

David K. Schettler  
Director, Memorial Programs Service  
National Cemetery Administration  
Memorial Programs Service (41A1)  
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20420  
January 9, 2006

Dear Mr. Schettler,

As the Board of Directors of Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc., we would like to add our support for and endorsement of the use of the tri-line Awen symbol on Druid veteran headstones. We feel that this symbol is one that is universally recognizable as a Druid symbol.

Our organization is one of the larger Neopagan druid groups in the United States, in existence for the past 20 years, with membership worldwide above 1000 and growing. Our board of directors consists of: Rev. Robert Ellison, Rev. Kirk Thomas, Anthony Thompson, Linda Costello, Philip Rutledge, Diane Vaughn, Elizabeth Richards, Rev. Carlynne Deaver, Rev. David GoWell, Diana Parr, Anne Lenzi, Penelope McFadin, Reginald Bell, Nicole Harlow and Christine Wityshyn.

**Statement of Beliefs and Practices.** ADF is a polytheistic religion which honors the Gods and Goddesses of the ancient Indo-Europeans as well as the Spirits of Nature and our Ancestors of blood, heart and the land. We believe in reciprocity with the Powers, that we can form relationships with Them for the good of the Earth, mankind and ourselves. And to further these relationships, we make offerings to Them that we may ask for Their blessings in return.

**Beliefs.** We in ADF have a multitude of beliefs, but here are some of the most important ones:

We believe in a multiplicity of Gods and Goddesses, as well as lesser beings, many of Whom are worthy of respect, love and worship.

We believe that divinity is both immanent (internal) and transcendent (external), with immanence being far more important to us at this point in human history.

We believe that divinity is as likely to manifest in female form as in male.

We believe that it is necessary for us to have respect, love and honor for Nature as divine in Her own right, and that we accept ourselves to be part of Nature, and not Her rulers.

We believe in the importance of celebrating the solar, lunar and other cycles of our lives in a full and conscious way, holding sacred the High Days with public ritual.

We believe that ethics and morality should be based upon joy, love, self-esteem, mutual respect, the avoidance of actual harm to ourselves and others, and the increase of the public benefit.

We believe that our Deities are perfectly capable of defending Their own honor without any need for us to punish people for "blasphemy" or "heresy."

We believe that human beings are meant to lead lives filled with joy, love, pleasure, beauty and humor.

We believe that with proper training, art, discipline and intent, our human minds and hearts are fully capable of performing most or the magic and miracles we are ever likely to need.

For more information on our beliefs, go to <http://www.adf.org/articles/cosmology/> and <http://www.adf.org/articles/gods-and-spirits/>.

**Organizational Practices.** ADF is a membership organization open to all sincere people. Leadership, however, is only open to those who describe Pagan Druidry as their primary spiritual path. Local congregations in ADF are referred to as "Groves," and are semi-autonomous with their own local traditions. At the same time, they are also part of our international organization. ADF also has many solitary members, some by choice and others because there are yet no Groves within traveling distance. Overseeing all this is our Board of Directors, also referred to as the 'Mother Grove.' This board is elected by the entire membership every two years, with the Archdruid having a three-year term.

Local Groves are required to hold public celebrations of the eight High Holidays, and to perform some kind of public service at least quarterly (cleaning up parks and other ecological activities are popular).

ADF also has a complex set of training programs in place for our members, from Clergy training down to training specific to individual Guilds dedicated to traditional spiritual, physical and artistic skills. ADF is working to combine in-depth scholarship with the inspiration of artistry and spiritual practice to create a powerful modern Paganism.

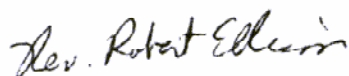
For more information on our organization, go to <http://www.adf.org/articles/organization/>.

**Clergy.** Priests (of both genders) in ADF combine the usual skills of clergy worldwide, such as pastoral counseling, church management and spiritual education, with a specialization in leading ritual, so that they may lead our congregations in celebrating the High Holidays, those lunar and other rites based on the rhythm of the seasons, and rites of passage for individuals and Groves.

ADF Clergy receive training through the Clergy Training Program administered by the Clergy Council which is made up of all ADF Clergy. There are two levels of the Priesthood marking different levels of knowledge and education. The first level is the Dedicant Priest, which requires the completion of the First Circle of the training program, as well as some other requirements, and which allows them to perform marriages for our people. The higher level, that of Full Priest, requires the completion of all three Circles of the training program and signifies a person who is both a scholar and a Priest.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Rev. Robert Ellison  
Archdruid, Ár nDraíocht Féin