

Indiana Bowling Centers In the Late 1940's

Bowling has seen a lot of changes since the late 1940's. The Indiana Bowling Association published it's first yearbook in 1947. In it they listed the city associations and requested those associations provide brief information as well as a listing of their bowling centers. 55 of 75 associations did just that. Six new associations were formed for 1949. I then researched to see if I could fill in missing information looking through newspaper archives and contacting local libraries. I was quite successful. The result of that research is the 229 bowling centers shown below.

Bowling has changed a lot since the late 1940's. We went from pin boys and ball returns above the lane to automatic pinsetters and ball returns below the lane. Bowlers went from using 2 fingers to 3 and now some with zero and from using one hand to two. We went from soft lanes and hard balls to hard lanes with soft balls and from rubber, to polyester to urethane to reactive. We went from rare 300 games to almost a weekly occurrence.

When you look through the information below, you will see that bowling has changed a lot since then late forties. You will see that many establishments only had two, four or six lanes. And this doesn't even show the centers that existed in earlier times and were already gone. For example, Kokomo had at least 7 bowling centers before the two listed below and another five after. A lot of bowling across the state started in the late 1890's through 1920 in towns where there were railroad stations. Note also how many were part of churches or other fraternal organizations. Some were located under an A&P grocery store (Franklin Bowling Center), 2nd floor of a Coca-cola plant (Rushville) and above a hardware store (Winchester). The Kokomo Recreation Alleys had 6 lanes upstairs and 6 downstairs. At least one didn't have to bring 6 bowling balls then! During my research I saw where several centers were damaged or destroyed by fires as the lacquer on the lanes was very flammable.

When I look at the list I only see two bowling centers that are still in operation. Those are Vigo Lanes in Terre Haute and Franklin Lanes in Evansville. A third is still in operation but at a different address (Inman's in Valparaiso). I hope you enjoyed this little trip to the past.

Jon Kelley - Historian

Association	City	Center	Address	# Lanes
Alexandria	Alexandria	Alexandria Bowling Alleys	W. Washington St.	8
Anderson	Anderson	Welper's Alleys	1004 1/2 Main Street	14
Anderson	Anderson	Eastman Recreation Center	600 Broadway	18
Anderson	Lapel	Lapel Golf Club, Inc.		8
Angola	Angola	Angola Bowling Alleys		12
Angola	Angola	Buck's Recreation	310 W. Gilmore St.	6
Auburn	Auburn	Auburn Recreation	127 1/2 W. 7th Street	8
Auburn	Garrett	Engle's Bowling Alleys	121 N. Randolph St.	4
Auburn	Butler	Butler Bowling Alleys	118 S. Broadway	6
Auburn	Kendallville	Kendallville Recreation	S. Main St.	4
Batesville	Batesville	Triangle "B" Recreation Center	18 W. Pearl St.	4
Batesville	Batesville	South Side Alleys	So. Park Ave.	2
Batesville	Oldenburg	Holy Trinity Church		2
Bedford	Bedford	Model Bowling Alley		
Bloomfield (New in 1949)	Bloomfield	Name not known - Installed in 1947	130 E. Main St.	
Bloomington	Bloomington	Classic Bowling Academy	316 S. Washington St.	
Bloomington	Bloomington	Indiana Bowling Alleys	423 E. 5th St.	
Bloomington	Spencer	House of Ten Pins		
Bluffton	Bluffton	The Bowling Center	112 1/2 N. Main St.	6
Bremen	Bremen	Bremen Bowling Lanes	E. Plymouth St.	4
Chesterton	Chesterton	G. & G. Lanes	535 W. Broadway	6
Clinton	Clinton	Lucky Strike Bowling Alley	137 S. Main St.	8
Columbus	Columbus	Recreation Alleys	308 Fourth St.	
Columbus	Hope	Hope Bowling Alleys		
Connersville	Connersville	Bowl-O-Drome (in 1945)	127 W. 7th St.	
Connersville	Connersville	City Bowling Alley (in 1948)	631 N. Central (basement)	
Crawfordsville	Crawfordsville	Maple Lane Bowling Alley	110 E. Market St.	
Crown Point	Crown Point	Reschke's Recreation		6
Crown Point	Crown Point	Keiser-Dunn		12
Crown Point	Shelby	Manno Bowling Lanes		6
Culver	Culver	Lake Short Recreation Bowling Alleys		
Decatur	Decatur	Mies Recreation	N. 2nd St.	10
Decatur	Decatur	General Electric Club		4

