HELLO and welcome to another exciting edition of Birrong Girls’ exclusive
Teen Zine (Awesome) Magazine
Teen Zine is Birrong’s FIRST self published online Magazine brought to you by the writers and editors of The Year 10 Teen-Zine Team!

Editors: Kathleen Wynter, Isabella Pham, Eman Gourani, Rowena Leung and Hanan Rahmany
Supervisor: Ms Brown from the English Staffroom

Okay, So here it is; We had a amazing time putting this together and learnt from our previous issue just how much work and effort has to go into the Zine even though we had a blast making it, In this edition we have heaps of exciting stuff, including the English Competition winners (both junior AND senior) We also have a collaboration of both 2010 and 2011 work!

Cover: Rowena Leung
Interesting Facts: Eman Gourani
Ending Up Where I Am Now: Hanan Rahmany
Star: Zarlasht Latifi
Life Gone Wrong: Bushra Al Hiriz
Photo Gallery: Photography Students (year 9 2010)
Interactive Whiteboards: Kathleen Wynter
Twelfth Night: Eman Gourani
The Civilian War: Anke Nguyen
The Addiction: Isabella Pham
First Edition Zine Feedback
Thankyou Page
Interesting Facts

- Nachos are the food most craved by pregnant women.
- All porcupine float in water.
- Your nose and ears never stop growing.
- Babies start dreaming even before they are born.
- If you unfolded your brain it would cover an ironing board.

- Slugs have 4 noses.
- A twit is the technical term for a pregnant goldfish.
- The dot over the letter ‘I’ is called a tittle.
- It is against the law to put pretzels in bags in Philadelphia.
- The most overdue book in the world was borrowed from Sidney Sussex College in Cambridge, England and was returned 288 years later.
- Google’s name was originally named BackRub.
- In Youngstown, Ohio, it is illegal to run out of petrol.
- In the US, there are 83 people with the name Edward Cullen.
- If you spell out every number- starting with one, you won’t use the letter ‘a’ until you reach one thousand.
- There is a company in Taiwan that makes dinnerware out of wheat- so you can eat your plate.
Ending Up Where I Am Now

“It was shaped flawlessly! I stood in awe how the bins stood over one another to form a temporary shelter. OHH! There was a cardboard box! Hurrah! Cardboard boxes were great to keep out the unpleasantly cold wind. I couldn’t believe it. I had found a temporary home, and it was right near the rubbish bin tip, PERFECT! I gazed up to the sky, past the long standing human homes and saw sinister dark clouds forming over the clear sky. I shivered and let a small yelp at the growl which was coming from my greedy belly. The smell of this place was horrible, it was intoxicating and hard to breathe; yet I couldn’t complain, the little shelter was better than the open and in addition it was soon going to rain. I hated the rain.

I wanted to stay at my tidy home and comfort myself, but I couldn’t, I was simply too hungry, I didn’t stand there for long. I galloped towards the rubbish tip, the warm juices of my mouth dripping, I couldn’t wait to eat!

As I entered the tip, I started to daydream...there was a banquet fit for kings, just waiting for me! I rushed about trying to find something edible but soon became dizzy. I sat and thought for awhile, and then slowly ambled around gathering items which were edible. There were many things, two banana peels, a chicken bone with some meat left on it, a few popcorn pieces, cold chips with a tiny amount of tomato sauce, an egg and tomato sandwich with a bit of mould and a piece of old chicken burger. What a magnificent feast! I gobbled all the food as fast as I could, imagining I had a never ending amount of it. As I finished the last popcorn piece, I realised I was still hungry; but as I was about to start searching for something to eat again, I felt a tiny drop of rain on my nose and saw a brilliant strike of lightning in the distance. I bolted for my little house, not even caring if I was hungry. The rain began, slowly then gradually building up and turning into a storm...I wished I was home in front of a blazing fire with my snugly blanket placed over me. I longed for the warmth and the love of a family, to love me and feed me three times a day, to give me my own bed and play with me.

