



MDAS
MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES

*"Generations of vibrant, healthy
and strong Aboriginal Communities."*

October 1, 2020

Letter of introduction from Jill Gallagher

Hey all you Mobs in Mildura, Robinvale, Swan Hill and Kerang

This message is to introduce myself to you, and to encourage you all to join MDAS and come to the AGM on 28 November.

I am an Aboriginal Woman from the Gunditjmara Nations and I am a Mother of 2 and a Grandmother of 4. I grew up on Gunai/Kurnai Country picking beans with other Aboriginal Families and then moved to Fitzroy when I was about 8 or 9 and have lived in Melbourne ever since. My Mother is a Mara Elder and she is still with us today and is doing great at 94 (can you please not tell mum that I told you her age - our secret!)

I have worked in many areas of Aboriginal Affairs over my lifetime, such as family violence, Museums, then Aboriginal Heritage protection, and now Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing. I have been at VACCHO for over 20 years and I still love my work. From January 2018 to January 2020 I was the Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner, and I very much loved that work too.

I commenced my role at MDAS on Monday 21 September 2020. Because of Covid-19 I am doing this virtually, but once it is safe to come up, I will be there, so put the Billy on the boil and the Damper in the fire.

The Board have engaged me and my team to assist the organisation through a very complex time and I am very happy to help. My team consists of Jim O'Shea (Corporate Services Director, VACCHO) and Collette O'Neill (Special Projects, VACCHO) and we are all based in Melbourne. My team in Mildura are Andy Charles (acting CEO), Mike Russell (Corporate Services Director) and Kelly Masters (HR Manager).

I will be working very close with the Board and our staff.

MDAS Membership drive and AGM Planning

I hope to see all our people filling in MDAS Membership forms. If you don't have an application form, it's really easy to get one:

Download the form from the MDAS website – go to www.mdas.org.au and select the link to Membership Drive 2020 OR

- Email membership@mdas.org.au and ask for a Membership pack to be sent to you OR
- Pick one up from the MDAS offices in Mildura, Swan Hill or Kerang OR
- Call the Office on (03) 5018 4100 and ask for one to be sent to you.

Be quick! **The AGM is on Saturday 28 November 2020** and all new Members who want to have a vote at the meeting need to have their applications processed by early November.

If you need a hand to fill in your application, we can help. You can drop into an Office or call the team on (03) 5018 4100 and a staff member will help.

I hope to see you at the AGM. Details are still being worked out so watch this space.

If you are on social media, connect with MDAS so that you know all the latest news including plans for the AGM and other opportunities to be involved. Search for MDAS on Facebook and Instagram.

Jill Gallagher
Executive Director
MDAS