Decatur	Berne	Berne Community Associatin		4
East Chicago	East Chicago	East Chicago Bowling Lanes	527 Chicago Ave.	16
East Chicago	East Chicago	Sun Bowl Lanes	2302 Columbus Drive	16
East Chicago	East Chicago	Leo Peters Alleys	1807 Broadway	12
East Chicago	East Chicago	Arcade Bowling Alleys	3451 Michigan Ave.	6
East Chicago	East Chicago	Immaculate Conception	1492 & Olcott Sts.	4
East Chicago	East Chicago	Calumet Bowling	4823 Alexander Ave.	2
East Chicago	East Chicago	Columbia Bowling Alleys	4726 McCook Ave.	4
Elkhart	Elkhart	F. O. E. #395 Alleys	225 W. Marion St.	4
Elkhart	Elkhart	YMCA Alleys	229 W. Franklin St.	4
Elkhart	Elkhart	Marathon Bowling Alleys	319 1/2 S. Main St.	6
Elkhart	Elkhart	Red Crown Bowling Alleys	117 E. Lexington Ave.	10
Elwood	Elwood	Ballard Bowl	1529 S. A St.	6
Evansville	Evansville	Jensen Recreation Alleys	111 S. E. Third St.	12
Evansville	Evansville	Franklin Lanes	1801 W. Franklin St.	20
Evansville	Evansville	West Side Recreation	210 1/2 W. Franklin St.	8
Evansville	Evansville	Pocket Alleys	10 N. W. Third St.	9
Evansville	Evansville	YMCA Alleys	203 N. W. Fifth St.	4
Evansville	Evansville	Rose Bowl		12
Evansville	Mt. Vernon	Mt. Vernon Lanes		4
Evansville	Henderson, KY	King Pin Bowling Alleys (1948)	325 1/2 Second St.	8
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Everett Scott Recreation	1223 S. Calhoun St.	18
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Court St. Recreation	717 1/2 Court St.	14
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Bowman's Metropolitan	1305 S. Calhoun St	12
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	G. E. Club	Swinney at Broadway	12
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Kessen's Recreation	2029 S. Fairfield	8
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Smitty's Alleys (1948)	7015 Bluffton Rd.	8
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	North Side Recreation	1517 Barthold St.	6
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Olympic Club	2138 S. Hanna St.	6
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Ft. Wayne Athletic Club	220 E. Jefferson	6
