saw Dovekies during his sailing trip with Donald MacMillan on the schooner Bowdoin in the early 1930s. During winter storms, Dovekies are sometimes blown inland along the Maine coast. This sculpture is characteristic of the period when Chippy's base designs had sharp angles, sides sloped inward, and part sloped downward to a thin edge. U44.



2.37

Duck Flying over Wavy Water, Black Walnut, U36.

This sculpture represents considerable growth in Chippy's design and sculpting skill. A thin section of one wing supports the entire duck, while the other wing is projected upward across a thin section of cross-grain wood. The base is a dramatic wave, finely sanded and highly polished. The base is several inches thick with vertical sides, and is irregularly shaped. Chippy's future base designs will follow these lines. This sculpture was probably created about the same time as flying duck #159, in 1953. U36.



2.38

Duck Landing on Water, Black Walnut, U42.

This is another early 1950s sculpture, representing Chippy's experimentation with innovative designs. It also displays his increased technical woodworking skills. The thin forward pointing wings, carved across the wood grain, are a challenge to execute successfully. The relatively thin base of highly polished ripples in water further shows his exploration of different design approaches. Overall, this is a dramatic sculpture. It was probably created around 1953 when two similar flying ducks were done, #159 (1953) and U16. U42. (CORNEL Photo)



2.39

Gull Hovering over Waves, Black Walnut, U11.

This sculpture exhibits elements of strong design—the Gull’s upwardly raised wings, and a more detailed base that shows the gouge markings on the wave’s surface. Chippy was also experimenting with his expanding woodworking skills to create a stable support for the delicate sculpture. The bird’s two thin legs and its bill touching the cusp of the wave provide three points of contact with the base. U11.



2.40

Gull Flying Vertically, Black Walnut, U10.

This is one of two vertically oriented gulls that Chippy created in the 1950s. The curling wave of this base is the more abstract and artistic of the two. The other is U29.



2.41

Hooded Merganser Standing on Rocks, Black Walnut, March, #147, 1952.

This sculpture reveals considerable growth in Chippy’s sculpting skills. The base has a pleasing irregular design of polished water with angular lines along the upper portion representing higher ground. Strong angular lines are evident in his bases throughout his career. During the early 1950s, Chippy was dealing with the tragic death of his wife Betty and their son, yet he continued sculpting and promoting his wildlife artwork in a series of exhibitions—perhaps as a needed respite from grief. From March 1949 to March 1952, he produced 28 sculptures. This dated sculpture is important in understanding the timeline of his development as an artist. #147. (Courtesy photo).



2.42

Vulture Sitting on Skull, #154.

This Vulture was created during the period when Chippy designed his bases to be either rectangular or square. The base's sloping polished surface is another indication of the period. The Vulture's head is completely polished. Chippy corrected this treatment in future pieces by leaving the head and neck rough sanded to more closely resemble the Vulture's coloration. #154



2.43

Long-tailed Duck Flying over Waves, #159, Walnut 1953.

This is one of several sculptures from the early 1950s when Chippy was developing his design for ducks in flight over water, using a large wave for support. The base appears oval in shape, mirroring the duck's long outstretched head. The waves are finely sanded and highly polished. U16 and U42 are similar in design and were probably created around the same time. #159



2.44

Sand Hen with Bill Pointing Upward, Mulberry, #160, 1953

This piece is typical of Chippy's early style of modeling circular bases from whole logs. The raised portion suggests land and the highly polished surface represents water. This is probably the only sculpture Chippy created in mulberry wood. It is unclear what species Chippy meant by calling this a "Sand Hen". The posture and setting are very similar to U57, American Bittern. This is one of many early studio photos with a black background and good lighting. #160.



2.45

Sand Hen, Mulberry, #160, 1953.

This photo shows the Sand Hen sculpture from a different angle, and displays the strong grain pattern of Mulberry. #160.



2.46



2.47

Black Vulture and Skull, 14", Ebony, #162, 1953.

Vultures were one of Chippy's favorite subjects and he sculpted many throughout his career. In the 1950s, vultures were rarely seen in Maine. Chippy had previously observed them during his trips to Florida, Virginia, and other southern states in the late 1940s and early 1950s. This piece displays a Vulture feeding on an antlered skull, a design that Chippy refined in future works. The design's complexity is evident in the large spreading claws, the body resting on the skull, and the bill touching the skull—it is a very solid sculpture. The highly polished sloping base is characteristic of Chippy's work. It is a finishing technique that he perfected.

The Ebony wood was likely provided by David Graham, who was living with Chippy at the time. Graham no doubt acquired the wood in Mexico, where he and his future wife, Maimy Graham, would spend the winter. He regularly supplied Chippy with Ebony.

