

***What's to come in this issue:***

In this rather late issue we have a few of the usual things, plus a few new things as well. Some article written by members of the APA about what the APA has been doing recently and an older interview with David Belle. Thought it was worth digging up as people sometimes miss these things. Hope you like it.

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***Letter from the APA president***

Hi everyone,  
Welcome to the second edition of the Australian Parkour Association newsletter. Sorry about it being late. A few issues arose at the start of the year, one being that I moved house, the second that my computer crashed and I had to build everything back up again. So without further ado, here is the second newsletter. Feel free to give us feedback and/or contribute articles, photos, offers to help with the newsletter and ideas for future editions.  
[newsletter@parkour.asn.au](mailto:newsletter@parkour.asn.au)

Matthew Campbell 'Chippa'  
President APA



*Alex – Passement, Photographer – Lauren.*

By Chippa

### *The Culture of Parkour in Australia*

The question of whether Parkour in Australia has a culture arose from considering what the future held for Parkour in our country.

As has been pointed out by some, the wider Australian community doesn't have one cohesive culture so to speak. Though some very distinct attitudes and ways groups conduct themselves have become apparent. These different groups all impact on how Parkour and traceurs in general are perceived. Though the influence these different groups have on the wider community differs depending on their level of participation within the actual community.

The community in Australia is varied. There is the online community, those who spend time on forums discussing Parkour. These forums are one way for newcomers to become acquainted with the art and begin meeting other people to learn. There are also smaller groups of friends that train exclusively amongst themselves. They may be on the forums, but don't get out and train with the 'public' groups. There is also the 'word of mouth community' as well. Those individuals who hear about Parkour from friends and are unaware of or don't wish to participate with the online community. They travel under the radar of the online community, but there are many out there (at least in Melbourne anyway, the amount of people I train with who don't use forums is quite large).

It is the people that are out in the community training the newcomers that seem to have the greatest influence on how new traceurs behave and how they actually perceive and practice Parkour. This can be seen by the way that training groups develop in certain cities. My experience is with Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

Within each city there is a larger group that meets up on a regular basis. These groups usually have 'unofficial leaders', usually people with a skill level higher than the average person there, with some level of ability to teach others, and that organize the training on a forum, or by word of mouth. It is these unofficial leaders that influence the behavior of the rest of the group. It is interesting to see how the attitude of the group is influenced by those who are looked up to for leadership, guidance and inspiration.

**By Chippa**

It is these leaders that can, and do influence the behavior of the group, and therefore the culture of the group. With this in mind, what then are the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of Parkour and some of the varying behaviors of the groups?

A traceur strives to be useful, altruistic. Be it through putting Parkour in to practice, or to help others with their training. They also look for progression, always seeking to better themselves and their own understanding. Be it a better understanding of Parkour, what they fear and how to overcome it or just a deeper understanding of themselves as a person.

Some groups and individuals in Melbourne are focused on getting the most from their training and aspire for a high level of skill within Parkour. This influences the manner in which they train and the way they portray themselves to the public. Others practice simply for fun and the social aspect. Some groups and individuals are helpful to the public when they are asked questions, or when out as a group. Some are rude and insulting and even seek to cause trouble at times. The same could probably said for all the other states in Australia as well. What some of the more selfish and rude people may not realise, or even care about, is that their behavior affects how the rest of us are perceived and they way people treat us in the future.

The future of Parkour itself and how it is understood and practiced will be decided by the people who take on the responsibility of teaching and educating newcomers and the quality of information and teaching that they provide. The future understanding of Parkour by the wider community is dependant on how we portray ourselves to the public, how we conduct ourselves in interviews, and out in the community when people recognize what we are doing and see how we behave and act.

*An old interview, but still very relevant.*

### **PKCali Interview with David Belle**

Ok, so as Jpnphreak3 finishes cutting the video proof that we were David Belle and Joss, I'd like to share with you some of the knowledge that was imparted upon me by the founder himself.

I had the wonderful opportunity to meet David and Joss the evening of July 12, 2005 and just sit down and chat with them. I also got to spend time doing Parkour with them the next day. Here are some of the things we discussed that I don't think have surfaced to the message boards and the community and I think will help you learn a little more.

First thing first, when asked for his (David's) words as to what is Parkour, he said this:

At the physical end, Parkour is getting over all the obstacles in your path as you would in an emergency situation. You want to move in such a way, with any movement, that will help you gain the most ground on someone/something as if escaping from someone/something or chasing toward someone/something. Also, wherever you go, you must be able to get back. If you go from A to B, you need to be able to get back from B to A. You don't need to do the same "move," but just get back.

He also stated that Parkour extends beyond the physical. When asked if he thinks of Parkour as playing a role in the hardships we face in daily life, translation was a little difficult so I used an example. I asked, "If someone is having difficulties in a relationship with a girlfriend/boyfriend, do you see those difficulties as obstacles like you do in Parkour?" He responded with an example of his own, "If you are in front of a wall that you cannot get passed, would you just keep banging your head into the wall?... No, you would find a new wall." He definitely believes that Parkour goes beyond just the physical in more than one way, which leads to the next aspect of Parkour.