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Zions Parrish	2318 Weiser Park	6
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Walther League, St. Paul's	303 W. Madison	5
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Walther League, Emmaus	Broadway at Creighton	4
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Elks Lodge #155	222 W. Berry St.	4
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne	Walther League, Concordia	1300 Fletcher Ave.	4
Fort Wayne	Huntington	Hotel LaFontaine		8
Fort Wayne	Monroeville	Monroeville Recreation		4
Fowler	Fowler	Fowler Bowling Center	305 E. 5th St.	6
Frankfort	Frankfort	Shores Recreation Alleys		6
Franklin	Franklin	Park-N-Bowl	188 W. Jefferson St.	
Franklin	Franklin	Franklin Bowing Center	50 N. Main St.	
Gary	Gary	Ambassador Lanes	523 W. 5th Ave.	16
Gary	Gary	American Bridge AA	1st Ave. & Bridge St.	2
Gary	Gary	Gary 20th Century Recreation	22 E. 5th Ave.	16
Gary	Gary	Glen Park Alleys	3833 Broadway	4
Gary	Gary	K. of C. Alleys	329 W. 5th Ave.	8
Gary	Gary	Moose Bowling Alleys	700 Adams St.	4
Gary	Gary	Nick's Bowling Alleys	752 Washington St.	6
Gary	Gary	Lake Hotel Recreation	738 Washington St.	6
Gary	Gary	R. & K. Recreation (Zale in 1948)	125 W. 5th Ave.	8
Gary	Gary	Ridge Bowling Alleys	3838 Broadway	16
Gary	Gary	Sportsman Recreation Center, Inc.	2540 W. 15th Ave.	16
Gary	Gary	Stack Brothers Bowling Lanes	501 S. Lake St.	12
Gary	East Gary	East Gary Alleys	3425 Central Ave.	6
Gary	Hobart	Hobart Alleys	530 E. Third St.	6
Goshen	Goshen	Playdium Bowling Lanes	205 N. Main St.	10
Goshen	Goshen	Wood-Ro Recreation	610 E. Madison St.	8
Greencastle	Greencastle	Varsity Lanes (1948)	809 S. Jackson St.	8
Greensburg	Greensburg	Tree City Bowling Alleys	201 1/2 W. Main St.	
Hagerstown	Hagerstown	Hagerstown Recreation Center (closed May 15, 1948)	115 E. Main St. (In Exponent Bldg.)	6
Hammond	Hammond	20th Century Recreation	114 State St.	24
Hammond	Hammond	Bowl-Era	6530 Calumet Ave.	12
Hammond	Hammond	Perrin's Recreation	5114 Hohman Ave.	9
Hammond	Hammond	Calumet Bowling Center	5851 Calumet Ave.	8
Hammond	Hammond	Pin Bowl Recreation	6716 Kennedy Ave.	8
Hammond	Hammond	Park View Recreation	1812 Calument Ave.	8