During 1952–1953, Chase produced 15 sculptures between numbers 147 and 162, and at the same time arranged for exhibitions. He was then in his early forties and busy establishing his career. #162.



2.48

Yellowlegs Feeding, #167.

This is an unusual sculpture because of its very thin base, which doesn't follow Chippy's regular style and is not seen in other completed sculptures. Professional photo with good uniform lighting. #167.



2.49

Anhinga Standing on Cypress Knee, #170, 1954.

Anhinga, in yellowish wood with little wood grain pattern, 11" high. A trip to Florida and the south in the early 1950s inspired Chippy to carve this small, attractive sculpture, designed with graceful curves and angles. The Anhinga's head and neck are at a 45-degree angle to its body, with the bill touching the back. The bird sits on a prominent vertical trunk, its long, slender tail sloping downward. A thin polished base suggests undulating water. #170.



2.50

Merganser in Large Waves, Black Walnut, #172, 1954.

A stunning male Hooded Merganser with head feathers spread. The angular base of highly polished “water” catches the viewer’s eye. The large curling waves and the tilted angle of the Merganser are the most striking features of this sculpture—a lively design filled with action. During this period, Chippy often liked to show the subject’s webbed foot protruding from a wave. #172.



2.51

Woodcock with Wings Up, Black Walnut, #173, July 1954.

Woodcock is an upland gamebird species that Chippy enjoyed hunting. This small sculpture has an interesting oval-shaped, polished base. Eyes are inscribed. The left leg is touching a small stump providing support for the woodcock's body. The long thin bill is carved through cross-grained wood—always a challenge for woodworkers. #173. (Courtesy of Sally Vaughan Eagle)



2.52

Mockingbird, Black Walnut, #175, 1954.

Mockingbirds is another species that Chippy came to know during his trips to Florida and the south in the 1940s and 1950s. This is a dramatic action-packed sculpture with distinctive artistic design. The Mockingbird stands on a small branch, one wing up, the other wing down. Its vertical tail is a spreading fan that dominates this piece. Chippy persisted in designing bases with sharp angles and sloping sides. This sculpture is in the permanent collection of the Portland Museum of Art. #175.



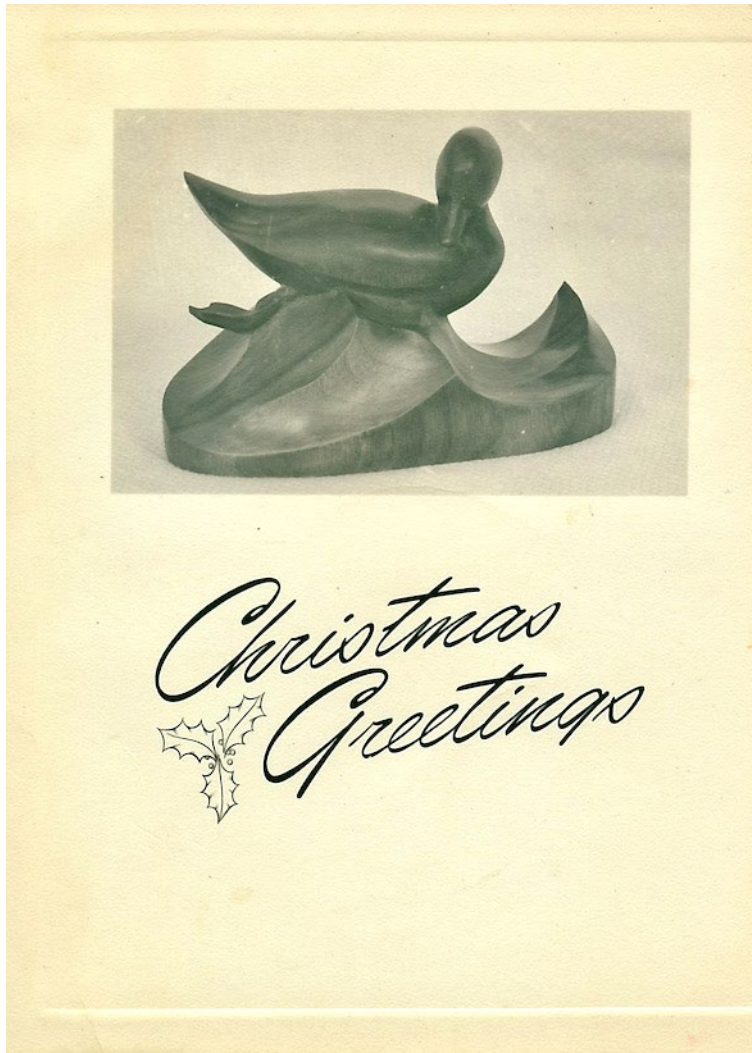
2.53



2.54

Ruffed Grouse in Flight, Black Walnut, #174, 1954.

