

# Outlaws Motorcycle Club

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The **Outlaws Motorcycle Club**, incorporated as the **American Outlaws Association** or its acronym, **A.O.A.**, is a one-percenter motorcycle club<sup>[2][3]</sup> that was formed in McCook, Illinois in 1935.

Membership in the Outlaws is limited to men who own American-made motorcycles of a particular size,<sup>[4]</sup> although in Europe motorcycles from any country are allowed so long as they are in the chopper style. Their main rivals are the Hells Angels, giving rise to a phrase used by Outlaws members, "ADIOS" (the Spanish word for "goodbye", but in this case doubling as an acronym for "Angels Die In Outlaw States").

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## Outlaws Motorcycle Club



<b>Motto</b>	God Forgives, Outlaws Don't  ADIOS (Angels Die In Outlaw States) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Founded</b>	1935
<b>Location</b>	McCook, Illinois, United States
<b>Type</b>	Outlaw motorcycle club
<b>Region</b>	Worldwide (275 chapters in 23 countries)
<b>Marque</b>	American-made motorcycles
<b>Membership</b>	1,600-2,000
<b>Website</b>	<span>www.outlawsmcworld.com</span> ( <span>http://www.outlawsmcworld.com/</span> )
<b>Abbreviation</b>	AOA

## History

The Outlaws Motorcycle Club was established out of Matilda's Bar on old Route 66 in McCook, Illinois, a southwestern suburb of Chicago, in 1935.<sup>[5]</sup> The club stayed together during World War II, but like most organizations at that time, their activities were limited.

In the 1950s, the club's logo was changed; a small skull replaced a winged motorcycle, and Old English-style letters were adopted. This design was embroidered on a black shirt and hand painted on leather jackets. In 1954, the Crossed Pistons were added to the original small skull. This design was embroidered on a black western-style shirt with white piping. The movie *The Wild One* with Marlon Brando influenced this backpatch. The Skull and Crossed Pistons were redesigned in 1959, making them much larger with more detail. The A.O.A. logo was adopted as an answer to the A.M.A. logo.

The Outlaws became an official member of the 1%er Brotherhood of Clubs in 1963.

The club featured in a work of photojournalism called *The Bikeriders* published in 1967 by Danny Lyon, a collection of photographs

and interviews documenting the lifestyle of members of the club in the early 1960s.<sup>[6]</sup>

In England and Wales the group has around 30 different chapters.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Clubs with similar names

A number of one percenter motorcycle clubs are called the "Outlaws", e.g. New Zealand.<sup>[8]</sup> These are not part of the AOA and share only the name, having a different patch design and colors. In some countries, independent Outlaw MCs have joined, or been "patched over" to the now worldwide club.<sup>[9]</sup>

The Outlaws MC of New Zealand, established in Napier in 1968, have since "patched over" to the international club <sup>[10]</sup>

## Criminal cases

### United States

#### Florida

The FBI's Ten Most Wanted Fugitive#453, Taco Bowman, known World Leader of the AOA, in prison since 1999 for three murders, was the international president of the Outlaws Motorcycle Club. During the time that Bowman was a fugitive in 1998, it had chapters in more than 30 cities in the United States and some 20 chapters in at least four other countries. In 2001 he was tried in Jacksonville, Florida,<sup>[11]</sup> Federal agents along with the Daytona Beach SWAT Team raided the Outlaws clubhouse on Beach Street in Daytona Beach, Florida<sup>[12]</sup> looking for drugs, weapons, contraband, paraphernalia, etc.; they tore the Daytona Beach clubhouse apart for the better part of the day and found nothing, but removed as many of the club's pictures and any other possibly identifying information as they could find. Federal agents also raided a home in Ormond Beach and two other clubhouses around the state. The search of the Jacksonville clubhouses netted federal agents 60 weapons including pocket and kitchen knives. U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales announced a Detroit grand jury indictment of 16 of the Outlaws National Club's members.<sup>[13]</sup> The Detroit grand jury indictment included various charges, including assault and drug distribution. Eleven Outlaws leaders and high-ranking members of the gang were arrested after a five-year investigation. The FBI said several gang members were charged with conspiracy to commit assault on members of the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club in Indiana.

