

**ABATE of New York
Records, 1977-2008****SC19330**

QUANTITY: 2 boxes (1.25 cubic ft.)
ACCESS: Open to research
ACQUISITION: Gift: ABATE of Rensselaer County, November 1989; accretion received from Lynn M. Hyland, ABATE of Columbia County, October 13, 2011
PROCESSED BY: Jasmine Bumpers, Student Assistant, University at Albany, Manuscripts and Special Collections, July 2012

Historical Note:

ABATE of New York was organized in 1974. Its mission is “to ensure that the motorcycling lifestyle will still be an enjoyable lifestyle for our children and grandchildren. [They] do this by making sure that motorcyclists’ point of view is presented to ... legislators. “

The idea for such an organization originated with Lou Kimzey, editor of *Easyriders*, in an early edition of that motorcycle magazine. In 1971 the National Custom Cycle Association (NCCA) was formed by Kimzey, with assistance from *Easyriders*’ associate editor Keith Ball. Because of a naming-rights conflict, the NCCA changed its name to A Brotherhood Against Totalitarian Enactments (ABATE). The meaning of the acronym was soon changed to American Bikers Aimed Toward Education.

In 1974 Kimzey and Ball allowed for the creation of state-level ABATE organizations and began to issue state charters. George Vigars founded the New York State chapter. Not long after the creation of ABATE of New York, county and city chapters were started throughout the state.

Since its creation, ABATE of New York has advocated for weakening New York’s mandatory helmet law, the elimination of laws restricting the height of handle bars, changing manufacturing standards of helmets in an attempt to reduce overheating, reducing Thruway tolls, and other laws and standards related to motorcycling.

Most of the information in this collection was recorded and collected by Lynn Hyland, a former officer of both the Rensselaer and Columbia chapters.

Scope and Content Note:

These records mostly document ABATE of New York’s fund-raiding and lobbying events in Albany, N.Y., and Washington, D.C., and provide a variety of materials pertaining to ABATE of New York and its many chapters, in particular its Rensselaer County and Columbia County chapters.

The major part of the record series is the newsletter published by ABATE of New York. However, there are also a number of county chapter newsletters. Most of these newsletters are in

paper format except for the Columbia County chapter newsletters for 2003-2008, which are available in PDF format on two compact discs (CDs). In addition to newsletters, there are several bulletins produced by the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (an organization dedicated to safeguarding the rights of American motorcyclists on the national and international level). Two folders of oversized ABATE newsletters (1982-1985) are filed in Box 2.

These records also contains documentation of ABATE of New York's legislative and fund-raising activities; including transaction records, e-mail and handwritten correspondence to congressmen and senators, meeting minutes, event flyers, and photographs. Photographs of members of the Columbia County chapter at the Columbia County Fair in Chatham, New York, are on a floppy disc.

Series Descriptions:

The collection is divided into four series: Organization Activities, Publications, Graphics, and Miscellaneous.

Series 1: Organization Activities Sub-series 1: General Information 2001

This sub-series of records contains general information on ABATE of New York and its local chapters for the year 2001, including names of chapter officers, mail/e-mail addresses for the officers, and meeting/event information.

Box	Folder	Description
1	1	State Office, Alle-Catt (Allegany and Cattaraugus counties) and Buffalo-Erie chapters
1	2	Capital (Area), Columbia County, Cortland-Chenango, Dutchess, County, Eastern Suffolk, and Finger Lakes chapters.
1	3	Genesee-Wyoming, Monroe County, Nassau County, Niagara County and Oneida County chapters.
1	4	Onondaga County, Ontario County, Orange County, Orleans County, Oswego County, Putnam-Westchester, and Schoharie County chapters.
1	5	Southern Tier, Southwestern, Tompkins County, and Wayne County chapters.

Series 1: Organization Activities Sub-series 2: Meeting Minutes 1984-1985; 1995; 2000

This sub-series contains information pertaining to meetings held by both ABATE of New York and its chapters. Most of the minutes are from meetings held by the New York State, Rensselaer and Capital District chapters. The minutes include secretary and treasurer reports, event reminders, membership numbers, suggestions, and nominations.

Box	Folder	Description
1	6	Meeting Minutes, 1984-1985; 1995; 2000.

Series 1: Organization Activities

Sub-series 3: Correspondence

1994-2001

This sub-series is primarily letters and e-mails sent to New York State assemblymen and senators by ABATE of Rensselaer County's legislative coordinator, Lynn Hyland. In these letters she seeks legislative support for the organization's endeavor to fight against what ABATE deemed as repressive motorcycle legislation, particularly in regards to helmet laws.

Box	Folder	Description
1	7	ABATE of Rensselaer County, 1994-1995.
1	8	ABATE of Rensselaer County, 1995; 1999.
1	9	Miscellaneous letter and e-mail correspondence pertaining to ABATE of New York.

Series 1: Organization Activities

Sub-series 4: Financial Records

1995-2001

This sub-series contains financial papers pertaining to the Rensselaer County chapter of ABATE, primarily checks/checking account records from the organization's bank account, including transaction receipts, statements, lists of income/expenses from a legislative trip to Washington, D.C., records pertaining to ABATE of Rensselaer's cash account and other financial papers. Undated papers can be found in the back of the miscellaneous folder.

