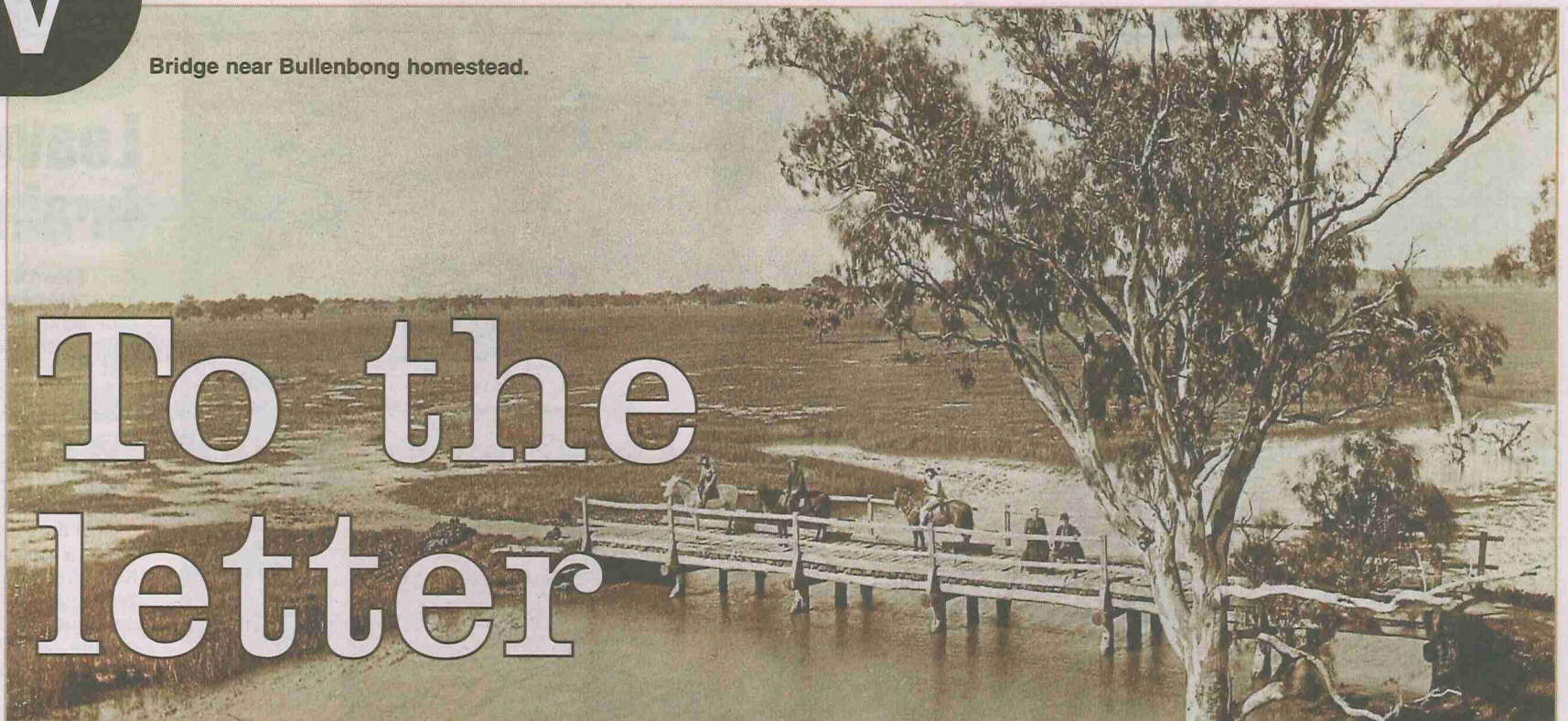


Bridge near Bullenbong homestead.



To the letter

A look at life through humble correspondence

The CSU Regional Archives is extending its opening hours to include the first Saturday of every month. On these days, the archives will be open from 10am to 3pm.

The Archives are open today, December 1.

at the archives
Wayne Doubleday



A large proportion of the archival collection held at the CSU Regional Archives is made up of varying types of correspondence.