Hammond	Hammond	St. Pauls Lutheran School	5848 Erie St.	4
Hammond	Hammond	Unity Council #726 K. of C.	520 Sibley St.	4
Hammond	Hammond	Oil Workers Athletic Club	142 Rimbach St.	4
Hammond	Lansing, Ill.	Follmer Lanes	3660 Ridge Road	8
Hammond	Lansing, Ill.	St. John's Bowling Alleys	18215 Wentworth Ave.	4
Hartford City	Hartford City	Hartford Bowl	120 E. Washington St.	6
Highland	Highland	Lucky Strike Lanes (association gone in 1949)	8644 Kennedy Ave.	6
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Antlers	St. Clair & Meridian	8
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Broad Ripple Bowl	1010 E. 63rd St.	12
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Central	38 W. Ohio St.	16
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Delaware	211 N. Delaware	16
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Dezelan's	959 N. Holmes	12
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Fountain Square	Prospect & Shelby	8
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Fox-Hunt	1201 E. Washington	12
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Iaria Recreation	325 S. Noble St.	
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Illinois	161 N. Illinois	14
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Indiana	124 W. Washington	18
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Indianapolis A. C.	Vermont & Meridian	6
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Moon-Lite	2405 Station St.	10
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Parkway	3368 N. Illinois	12
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Pennsylvania	38 1/2 N. Pennsylvania	12
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Pritchett's	37 E. Maryland	26
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Pritchett, Hunt, O'Grady	7850 E. Washington	20
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	St. Cecelia	1530 Union St.	4
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	St. Pauls	743 Weghorst St.	4
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	St. Phillips	535 Eastern Ave.	4
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Speedway	3805 W. 16th St.	12
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Sport Bowl	3900 New U.S. 31	12
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Sturm's Recreation	1422 N. Illinois	16
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Uptown	4169 College Ave.	10
Indianapolis	Indianapolis	West Side	2324 W. Michigan	16
Indianapolis	Beech Grove	Beech Grove Bowl (1948)	2nd & Troy Ave.	12
Jasper	Jasper	Gerbo Lanes	522 1/2 Main St.	4
Jasper	Jasper	Gerbo Lanes	Highways 46 & 46	10
Kendallville	Kendallville	Aldrich Lanes	North Park Ave.	12
Knox	Knox	Knox Recreation	21-23 N. Main St.	6
Kokomo	Kokomo	Evans 20th Century Academy	212 E. Sycamore St.	12
Kokomo	Kokomo	Kokomo Recreation	500 N. Main St.	12
Lafayette	Lafayette	Bowlmore, Inc.	4th St. & South St.	10
Lafayette	Lafayette	Lafayette Bowling Alleys	18 N. 4th St.	8
Lafayette	Lafayette	Sixth St. Bowling Alleys	220 N. 6th St.	6
Lafayette	West Lafayette	Purdue Alleys	Memorial Union Bldg.	15
LaPorte	LaPorte	Civic Auditorium	1001 Ridge St.	9
LaPorte	LaPorte	Bowl-Away Lanes	711 Madison St.	8
LaPorte	LaPorte	St. John's Parish Hall	301 "B" St.	8
Lebanon	Lebanon	Lebanon Bowling Center	642 Indianapolis Ave.	6
Ligonier	Ligonier	Fourth St. Recreation	W. Fourth St.	4
Linton	Linton	Linton Bowling Alley	47 1/2 West Vincennes	
Linton	Lyons			
Linton	Dugger	Dugger Bowl		
Linton	Jasonville	Dickerson Bowling Alley (in 1946)		
Linton	Jasonville	Hamilton Bowling Alley (before 1949)	121 W. Main St.	
Linton	Jasonville	Fish-Harlan Bowling Alley (in 1949)	147 W. Main St.	
Logansport	Logansport	McNutt Bowling Lanes	215 Broadway	
Madison	Madison	Pleasure Parlor	Central and Second	8
Marion	Marion	Miller & Son	506 1/2 S. Washington	8
Marion	Marion	Bowl Ane	117 E. 8th St.	10
Marion	Gas City	Gas City Bowling Alleys	W. Main St.	4
Martinsville (New in 1949)	Martinsville	Martinsville Bowling Center	E. Washington St.	
Michigan City	Michigan City	Palace Recreation	724 1/2 Franklin St.	12
Michigan City	Michigan City	Michigan City Recreation	117 E. Michigan St.	12
Michigan City	Michigan City	Moose Bowling Alleys	1107 Franklin St.	4
Michigan City	Michigan City	Rose Bowl, Inc.	2309 Franklin St.	16
Mishawaka	Mishawaka	Pastime Alleys	121 1/2 N. Main St.	6
Mishawaka	Mishawaka	Rose Recreation	107 1/2d E. First. St.	6
Mishawaka	Mishawaka	Parkway Lanes	2802 Lincoln Way West	12