#### Georgia

Frank Rego Vital of Roberta, Georgia, an Outlaws MC member, was shot and killed in an early morning gunfight June 24, 2007 in the parking lot of The Crazy Horse Saloon strip club in Forest Park, Georgia by two members of the Renegades MC in what has been described as a self-defense shooting after Vital and other Outlaws members followed the men from the club. Both Renegade members were shot several times but survived.<sup>[14]</sup>

#### Illinois

On July 30, 2008, several facilities associated with the Outlaws in the Chicago area were raided by agents from the FBI and the ATF.<sup>[15]</sup> The FBI brought in a SWAT team and an urban assault vehicle to the clubhouse in the west side of the city in case violence were to break out.<sup>[16]</sup>

#### Indiana

On July 11, 2012, U.S. Marshalls raided the Indianapolis Outlaws Chapter clubhouse and arrested 42 members for crimes ranging from mail fraud to money laundering.<sup>[17]</sup> Law enforcement agencies conducted the raids at dawn in an attempt to catch members off guard. U.S. Attorney Joe Hogsett said their offenses included using violence to collect debts and illegal gambling operations.<sup>[18]</sup>

#### Maine

On June 15, 2010 the ATF surrounded the home of Thomas "Tomcat" Mayne. Gunfire was exchanged with the ATF, ultimately killing Mayne. The ATF was there to serve a federal search warrant for an indictment that included Mayne and 26 other members of the Outlaws, for RICO charges and for the shooting of a member of the rival Hells Angels.<sup>[19][20][21]</sup>

## New Hampshire

On June 27, 2006 Christopher Legere of Raymond, New Hampshire, an Outlaws member, was arrested in the murder of a man who was wearing a Hells Angels shirt.<sup>[22]</sup> The victim, John Denoncourt, 32, of Manchester, New Hampshire, was shot and killed outside the 3-Cousins Pizza and Lounge in Manchester on Sunday June 25, 2006 after he was spotted hugging the bartender, who was Legere's girlfriend. Denoncourt, according to friends and family, was not a Hells Angel member himself but had friends who were. Legere had been involved in another incident in Connecticut in early 2006 when he was charged with illegal possession of body armor by a convicted felon.

## Pennsylvania

On March 17, 2009, 22 people—including a correctional officer—were charged in connection with a \$3.6 million cocaine distribution ring operated by members and "wannabes" of the Outlaws Motorcycle Club in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.<sup>[23]</sup>

On August 24, 2009, 15 members of the Outlaws Philadelphia chapter were arrested in connection with a methamphetamine ring. Those arrested included chapter president Thomas "The Boss" Zaroff, Jr., and Charles "The Panhead" Rees. According to Pennsylvania District Attorney Tom Corbett, the gang sold methamphetamine in Philadelphia, Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, and Delaware counties in Pennsylvania and in Camden and Burlington counties in New Jersey.<sup>[24]</sup>

## Tennessee

On January 1, 2010, the Knox County Sheriff's Office in conjunction with the Knoxville Police Department raided a house located at 205 Clifton Road to serve two arrest warrants and execute a search warrant on the property alleged to be an Outlaw clubhouse. Officers, including members of the SWAT team, raided the facility just before midnight but found only a handful of elderly club members, who surrendered quickly and peaceably. Knox County Sheriff James Jones acted on information from an undercover informant that many of the members of the club would be present at the informal celebration of New Year's Eve. Arrest warrants had been issued for Mark "Ivan" Lester and Kenneth Foster for their alleged roles in a confrontation with the undercover informant earlier in December 2009, who had infiltrated the organization over 14 months ago. According to Sheriff Jones, Lester and Foster allegedly threatened the informant with a pistol and demanded the colors in his possession. By Club bylaws Club colors always remain the property of the Club and not of the individual member. The informant, who claimed to be in fear of their safety, submitted to the men's demands. Mark Lester is alleged to be the Regional President in charge of the clubs operations in the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. Kenneth Foster is alleged to be the local Knoxville chapter Outlaw Motorcycle Club President.

