**The LGBTQ Scene in Bloomington**

While the Indiana University campus has long been a center for LGBTQ groups and activity, the history of the scene in Bloomington outside university grounds is at least as long. The Kirkwood Bar, located at 212 W. Kirkwood, was one of Bloomington’s earliest avowedly “gay” bars. The Omni, “Bloomington’s gay disco,” opened in the Spring of 1978, shortly before the Kirkwood Bar closed, but would last only a year before closing down. However, it was quickly followed by the opening of Bullwinkle’s in the lower level of 201 S. College. Bullwinkle’s would eventually expand to the upper level of the building as well, where a dancing and performance space would be used for drag shows and other events. Bullwinkle’s remained a Bloomington fixture until closing down in 2006. Today, Bloomington’s LGBTQ+ community can visit The Back Door. Opening on Valentine’s Day in 2013, The Back Door promotes “Queer Liberation through community building, mutual aid, performance, revelry, and dance.”

April 1975 saw the creation of New Horizons, a community center that sought to facilitate social contact among the Bloomington LGBTQ+ population. New Horizons volunteers received training in counseling services from the Monroe County Mental Health Clinic, as the center sought to connect individuals with crisis-intervention, counseling, and other information dissemination services from providers prepared to help those in this specific community. In particular, New Horizons presented itself as an alternative to mainstream service providers, who were often either actively anti-gay or otherwise ill-prepared to help.