As I was thinking to myself, I heard thunder right above me; at last the rain had slowed to a light sprinkle...how come there was still thunder? It hit again, right above me! I cowered, whined and held my paws against my ears, this thunder wanted to hurt me...I shut my eyes and felt the cold rain water hit against my back, I jolted and sat up in shock. The roof of my house had been destroyed; instead of it was a human being face smiling at me. I got up and stood in an attack position. HOW DARE THIS HUMAN RUIN MY HOME! I let a low growl, however this human didn’t budge, and it bent down and stretched its hand towards me and spoke something I didn’t make out. I was hesitant but slowly I realised this human did not wish to hurt me. I gave way, longing to be comforted, trotting slowly and carefully. I walked up and smelt the hand, OH! The smell of food. YUM!

The human started to ruffle my fur, and tickle my chin; I love being tickled under the chin. I yelped and wagged my little tail, in hope of being given food. The human got up and took me up with them as well; lifting me very cautiously.
I felt a glitter of hope shine in that little heart of mine, but I squinted and closed my eyes and ordered myself to wake up, but I WAS awake, this was really happening, it wasn’t a dream.
I felt warmth as I entered a room being carried by this gentle human.
I was taken to the bathroom, where steam began to surround me caused by the hot water running in the bathtub. I jumped into it, feeling the warmth against my body. I saw bubbles beginning to appear and yelped in joy! Oh how I loved bubbles. I stayed in the bathtub for an exceedingly lengthy time; my fur had changed back to its original colour from the bath I was taking. It was white again. How this cheered me up. I felt warm hands around me and was lifted out of the bath, I felt clean for the first time in a long while. A fluffy towel started to rub against my fur, drying my drenched coat. I felt a blast of warm wind hit me as I realised a blow-dryer had been turned on. The blow-dryer was comforting, warming and as I was starting to drift into my daydream, it turned off. I was lifted off the floor again, and taken into a room where the warm air was circulating. I was gently placed down on a mink blanket and served a giant metallic silver bowl. Food was poured into it and I wasted no time diving into the food...was this really happening to me? I wasn’t sure but I didn’t want to stop. Eventually my stomach had no more space left for more; I slumped down and felt exhausted.
I fell asleep really fast that night. I woke up several times from bad dreams but quickly fell asleep again. I had realise this was truly not a dream...Young Pup I’ve been here ever since, Noah is a good human, you’re in safe hands.”
The little dog yelped in relief and flopped himself on the floor. I thought to myself “This pup has been through a lot, I know because I was in the same position as him”. I gently lowered me body right next to my new companion and snuggled closer to keep him warm.

Written By Hanan Rahmany
I’m as tall as a tree
   gentle as a swan
  As quiet as a mouse
My hair is as black as cold winters night
My eyes are as brown as a Hazel Nut
My smile is like the sunshine.
I am me ~

By Krystal Tran

Rain droplets falling
  From a high distance above
As they touch the sea
By Marium AlKhazaaly

I would love to sing
And dance and laugh all night long
Until I drop dead.
By Nasia Kyriacou

Look Outside, see the trees
Watch the flowers in the breeze
Things won’t be like this in a year or two
If polluting is all we do
Seize the night
Seize the day
Things won’t always be this way
Thousands of people are dying
In the night you hear children crying
Let’s stop the war
Our people are sore
The world can’t help itself
Who cares about your wealth
Help me to help you
Show the world what you can do.
By Hanna Hijazi

The Clock

Ticking a beat through silence,
Like a lonesome busker,
Ticking invades the street.

By Helen Mac

ROCKSTAR!

She is a guitar
Playing hard rock

She is a loud boom-box
Blasting out music

She is a flaming inferno
Filling the town with flames

She is a showstopper
Taking on the stage.
By Emily Miciev
The star is a diamond
sparkling in the night sky

It is a group of silver butterflies,
flyng around in circles

It is dot of ink dropped on a paper,
floating around the dark blue ocean

It is the sparkle of a newborn baby,
hollowing in the wind

It is the silver starfish,
twinkling in the sky.

Written by Zarlasht Latifi
“You’re going again?” said Miriam.
“Yes I have to go” said Harold.
“But why, and for how long?” Miriam asked
“For about three days” said Harold. He kissed her cheek and left.

Harold was an environmentalist. he was going with a group of friends and scientists, like many other times but this time he felt that he was being followed and he was...