Box	Folder	Description
1	10	Troy Savings Bank checking account records, 1999.
1	11	Miscellaneous financial records.

Series 1: Organization Activities

Sub-series 5: Legislative Information

1995

This sub-series contains information on state and federal motorcycle legislation and trips by members of the Rensselaer County chapter to lobby legislators in the state and federal capitals, including news releases on amendments to the federal helmet laws, schedules and itineraries for trips to Washington, D.C., and a map highlighting the location of the House and Senate office buildings.

Box	Folder	Description
1	12	Legislative information pertaining to motorcycle-related legal matters.

Series 2: Organization Activities

**Sub-series 6: Flyers
1984-2001**

Most of the flyers in this sub-series promote fund-raisers, support rallies, parties, toy drives, and meetings.

Box	Folder	Description
1	13	Event and meeting flyers, 1984; 1985; 1992; 1995; 1999-2001.
1	14	Event and meeting flyers, 2001; 2003; 2006; undated.

**Series 2: Publications
Sub-series 1: Newsletters/Bulletins
1982-2007**

This sub-series contains newsletters produced by ABATE of New York and by the organization's chapters. Many of the newsletters contain stories published in other newspapers around the state. Many of the stories concern the helmet law, including stories on protests, meetings, and rallies. Most of these newsletters are in paper format but most of the Columbia County chapter newsletters are in PDF format on two compact discs (CDs).

Also included in this series is the July 1982 edition of *Grips & Saddles: Eastern New York's Monthly Motorcycle Newspaper* and the MRF Reports, a bi-weekly bulletin produced by the Motorcycle Riders Foundation that, like the ABATE newsletters, contains information centered on news related to motorcycles and motorcyclists.

Box	Folder	Description
2	1	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 1982-83.
2	2	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 1984-85.
1	15	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 1994.
1	16	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 1995.
1	17	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 1995-1996.
1	18	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 1999.
1	19	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 1999-2000.
1	20	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2000.
1	21	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2000-2001.
1	22	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2002.
1	23	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2003.
1	24	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2003.
1	25	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2004.
1	26	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2004.
1	27	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2005.
1	28	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2005.
1	29	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2005.
1	30	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2006.
1	31	ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2007.
1	32	Capital District Chapter of ABATE of New York Newsletters, 1999-2000.

1	33	Capital District Chapter of ABATE of New York Newsletters, 2000-2001.
1	34	ABATE of Columbia County Newsletters, 2000-2001.
1	35	ABATE of Columbia County Newsletters, 2001.
1	36	ABATE of Columbia County Newsletters, 2002-2008. [2003-2008 issues in PDF format on CDs].
1	37	ABATE of Rensselaer County Newsletters, 1993-1994.
1	38	ABATE of Rensselaer County Newsletters, 1994-1995.
1	39	ABATE of Rensselaer County Newsletters, 1995.
1	40	ABATE of Rensselaer County Newsletters, 1995; 1996; 1999.
1	41	Miscellaneous county/state chapter ABATE Newsletters.
1	42	MRF Reports Bulletins, 2002.
1	43	MRF Reports Bulletins, 2003-2004.
1	44	MRF Reports Bulletins, 2005.
1	45	MRF Reports Bulletins, 2005-2006.
1	46	MRF Reports Bulletins, 2007-2008.
1	47	MRF Reports Bulletins, 2008.
1	48	Various motorcycle related newsletters/articles.

Series 2: Publications

Sub-series 2: Articles/Reports

1977; 1981; 1992; 2003

Most of the items in this folder concern the history of ABATE, including ABATE of New York by-laws, newsletter reports, New York State's mandatory helmet law, helmet removal workshops for medical professionals, and defects in motorcycle helmets.

Box	Folder	Description
1	49	ABATE reports and articles.

Series 3: Graphics

Sub-series 1: Photographs

This sub-series consists of photographs taken at the Chatham Fair on September 1, 2003, in Chatham, New York, and feature members of ABATE's Columbia County chapter, who ran a booth at the fair and held a motorcycle quilt raffle. The images, taken with a Sony Mavica camera, are on a floppy disc.

Box	Folder	Description
1	50	Columbia County Fair, Chatham, N.Y., September 1, 2003

Series 3: Graphics

Sub-series 2: Stickers and Brochures

The sub-series consists of brochures, stickers, bumper stickers and address labels promoting/pertaining to ABATE and/or motorcycling in general. Many of these materials were made by ABATE of New York, the Rensselaer County chapter and AIM (Aid to Injured

Motorcyclists, a group of law offices specializing in providing representation to injured motorcyclists).

Box	Folder	Description
1	51	Stickers and brochures pertaining primarily to ABATE and AIM.

Series 4: Miscellaneous Items

Box	Folder	Description
1	52	Miscellaneous materials pertaining to ABATE.
1	53	Miscellaneous materials pertaining to ABATE.

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