The most interesting form of correspondence, I find, is the personal letter from one friend to another. They are a wonderful depiction of a few

moments in time, showing a person's thoughts, feelings and experiences at one particular point in their life.

The following is a transcription of one such letter.

The author is Brenda Mackenzie to her future husband, Roderick Davidson of "Bullenbong" near The Rock.

The CSU Regional Archives has in its custody 16 letters from Brenda to Roderick written between May 1912 and March 1913.

The following letter was written by Brenda while visiting with relatives at Springfield in January 1913.

Compiled by Jillian Kohlhaugen

what you need to know

The CSU Regional Archives are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Located in the Blakemore Building on South Campus of the university, access can be gained via College Avenue or Hely Avenue. Members of the public are welcome to visit the search room, where professional archival staff can assist with inquiries. For those people unable to visit the archives in person, staff can provide a research service for straight-forward inquiries for a fee of \$55 per hour including copying and postage. For further information, phone 02 6925 3666, email archive@csu.edu.au, or visit our website at www.csu.edu.au/research/archives for a full listing of holdings and more detailed information.

My dearest One,

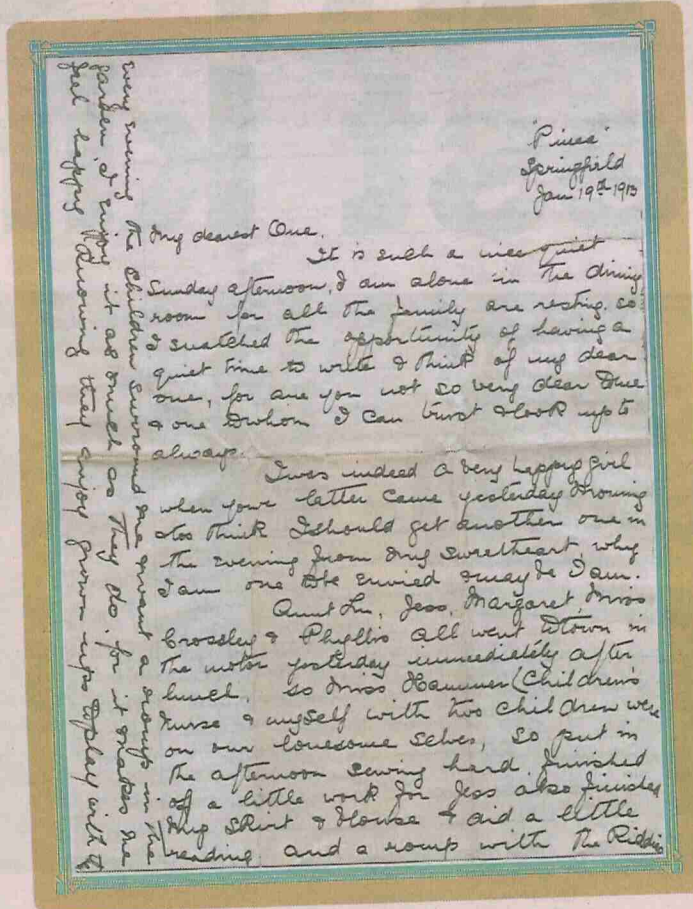
It is such a nice quiet Sunday afternoon. I am alone in the dining room for all the family are resting. So I snatched the opportunity of having a quiet time to write and think of my dear one, for are you not so very dear to me and one to whom I can trust and look up to always?

I was indeed a very happy girl when your letter came yesterday morning and to think I should get another one in the evening from my sweetheart. Why, I am one to be envied and may be I am.

Aunt [?], Jess, Margaret, Miss Crossley and Phyllis all went to town in the motor yesterday immediately after lunch, so Miss Harmer (Children's nurse) and myself with two children were on our lonesome selves, so put in the afternoon sewing hard. Finished off a little work for Jess, also finished my skirt and blouse and did a little reading and a romp with the kiddies. Every evening the children surround me and want a romp in the garden. I enjoy it as much as they do for it makes me feel happy knowing they enjoy grown ups to play with them. Every morning they come in to see us before breakfast. Still for all their dear winning little ways, they are pickles.

