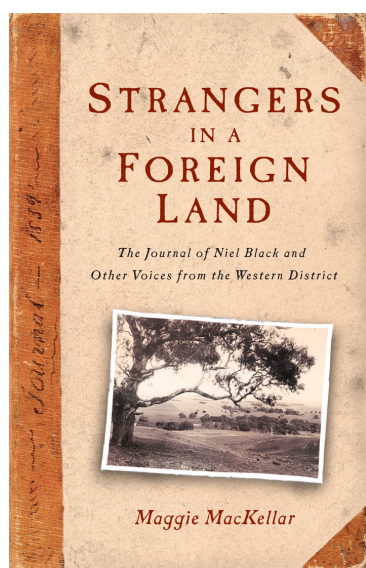


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Maggie MacKellar will be available for interview in May

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STRANGERS IN A FOREIGN LAND THE JOURNAL OF NIEL BLACK AND OTHER VOICES FROM THE WESTERN DISTRICT by Maggie MacKellar

'The Object of this Journal is to enable my Relations at home to form some idea of my mode of living here, the manner in which my time is spent, and altogether to familiarise their minds with the Australian Bushman or Squatter's life so as to enable them to form a correct judgement as regards their following my example, To hunt their Fortunes Strangers in a foreign land, and also to enable them to afford some practical information to the anxious inquiries of intending Emigrants.'

From Niel Black's 'Journal of a few of the first months spent in Australia', commencing September 30th 1839, the day after his first landing in Sydney

When Niel Black, one of the most influential settlers of the Western District of Victoria, stepped onto the sand at Port Phillip Bay in 1839 and declared Melbourne to be 'almost altogether a Scotch settlement', he was paying the newly created outpost of the British Empire his highest compliment.

His journal, reproduced here in its entirety, provides rare insight into the realities of early settlement in Victoria, detailing experiences of personal hardship and physical danger as well as the potential for accumulating great wealth and success.

Drawing on the extensive collections of the State Library of Victoria, *Strangers in a Foreign Land* also includes glimpses into the lives of other settlers and the indigenous people of the area. It evokes the sense of place and dislocation that the early settlers encountered, and the hopes and anxieties they carried with them as they created new homes in Australia.

Maggie MacKellar is an academic and an historian. Throughout her career she has written on the comparative experiences of women working on the land; her first book, *Core of My Heart My Country*, was about the role of women on the frontiers of Australia and Canada. In 2005 she moved to the central west of New South Wales to write full time. *Strangers in a Foreign Land* is her second book.