A week had past and Harold hadn’t returned. Miriam was getting worried. She went to her friend’s house and stayed the night. In the morning Miriam woke up and went to the kitchen she saw her friend Alexandra reading the morning newspaper, she had a shocked look on her face
“What’s wrong? What’s the matter? Tell me!” said Miriam.
"Um... um...nothing" said Alexandra.
"Oh tell me Alex. I know you very well, what's wrong? Said Miriam.
Alexandra took a deep breath and said
“Ok...it says here, a man named Harold has been taken to smash field hospital. He had a piece of his left leg bitten off; the doctors say that he might have been bitten by a wild bear”
Miriam couldn’t believe what she is hearing she had an unusual feeling that something terrifying was going to happen really soon.

That afternoon Miriam went to the hospital to see Harold, when she came into the room he was asleep he looked like he was having a nightmare his face was pale like he has just seen a ghost; he suddenly woke up he howled with pain from his sudden movement, he had a frightening look on his face looked he wanted to attack Miriam, after a while he calmed down and went back to sleep, he said nothing to Miriam as if she wasn’t there.

Miriam went home that night worried about Harold. All night she couldn’t sleep, she had weird visions about nocturnal creatures coming to haunt her; each one was scarier than the other. In the morning she went to a psychological doctor but he only said
“there is nothing wrong with you, you are only worried about your fiancé."

After the talk with the doctor she went to see Harold, there was something strange about him, he was talking to someone but there was no one there.
“What is happening to me...? Why am I here? I can’t do this master... there has to be another way...help me master!” He was saying.
When Miriam went in the room he growled at her and she jumped back in surprise. Tonight was a full moon and Miriam stayed with Harold as her eyes closed she heard growling and a type of screaming she opened her eyes and saw in his place a ugly looking dog with long legs and he was standing on his back legs heading out of the room.
“Who are you? Are you Harold? Where are you going?” said Miriam
"Yes I am Harold, you are a victim and you should go..."he said.
Miriam ran for her life and never saw her darling Harold again.

Written By Bushra AlHiriz
Photo Gallery

Photograph taken by Rowena Leung

Photograph taken by Christina Le
Photo Gallery

Photograph taken by Jessica LaDelfa

Photograph taken by Christina Le
Interactive Whiteboards – The Future or a Waste of Money?

Smart Boards. Are they the future of our education or a waste of money? Some believe that these modern, technological devices are a tool for distraction, while others refer to them as an ‘education booster’ or more commonly, the future of our education.

The installation of the IWBs can be a bother and an annoyance to teachers and students. While these students are in class, the process of installing one of these Smart Boards is still in progress. Because there are usually two normal whiteboards per classroom, one has to be removed in order to place a new Smart Board in the room, and during classes, there have been cases where one whiteboard is removed but a Smart Board hasn’t been put in its place yet. As a result of this, teachers could only write on one whiteboard and have constantly had to erase their previous notes to make space for more. Some of the whiteboards have even been removed from the wall, so the teachers have had to place the whiteboard on a chair and bend down to be able to write things onto it. This does not only affect the teacher, but also affects students’ learning in the classroom.

Interactive White Boards provide the possibility of accessing the internet and other useful tools in the classroom. Some teachers prefer to leave these Smart Boards alone and think of them as a distraction from the actual class work, while other teachers use them frequently to assist in the presentation and accuracy of the class work. Through the teachers’ accounts on the DET Portal, they are able to provide the students with useful videos of the topic they are studying and are able draw diagrams easily with the specially designed pens. Depending on the teacher and class, these IWBs can be either a benefit or a distraction for the students’ education.

One thing that bothers me, personally, is the fact that the walls aren’t painted before the installation of these Smart Boards. This can make the rooms look less professional and aesthetically appealing. However, the colour scheme and the look of the IWBs are very professional in my opinion.

Overall, depending on the teachers and the students that use these Smart Boards, these IWBs can be considered either a benefit or detriment to the students’ education. What do you think?

Written By Kathleen Wynter
On the 23rd of November 2010, 100 year nine students had the opportunity to attend an excursion to the Sydney Opera House. The students were going to watch a theatre show called The Twelfth Night. This excursion would help assist them with their work in class. The students were at school at 8:30 am, had the rolls marked and departed the school to walk to Birrong station. They were fully supervised by teachers. From there, they caught a train to Circular Quay and walked the way to the Opera house.