Both Lester and Foster were arrested at the residence and were charged with aggravated robbery and aggravated kidnapping. Upon search of the residence the officers found a few legally owned handguns and small amounts of marijuana. They alleged they had evidence of other illegal activities. Both men were jailed and held in lieu of 3 million dollar bonds.<sup>[25]</sup> Other than the charges stemming from the club's unmasking of the undercover officer, however, no other charges have been filed.<sup>[25]</sup>

## Virginia

On June 15, 2010, a grand jury in Virginia indicted 27 Outlaws members on various charges under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) related to participating in a criminal enterprise that engaged in assaults, kidnapping, drug dealing, illegal gambling, and attempted murder.<sup>[26]</sup>

## United Kingdom

On August 12, 2007, Hells Angel Gerry Tobin, a Canadian living in Mottingham, London, was shot dead on the M40 motorway while returning from the Bulldog Bash festival held near Long Marston, Warwickshire. He was singled out at random by members of the Outlaws. In November 2008, seven members of the Warwickshire chapter, were convicted of his murder and sentenced to life imprisonment.<sup>[27]</sup>

On January 20, 2008, there was a brawl between up to 30 of the rival clubs at Birmingham International Airport. Police recovered various weapons including knuckledusters, hammers and a meat cleaver. Four Outlaw members and three Hells Angels were imprisoned for six years each.<sup>[28][29]</sup> Increased security at the court, for the period of the trial, cost around £1 million.

## Belgium

In April 2000 full-patch member Jan Wouters was killed by Outlaw André Renard in the presence of two other Outlaws on the club's domain in Mechelen. All three members were given life sentences for the murder of their fellow Outlaw. Among them was the brother-in-law of the victim. According to the three convicted Outlaws the murder took place after an argument escalated. Upon escalation Wouters supposedly aimed a gun at his brother-in-law after which he himself was killed. It was largely believed that the murder was not the result of an escalated discussion, but rather an execution approved by the club's hierarchy.<sup>[30]</sup>

On October 4, 2009 several Hells Angels and allied Red Devils performed a raid on an Outlaw MC clubhouse in Kortrijk. Shots were fired and three Outlaws were wounded before the Hells Angels and their Red Devils comrades fled the scene. The incident occurred after members of the Outlaws MC supposedly pushed over a motorcycle belonging to Red Devils MC president Johan F. in Moeskroen. The raid is also thought to be a part of a territorial dispute between the Hells Angels and the Red Devils on one side and the Outlaws on the other. Several months before the raid, on the 24th of July 2009, members of the Red Devils and Hells Angels already retaliated by setting fire to motorcycles outside an Outlaw clubhouse. Eventually six Hells Angels and two Red Devils were convicted for attempted murder and given sentences from five to twenty years in prison.<sup>[31]</sup>

On May 21, 2011 one full-patch member, one prospect, and one sympathizer of the Belgium Outlaws MC were shot and killed by rival bikers of the Belgian Hells Angels. The killings took place in Eisden, not far from Maasmechelen where the Outlaws had opened a new clubhouse just several days earlier.<sup>[32]</sup> Two days after the murders several Hells Angels were linked to the murder and arrested, including the president of the 'Zwartberg' chapter.<sup>[33]</sup> The funeral of the full-patch member, Freddy Put, was joined by some 200 Outlaws from across Europe.<sup>[34]</sup> The investigation concerning the murders in Eisden is ongoing and is made difficult because within both the Hells Angels and the Outlaws there is a code of silence called 'omerta'. In a response to these murders the Belgian Army is investigating the possibility of removing members of criminal MC's from their ranks since two of the primary suspects were paracommandos.<sup>[35]</sup>

In the night of 24 December 2012, during a rock concert in Dilsen-Stokkem, members of the Hells Angels were attacked by members of the Outlaws MC. Several Hells Angels were inside the *Nieuwenborgh* hall listening to the evening's last rock band finishing their final songs when, at about 1:30 a.m. by local time, several Outlaws armed with expandable batons (illegal in Belgium) arrived at the scene. The situation quickly escalated into a brawl with three wounded as a result. The police quickly arrived at the scene in large numbers. One of the wounded was a 41-year-old man who suffered an open fracture to the leg.<sup>[36]</sup>

## See also

- Motorcycling

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## Further reading

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- United States v. Bowman, 302 F.3d 1228, 1232 (11th Cir., 2002)
- Article from the Union Leader on the search for Christopher Legere (<http://www.unionleader.com/article.aspx?headline=Manhunt+continues+for+Outlaws+member+for+murder+of+man+wearing+Hells+Angels+shirt&articleId=e5174096-8000-4e28-9184-d32968b34c78>)

## External links

- Outlaws Motorcycle Club American website (<http://www.outlawsmc.com/>)
- Outlaws Motorcycle Club world website (<http://www.outlawsmcworld.com/>)

Retrieved from "[http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Outlaws\\_Motorcycle\\_Club&oldid=649662189](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Outlaws_Motorcycle_Club&oldid=649662189)"

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