

Evolution of the Illinois Wing Patch



First Illinois Wing Patch
Late 1940's



Second Illinois Wing
Patch
Early 1950's



NEW Illinois Wing Patch
Approved February 2010

Illinois Wing now has a new wing patch. The first wing patch was designed in the late 1940's and was worn on the right arm a half inch below the seam. The CAP emblem (prop, triangle and disk) was an embroidered patch worn on the left arm. This was an army practice that carried over to the fledgling US Air Force. The number "61" represented the Sixth Army Region/ First Wing.

In the early 1950's the Illinois Wing patch was redesigned to the eagle that we have all worn proudly and dearly love. When the wear of the CAP Emblem on the left shoulder was rescinded wear of the wing patches was moved from the right arm to the left. Again, this was early in the Air Forces history, and wear of unit patches in an Army style was still common.

During the Air Force's early years there came a time when standardization of unit insignia was mandated for all Air Force Units including Reserve and Air National Guard units. Air Force Instruction 84-101, *Organizational Lineage, Honors and Heraldry*, directed units not only on the design requirements but on documenting unit heritage. Groups, Wings and Major Commands (MAJCOM) were placed on the shield with scroll and Squadrons were placed on the circle with upper and lower scroll. CAP was not required to comply with the regulated change and if you look around the country you will see wide variety of shapes and designs including many squadron patches on the shield and scroll.

Since the events of 911 CAP has become more integrated with the US Air Force and other military units in Homeland Security and National disaster response. This exposure has allowed us to become a very visual representative of the U S Air Force. Therefore it is necessary for our members to always present a positive and professional appearance to the general population as well as members of the military.

It is with these thoughts that in 2009 when I was presented with a redesign of the Illinois Wing patch along Air Force guidelines I approved the new design and submitted the change thru channels to National Headquarters. Illinois became the third wing (behind Florida and Nevada) to redesign their Wing patch. Although both Florida and Nevada changed the new patch design entirely away from their historic patches, I chose to keep our historic patch adding only the prop/triangle/shield to represent Civil Air Patrol. At the Winter Board meeting in February 2010 the new design was approved. This past year Vanguard continued to sell the older patch design to deplete their stock. They now have the new patch available for purchase.

We are now in a transition period to the uniform wear of the new patch. Wing patch wear, both old and new design, are optional on flight wear or BDU's. The old design may continue to be worn on the appropriate uniforms until December 31, 2015 unless rescinded. To align closer to Air Force uniform wear the new MAJCOM designed Wing patch can immediately be worn on AF/Corporate flight suits/jackets (on the right shoulder) and AF/Corporate BDU's (on the right breast ½ inch above the nametape). Approved Squadron and Group patches are worn on the right pocket of BDU's. Members are reminded that the old patch cannot be sewn on new uniforms to delay the transition.