The carriages with Birrong in them were not quite. Year nines dominated the trains at this time. The students were given a chance to take photos and eat lunch outside the theatre. They then entered and the play began. Fortunately, Birrong Girls were told to sit in the first 5 seats, which was fantastic because you could see all the action close-up. One word used to describe the play was: Brilliant- Not only because there were cute actors, but because the storyline was easy to follow and everyone remembered their lines.

After half the play was over, both the audience and actors received a break in case they needed to go to the toilet or have something to eat. The audience was called back inside after a good break and the play resumed. During the play there were many songs, applauses, laughs and possibly tears (because one female actor was kissing the hot male actor.) The play was over before you knew it. After the theatre was vacated and everyone was outside, there was another opportunity to take photos and eat. There were many other schools watching the play.

Having time planned carefully, the teachers told the students that they had to get back to the train in time. But walking on the way, the actors were spotted walking out in public. A student ran up to them and asked for a photo together but eventually the whole year realised and got in the photo. After many photos and screams, the actors were left alone to enjoy the rest of the day. The year nines then boarded the train back home. It was an interesting day for them. One that was unforgettable.
The Soldier’s Wish

The following passage is the start to the next three chapters of the experiences soldiers endured in the eye of the battle. They are the ones who know the true meaning of a civil war.

There doesn't seem to be any time in this place. A day burns away like a candle in the night. It keeps burning and burning until it's forgotten. Like the candle I'm still burning but there is a time when it has to come to a stop. But the process is repeating over itself. This is too much. My heart has stopped but my body is still firing. I feel like a walking corpse stained in the blood of the innocent. What is my purpose? I started off with the ambition to bring justice for those who chose to not go down this path, for the civilians who bring this world forward for us. 'We manage this country and they help us make it a better place' that's what I said to come down this path.

When the years were still peaceful, before I was sent to the crater where matters split into blood on the dusty red dirt, my eyes met things in a different way. I was living not surviving. That's all I can say. As I rest here between the cracks of a collapsed home with pieces of burning metal and rubble around me, I can't get my head around the matter of surviving. I've left my life for far too long to remember how it was. Being here, not having any hope to return to a family or home, I feel like I've already died since the first shot I made on the civilian. My heart cease and I seem to detach from my body when it comes to that thought, the Civilian War. Over the years death flashed beneath my eyes in a single minute. In this arid land of survival the first option is death then life. Here we're all used to the constant sequence of screams, pleads, cries, explosions and everything is seen in a slur of red. We all just want to go home and just have a decent warm meal. For that it is worth surviving for.

I've walked myself into this fire so the best I can do is to walk myself out of it. By now I'm pretty much crawling. Crawling to where? To somewhere bright. Maybe it’s the Sun but I’m not sure anymore. The rays of the sun felt like it had opened up the curtains inside of me, allowing all the images of people, mothers and children dying from my hands to rush out of my mind. It's easier to breath now. I had lost myself towered beneath those regrets. I fell to the ground thinking of how wonderful it would be to meet my wife and children again. They're still waiting for me at home. I'll be there soon.

This passage was combined from the remaining extracts of the soldier's journal. It was found beside his body, both withering away. The anonymous soldier was half buried beneath the build up of dirt. By that time his body was making its way into nature. He lay in the red dirt with nothing else but the journal and a gun in his hand. It was too late to return him back home.
The Addiction

The rush was like a drug, once was all you needed and you’re hooked. You tell yourself it was a onetime thing, you were never going to do it again but it was just a beautiful lie.

The high you felt was like soaring through the sky and thinking you would never come back down. But all things that go up must come down. The down was alright; waiting for the down was like a fiery hell that wanted desperately to consume you. Like when you were riding the rollercoaster and you know it’s going to drop. Nevertheless, you forget about it for a while and then it pauses just for that second. All the doubt you pushed out of your mind comes rushing back and then you erupt. The fear, anxiety and the euphoria clouds your mind, and you take the plunge. It is too late to stop, you’ve gone off the deep end and there is no going back.