Margaret and I are off to spend the day with Mrs Budden tomorrow. She lives about three miles from here nearer to Goulburn. We both like her so much. She is so good and kind to everyone - we were hoping to have a treat in the way of ice-creams for we hear her ice-creams are delicious. Would you not like to be coming too, dearest? It is a shame to think you are so far off. But you will not be forgotten, dear, as you know you are ever in my thoughts no matter where I am or what I'm doing, and the thought of you makes work so much easier when it was at times irksome.

Oh dearest, I am trying to be patient. It is a hard lesson to learn but you won't think me selfish to be always longing to have you here? But this longing seems to grow more and more and unsettles me. But your letter yesterday was such a comfort. I was indeed very sorry for you all to hear of Harry's misfortune. No doubt he caught a chill which brought on the complaint but I do hope for your sake he is better for I know how hard my dearest is working and never complaining. Never mind dear



heart, you and I are hoping for something better soon, and a good restful holiday after all your labours.

Have done a little reading. Finished "A Mother's Son" last night. A pretty story. Will now start "Winding Waters". Margaret has just finished reading it and recommended me the book.

Any rain up your way? There has been a storm pretty well every afternoon this week but only just a passing storm and the sunset after it has been a most magnificent sight, a lovely grey with touches of palest pink, and then changing to a glorious blue green.

Have promised to make Jess a skirt next week. She bought a beautiful piece of serge at the tailor's yesterday so am hoping it will be a success. After that will do some alterations to some undershirts and Margaret is going to make two blouses for her - so she says she will have us all out again to stay and make her clothes. Aunt [?] also is helping with children's dresses so none of us are at all idle.

No church today. Service is held every 2nd Sunday in month. We are glad we have not to go over today. It is scorching today with a high wind blowing.

Our summer is very hot indeed at times dearest but the evenings are as a rule cool. A sea-breeze blows up occasionally for which we are thankful. Makes the heat more endurable, I think.

Will went off yesterday to [?] and expected back this evening, and just after we had all gone to our bedrooms about eleven it must have been, smelt strong smoke blowing into our rooms. Aunt Jess did not notice it till just as she was getting into bed. She feared a bush fire was close by for the smoke was dense outside. We were all in our nightgowns hunting round the house but no sign of anything. So Aunt Jess went over to the men's cottage and called one to investigate. He rode off but said there was no cause for alarm. It was fires in the ranges and the sea-breeze carrying the smoke across. It must have been one o'clock before we got to sleep. Jess is a fearfully nervous person especially when Will is away and keeps a loaded revolver. Would not allow us to sleep with the shutters open for fear someone might run away with us.

I am so pleased, sweetheart, you liked those words. Thought you would, and I do echo them so you are not vain. But no man could possibly have written them without being in love I think.

Margaret was very anxious to know the other day why I did not go to the [?] Races. Said I was not keen and had no wish to go. So Aunt Jess chipped in and said, "Oh she's got 'em bad". I only laughed so nothing more was said. They like to tease a bit but get no satisfaction out of me.

Yesterday Aunt Jess said to me, "Oh you seem to hear from Bullenbong very often. How's that?" I can only laugh and pretend there is nothing on, but you don't mind them teasing, do you, as I don't.

Do you still dream sweetheart? Oh, I had lovely dreams of you last night. Was so happy for you were actually here with me having a good quiet time together. No, I've not had one single word from "Esrom". Wonder why? Could I have offended them, I wonder, in any way? Well, I am somewhat disappointed and perhaps I expected too much. [?] may be going up to Braidwood tonight to stay with the Royds again. Suppose Bill will take her up in his motor, so may have to go home on Wednesday, for I have had a nice rest and must settle down to hard work once more.

Wonder how Sunday school is today - do you know, dear, I miss teaching a wee bit. Hope to be there again next Sunday. You will be tiring of this long scribble. Hope you can read it.

Good-bye my darling. Fondest love,
Ever yours,
Bren.