An action sculpture of Ruffed Grouse just taking flight with wings extended. The grouse's tail touching the angular base provides support. As an enthusiastic upland bird hunter, Chippy took inspiration for this sculpture from his hunting experiences and direct observations in the field. #174.



2.55

This sculpture is similar in design, style, and size to Merganser #172, 1954. U47.



2.56

Bufflehead Flying with Wing Touching Wave, Black Walnut, #177, 1954–1955,

During the mid-1950s Chippy carved a number of Bufflehead Ducks. He designed them in a variety of positions relative to the watery bases. This sculpture displays his considerable artistic growth and creativity. The duck skims over a cresting wave. The left wing touches the wave's tip, the singular point of contact, while the right wing extends into the air. The downward sloping duck conveys the feeling of direction and action. #177.



2.57

Spotted Sandpiper in Flight, Myrtle, #184, November 1955.

Chippy was a pilot in 1955 and was probably inspired to create this design from his flying experience. During the 1950s, he was experimenting with many design concepts and, in this sculpture, he combined the bird's-eye-view of not only the bird's top side, but also the waves below. The sculpturing of wavelets within the curves of the larger waves reveals his deep knowledge of ocean waters. #184. (Courtesy of Jonathan Burnett)



2.58



2.59

Bufflehead Riding Waves with Foot out of Water, Black Walnut, #185, December 1955.

Chippy created this sculpture as a Christmas present to Georgie. The sculpture's base is inscribed: "London Purchase Farm, New Hope, PA. To Georgie from Chippy." Chippy sculpted a number of Bufflehead ducks in the mid-1950s. #185. (Courtesy photos)



2.60

Yellowlegs Taking Flight, Oak, U49.

Yellowlegs is a shorebird that Chippy observed frequently in Maine saltmarshes; they caught his eye and imagination. While we do not know the date of this piece, it's sculpted in oak, a new and different wood for Chippy to handle. Carving the very thin, open bill across the wood grain is quite challenging. The creative style of the base, characteristic of Chippy's mid-1950s work, suggests it may have been created around the same time as Curlew U07. U49.



2.61

Pheasant Taking Flight, U14.

As an upland game bird hunter, Chippy was very familiar with Ring-necked Pheasants.

After World War II, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Game and local Game Clubs began introducing Asian Ring-necked Pheasants into Maine as a new game bird. Chippy sculpted a number of Pheasant pieces over the years. This work is noteworthy because of the light-colored wood, the use of a corn leaf blade to support the Pheasant, and the polished sloping base. U14.



2.62

Osprey in Flight with Fish, Black Walnut, #179, 1955.

Action-packed Osprey, having just caught a fish, with wings stretched upward as it lifts away from a wave. The overall design is dramatic, as were so many of Chippy's mid-1950s sculptures. The upwardly pointed wings, open bill, and downward-sloping body create energy and a sense of motion. The base represents significant design advancement—pointed waves dominate the sculpture and the fish clutched in the bird's talons is an eye-catching detail. #179.



2.63

Arctic Tern Flying over Large Wave, #181, 1955.

When Chippy was boating on the Maine coast, he'd observe terns flying overhead, diving into the water to catch small fish, and then flying off with fish in their bills. Maine's rich birdlife presented endless opportunities for him to visualize designs for his sculptures. This piece is noteworthy because it shows the intentional use of a large ocean wave in the base designs for his seabirds. The photograph's black background and effective lighting on the piece demonstrates that Chippy and his photographer, Ivan Flye of Newcastle, were striving to capture quality images of his sculptures. #181.



2.64

Tern Skimming over Ocean Wave, Black Walnut, 1954, #169.

Chippy loved being on ocean waters and he observed many seabird species that inspired later sculptures. Both the Common and Arctic terns are found along the Maine coast. The wave in this sculpture shows Chippy's keen understanding of ocean waters—note how he carved the smaller wavelets into the larger curving wave. His design of the tern's body, just touching the wave, creates a very dynamic and eye-catching sculpture. Wisely, the tips of the two delicate tail feathers are just touching the wave, protecting the thin, fragile wood from breaking. #169.



2.65

Gull in Flight Dancing on Wave, U12.

In the 1950s, Chippy began using whole logs for his work. This sculpture of a gull hovering and dancing over a large wave is a classic example. The gull extends upward from the circular vertically sided base. The tail touching the wave provides most of the support for this gull. It appears that the right foot does not touch the wave, adding to a sense of action and motion. The black-and-white photo is crisp. U12. (Douglas Photo Shop, Bath, Maine)



2.66

Anhinga Standing on Cypress Knees, Mahogany, #187, 1956.