Monticello	Monticello	Pappy Fee's Bowling and Grille		4
Muncie	Muncie	City Recreation Parlor	114 1/2 E. Jackson St.	10
Muncie	Muncie	Muncie Bowling Center	2400 Kilgore Ave.	12
Muncie	Muncie	Roberts Recreation	124 W. Howard St.	6
Nappanee	Nappanee	Pete's Bowl		6
New Castle	New Castle	Schlund's Recreation Alleys (Schuhardt's in 1948)	1621 Broad St.	8
Noblesville	Noblesville	M & M Alleys		12
Noblesville	Noblesville	Eagles		4
Noblesville	Noblesville	Elk's		4
North Vernon (New in 1949)	North Vernon	Skate-Bowl (lanes came from Hagerstown)	S. State St.	6
Peru	Peru	Peru Recreation Center	22 1/2 E. 5th St.	7 (6 in 48)
Peru	Peru	Easter's Lanes	64 S. Miami St.	11
Plymouth	Plymouth	Plymouth Bowling Center		6
Portland	Portland	Century Bowling Alleys	1114 N. Meridian St.	8
Princeton (New in 1949)	Princeton	The Bowl	Road 64 E	
Redkey	Redkey	Redkey Bowling Alley		
Rensselaer	Rensselaer	Star Bowling Alleys		3
Rensselaer	Remington	Remington Bowling Alleys		2
Richmond	Richmond	American Bowling Alleys	215 S. 8th St.	10
Richmond	Richmond	Brunswick Bowling Alleys	221 E. Main St.	8
Richmond	Richmond	Recreation Bowling Alleys	415 E. Main St.	8
Richmond	Richmond	Leland Hotel Alleys	S. 9th & "A" St.	6
Richmond	Eaton, Ohio	Arcadia Bowl	W. Somers St.	6
Richmond	Liberty	Lantern Recreation Alleys	Union St.	3
Rochester	Rochester	Rochester Bowling Center	714 1/2 Main St.	5
Rushville	Rushville	George's Bowling Alleys	131 W. 1st St.	
St. John	St. John	Spring Hill Grove Bowling Alley	10400 W. 93rd Ave.	
Scottsburg (New in 1949)	Scottsburg		Downtown	4
Shelbyville	Shelbyville	Shelby Recreation Alleys	24 W. Franklin St.	8
Shelbyville	Shelbyville	St. Joseph Bowling Alleys	151 E. Broadway St.	4
Sheridan	Sheridan	Sheridan Bowling Alleys	417 Main St.	4
South Bend	South Bend	Bowl-Mor Recreation	115 E. LaSalle Ave.	36
South Bend	South Bend	Calvert Club	745 W. Calvert St.	2
South Bend	South Bend	Eagles Lodge	321 N. Michigan St.	4
South Bend	South Bend	Elks Lodge	215 W. Colfax Ave.	6
South Bend	South Bend	German Club	1541 Prairie Ave	2
South Bend	South Bend	Indiana Club	320 W. Jefferson Blvd.	6
South Bend	South Bend	Nyikos Alleys (K & B in 1948)	1233 W. Washington Ave.	4
South Bend	South Bend	St. Anthony Society	414 W. Indiana Ave.	2
South Bend	South Bend	S. B. Turners	503 N. Michigan St.	2
South Bend	South Bend	Verhovay Club	1024 W. Indiana Ave.	4
South Bend	South Bend	Waters Recreation	922 S. Main St.	20
South Bend	South Bend	Western Recreation	1025 Western Ave.	8
South Bend	South Bend	Workers Home Club	1216 Colfax Ave.	2
Tell City	Tell City	Tell City Bowling Alleys		
Terre Haute	Terre Haute	Vigo Bowl	210 9th St.	24
Terre Haute	Terre Haute	Ten Pins	9 N. 6th St.	10
Terre Haute	Terre Haute	Shamrock Lanes	20 N. 5th. St.	10
Terre Haute	Terre Haute	Rust Bros.	825 1/2 Wabash Ave.	4
Terre Haute	Terre Haute	K. of C.	9th and Ohio St.	6
Terre Haute	Terre Haute	Kerman Grotto	229 N. Ninth St.	4
Terre Haute	Terre Haute	Elks	130 N. 7th St.	6
Tipton	Tipton	Bowl-O-Drome	South East St.	8
Union City	Union City	Union Bowling Alleys	208 1/2 Pearl St.	6
Valparaiso	Valparaiso	Inman's Recreation	711 Calumet Ave.	10
Vincennes	Vincennes	Vincennes Bowling Alleys	109 1/2 Busseron St.	6
Wabash	Wabash	Twentieth Century Bowling Alleys		6
Wakarusa (New in 1949)	Wakarusa			
Warsaw	Warsaw	Royal Recreation	1703 E. Market St.	12
Whiting	Whiting	Whiting Community Center	Clark St.	8
Whiting	Whiting	Slovak Dom (American Slovak Club)	1324 119th St.	
Whiting	Whiting	Gyure Brothers	1545 121st St.	
Winchester	Winchester	Winchester Bowling Center	North Side of Square	4
Worthington	Worthington	Thompson Brothers Recreation	S. Commercial St.	2