

Heraldry of the

SOUTH DAKOTA WING PATCH

The South Dakota Wing Headquarters, CAP designation NCR-SD-001, is located on Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City, SD. One of 52 Wings in the Civil Air Patrol it is subordinate to the North Central Region. The Wing is named after the state where it is located. It was formed at the same time the Civil Air Patrol was formed on 1 December 1941. The earliest specific mention of the South Dakota Wing is in a South Dakota newspaper article dated January 1942.

The Wing Headquarters has moved three times since it was formed. From December 1941 to February 1950 it was located in Pierre. From March 1950 to June 2006 it was in Sioux Falls and from June 2006 to present it is on Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City.

There are two variants of the South Dakota Wing patch. They are very similar in appearance to each other. Variant-1 is believed to have come into existence in 1951. No record has been found as to when Variant-1 was superseded by Variant-2. However, anecdotally, Variant-2 was in wear in the early 1980s.

Variant-1: The patch, edged in dark blue, is in the shape of a circle, banded in dark blue, with a banner above and below. The upper banner bears the name of the Wing in red on a white field. The lower banner bears the organizational name in red on a white field. The field of the circle is white. In the center is a solid outline of the state of South Dakota in light blue. Superimposed over the state outline is a crude representation of the four faces on Mount Rushmore in white and light and dark blue surrounded by dark blue that represents the mountain. At the bottom center of the circle is an older version of the Civil Air Patrol emblem; stylized light blue wings with central light blue circle edged in dark blue containing a white triangle with a red, three-blade propeller. This Variant-1 patch is from the Lt. Col. Dick Forman Collection.



Variant-2: The patch, edged in medium blue, is in the shape of a circle, banded in medium blue, with a banner above and below. The upper banner bears the name of the Wing in red on a white field. The lower banner bears the organizational name in red on a white field. The field of the circle is white. In the center is a solid outline of the state of South Dakota in light blue. Superimposed over the state outline is a representation of the four faces on Mount Rushmore in white and light blue with touches of darker blue below and to the right representing the mountain. At the bottom center of the circle is an older version of the Civil Air Patrol emblem; stylized light blue wings with central light blue circle edged in darker blue containing a white triangle with a red, three-blade propeller.

The primary differences on Variant-2 are that the depiction of Mount Rushmore is much more precise and that the wings at bottom center are slightly different in shape.



No record has been found as to who designed the Wing patch. Nor has any record been found as to who initially manufactured the Variant-1 design.

The 1980 uniform sales catalog for the “CAP Bookstore” (1980-2000) did not have a photo of the patch so it is not known if it was Variant-1 or Variant-2. The “CAP Bookstore” was replaced by “CAPMart” (2000-2006). Their catalogs also did not have a photo of the patch. Vanguard Industries began manufacturing the Variant-2 design in 2006 when they acquired the contract from “CAPMart”.

An argument can be made that when the “CAP Bookstore” took over the marketing of the South Dakota wing patch from the previous manufacturer(s) they, or their subcontractor for patches, used computer design software to clean up the original pattern. If this is the case it would explain how the Variant-2 patch was anecdotally being worn by South Dakota Wing in the early 1980s.