During the 1950s, Chippy made winter trips to Florida to take movies of waterbirds. It was there that he first saw the Anhinga. In this sculpture, the bird's twisting neck, curving wings and long flowing tail combine to create a graceful and attractive piece. This sculpture is in the permanent collection of the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum. (LYWAM photo). Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum.



2.67

Osprey with Fish in Claws on Rock, Black Walnut, 19" high, #189, 1956.

The outstretched vertical wings display action, while the Osprey's claws appear to grasp a freshly caught fish. The complex base conveys waves dashing against vertical, angular rocks. It represents the transition from a simple rectangular base with small choppy waves to a circular base with large rolling waves. #189.



2.68

Black Duck Standing on Angular Rock and Waves, Ebony, #191, 1956.

It was in the mid-1950s when Chippy shifted from small sculptures, primarily of waterfowl, to much larger dramatic sculptures. From then and into the later 1950s, his sculptures displayed much more upward wing action as evident in the Yellowlegs, Goose, and Great Blue Heron pieces following. #191. (Courtesy of Robert Stock)



2.69

Greater Yellowlegs Stretching Wings, #196, Myrtle, 1957.

Greater Yellowlegs, a shorebird, 11” high standing erect with wings stretching upward, its tail spread and slightly twisted. A vertical, action-oriented sculpture. #196.



2.70

Osprey Flying Over Waves with Fish, Black Walnut, U29.

This sculpture of an Osprey flying off with a fish firmly held in his talons is an example of Chippy's maturing style. He conveys action through the outstretched wings and the large circular base of rolling waves. This piece was most likely done in the late 1950s. Chippy would employ this artistic style for the rest of his career. Note the significant advance in design from Osprey sculptures #179 and #189 to this sculpture. U29. (Douglas Photo Shop, Bath, Maine)



2.71

Canada Goose Taking Off, Black Walnut, U28.

This goose is similar in style and appears to be the same Black Walnut as Great Blue Heron U27. The shape of the wings and the cattail-like vegetation under the goose's tail suggest that this sculpture was probably done in the late 1950s. This sculpture was included in Down East's 1961 article about Chippy. U28. (Douglas Photo Shop, Bath, Maine).



2.72

Cormorant on Rock, *Ebony* #202, November 1957.

Cormorants, a common seabird along the Maine coast, were a frequent subject of Chippy's sculptures in the 1950s—apparently he found the shapes of comorants sitting on rocks, posts, and bouys to be very sculpturesque. This work in *Ebony* displays his knowledge of curving waves splashing against rocks. Note the sharp angular rocks, characteristic of Chippy's sculptures throughout his whole career. The highly glossy finish of this piece is a "French finish" of shellac and wax polish. #202. (Douglas Photo Shop, Bath, Maine).



2.73

Pintail Duck Taking Flight, Black Walnut, U61.

This sculpture of a Pintail Duck displays action as the duck lifts off the water with its wings outstretched. The curves of the base depict a watery habitat, and the rough unfinished wood indicates wind ruffling the water's surface. Chippy selected a stunning piece of Black Walnut, his favorite wood for sculpting, and displays a striking grain pattern in the rich brown wood. The color photography suggests this sculpture was done in the late 1950s. U61. (Tom Jones Photo)



2.74

Whooping Crane with Head Pointing Up, Maple, #215, 1959.

A trip to Texas with brother-in-law Herb Pratt, to see the endangered species Whooping Crane in the wild at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, was the inspiration for this sculpture. Herb and Pat Pratt commissioned Chippy to undertake this particular piece as a special reminder of the trip. Note the oval shape of the base, indicating that Chippy must have used a large whole log for this commission. #215. (Douglas Photo Shop, Bath, Maine).



2.75

Egret Feeding in Shallow Water, Black Walnut, U32.

In the late 1950s, Chippy sculpted a number of herons and egrets. This piece shows an egret feeding with one wing spread horizontally to create a shadow to aid in spotting fish. The three points of contact with the base ensure overall stability. The highly polished portion of the oval base represents water, while the unfinished rough wood suggests muddy or sandy land. U32. (Douglas Photo Shop, Bath, Maine).

Section 7, Artistic Style, covers the 35 years from 1960 to 1995 when Chippy's artistic style matured, and when he produced 169 classic sculptures.

Because Whooping Crane #215 was completed in November of 1959, we presume it was his final bird that year. Therefore, #216 (as yet unidentified) would have been the first work created in 1960. #383 Broad-Winged Hawk was completed in December of 1994. This is the latest bird we've identified.



The New York Times Sunday Magazine, November 27, 1949 showing six of Chippy's sculptures that were in the exhibition at the American Museum of Natural History in 1949.