You deny it with every fibre of your body, you say that you’re different, but you realise you’re more alike than you’d ever want to admit. They’re your parents, but you’ve never met them in your life. Ironically, you’ve never met them, but you’ve followed their footsteps. The constant danger of their profession gives you a thrill, you wonder in the back of your mind if your parents have felt the same way.

The full moon was blooming tonight and it was tonight when it began. The anxiety would make you wary but your muscles tense. The wind blew your neat pony tail that you kept your hair in. You skim across the rooftops of buildings and the ecstasy fills your body and mind. You reach your destination, it was time. You tell yourself it was immoral but it didn’t matter anymore, you couldn’t go back any longer.

It was your job, profession, even. It was time, the guards are prepared to capture you, assuring some rich business man that they would surely succeed, but you knew it was futile. You take the plunge, and enter the guarded building.

3 minutes. . .
You enter the correct floor. You dodge the alarms and retrieve it.
2 minutes. . .
You run and then jump through a window.
1 minute. . .
The guards are alerted but it’s too late. . .
The deed was done.
That night the rich business man cursed your name. . . The Blooming Moon Thief. . .

Written By Isabella Pham
And here it is! The feedback from our previous issue of 2010, special thanks to those who took their time to read through the magazine, it meant a lot to us! Thankyou to the wonderful girls who sent in their feedback, it was interesting what people had to say and we tried using the feedback to improve the magazine. Also, if we could have more students who could kindly send in their poems, stories and recounts or any piece of writing, we would be greatly appreciative!

I've read it!
Great jobs, guys, great jobs. Now I wished I submitted something! I always wanted to write a short story but I never got the chance to sit down and conjure something good up. (Okay, it's also because I was partially too lazy to do so I especially liked The End by Anke Nguyen - it was bittersweet and sad. Questions arose when I read it, 'who is he?', 'why is he sick - old age? Cancer' and for me, your story had a lingering effect after the words 'this is the end.' Haha, I was drawn in. The poetry is great, it's always fascinating how poetic some of the Birrong students are - because you never know until you read their stuff! My favourite is by Zaara Ahmed, 'the Painful Truth' because it pretty much sums up what I think of people and the world right now. I do believe that human kind with its technology and their money centred minds (our Western society) are slowly evolving into bestial creatures; selfish, cruel and heartless. Nature and the wildlife are facing the consequences of our actions and through the eyes of Mother Nature she probably would be ashamed of what is happening. Sorry if I'm blabbing too much.

I honestly think that Zine is going to get even bigger and better as the years go on, so hang in there Ziners! I'm in awe right now because all of you have dedicated your time to write a short story or poem, to take photos, write about your embarrassing moment and I couldn't even spare a few hours of my time to contribute. I wonder if I can write something and submit it for the next Zine issue... And to the editors, well done! I'm currently working on the year 12 yearbook so I know how much work and effort that goes into it. Keep up the good work: D
-Mary Tran yr 12 (2010)

Great Job on your first Teen Zine Magazine!
It is very interesting and I think it is a great idea to have a self- published magazine in which students get to participate in. I love this issue and I am looking forward to the next one! Good job, again guys! ; )
Lisa Mohammadi Yr 9 (2010)

I have read this article it is an amazing magazine and funny stories they are really incredible im so pleased with you with the work you did ,It shows how wonderful and keen you are in
doing this magazine and it is well structured at the same time and thank you for sending me this article cheers  
Nomusa Ncube, yr 11 (2010)

Hello Ms Brown  
I actually enjoyed reading the teen Zine, it had quite interesting stories which I really like reading them. The heading and all the bright colours made it enjoyable to read the magazine. I can’t wait to read the second issue.  
Zahraa Alhirz yr 8 (2010)

Wow ZINE is so good, it’s so new and different. I can tell that the Zine team did A LOT of work. Congratulations on publishing it and I hope it'll continue to be successful in the future.  
Looking forward to the next issue. =D  
Anke Nguyen, yr 9 (2010)
Thank you to EVERYONE who wrote something for Zine,

Thank you to those who sent their pictures and photos :D

Thank you to the amazing editors who put this together

AND thank you to the supportive Ms Brown who coordinated this Magazine 😊