I'd like to draw your attention to this as possibly being the MOST important thing I learned from speaking with David, as this seems to have gotten lost in our community. Parkour is about helping people. With the training and knowledge we get from Parkour, we become useful and can help others. The range of situations in which we become useful and helpful is wide. We can help save someone stuck inside a burning building. Or help another traceur to progress over a wall so that traceur can then become useful. We need to share with each other what we learn, ways to train, and useful concepts.

Further, it's about what you can do at that particular moment. If someone is stuck in a fire and you say, "Well, two years ago I could have done something that would have saved you" then you are useless. Parkour is not what you could have done for whatever excuse. If you aren't able to help someone, what use are you ?

David is a very humble person. He doesn't see himself as being superior. While many people like to say he is god-like, he quickly shakes his head at this notion. He states that he is just a man and claims, "If I break my leg, I can do nothing and am useless."

Also, Parkour is about progression, continually looking to improve yourself so you can do that much more. David cites an example, "If someone puts you in front of a 30m high wall, tells you to get over it, and then comes back two years later and you're still there, you've made no progress. You should find another wall." You need to always look to progress. David's father was always on top of him to fix his movements and get better. There was, and is, always a way to improve. One of the ways to progress is to help each other. Everyone has a different view, physicality, and means of training and applying knowledge from which they can offer advice, options, and assistance. The more you progress, the more you can help.

David also pointed out that while doing Parkour, you need to be focused on what you are doing. Maintaining concentration is key. You must be ready for whatever you are going to do. When a traceur tells another traceur to "be careful," they are not saying, "Don't get hurt." They are saying, "Keep focused. Don't lose your concentration." If you lose your concentration, that is when you put yourself in danger. You don't want your mind to be elsewhere. Never do things because of other people watching or daring you to do something if you can't be focused and dedicated to what it is you are doing. Don't attempt anything when you mentally are distracted. When doing Parkour, you must dedicate your mind to what you are doing.

When asked about why the world tour, the response was this. To spread Parkour so as to be helpful to the rest of the world. It's a means of exercising that part of Parkour...being helpful to others and sharing the knowledge. It is a center point and contact for the Parkour information they seek to share. The world tour allows for the true illustration that Parkour can be done anywhere in the world no matter what your environment. Be it rural, urban, rocks, buildings, trees, France, California, Madagascar, Japan, etc. it doesn't matter. The world tour also allows David and others to get out around the world and spread the understanding of Parkour first hand. Who better than the founder himself.

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When asked about competition, it came out that his view of competition is very different from the general ideas about competitions. He said that they already have competitions. However, the competitions are not ones of war, battling for who is better. The competitions are about helping. Who can help the most people and spread

their knowledge. There are no medals or prizes. The competitions are when different people meet up and share their views in order to teach and learn from each other. By doing this, you become the best as you show you are useful and helpful. The more people you help, the more useful you have become as those people will then go on to help others...you win.

We spoke about a number of other topics, but nothing quite so significant for the Parkour community as the above information. If something else comes to mind that I left out, I'll add it in. I hope this has been helpful for everyone. Thanks to David Belle and Joss for coming out. I look forward to seeing them again next month !!



*Chippa – Passement, Photographer – Lauren.*

*By Chippa*

### **ACTIVITIES OF THE APA**

#### **BLUEARTH**

The Australian Parkour Association held a unique event on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2007. It was asked to run a workshop for Bluearth on a scale it hadn't yet dealt with before. Every year Bluearth have a gathering of personnel from all over Australia. This was an opportunity for them to learn a little about Parkour and experience it firsthand.

The workshop was held out the back of Federation square in Melbourne. There were seven APA trainers present: Chippa, Morgan, James, Joshua, Blair, Alex and Ish. There were 36 people from Bluearth attending. The mix consisted of an even spread of men and women. Ages varied from early twenties to 40+.

Due to time restrictions there was only a brief description of Parkour and then it was onto the warm up. After the warm up the group was split in to smaller groups of six and taken away by an instructor. Each group spent 10 minutes learning about and practicing a specific technique with each instructor, before moving on to the next one. Techniques covered included: rolls, cat jumps, arm jumps, precision jumps, speed vaults and lazy vaults.

The Bluearth group as a whole took very well to the instruction and weren't afraid to give anything a go. They were impressed with our professionalism and ability to teach them techniques and provide helpful encouragement. The classes generated a lot of interest from passers by, many curious as to what we were doing and some more interested to see if they could join in at a later date. Many of the Bluearth personnel were also interested in continuing to learn more and train Parkour when they returned to their respective home town's, and were asking about contacts for training that were close to their areas.

Unfortunately time was limited and they had to leave after we had run them all through the different techniques. All in all it was a very successful operation and the Bluearth group is keen to continue learning from and using the services of the APA in the future.

Should you wish to know more about Bluearth visit their website: [www.bluearth.org](http://www.bluearth.org)

*By Blair Walker*

### **ACTIVITIES OF THE APA**

#### **BALLARAT TRIP**

For some time now there has been a small scene going in Ballarat, a rural city in Victoria. Members of this scene have been requesting that some of the Melbourne APA guys come up to Ballarat and meet and train with them. Eventually we (Chippa, James, Blair and Alex) settled on Saturday the 17th of Feb and drove up to meet them.

After arriving rather early, scoping out the city centre and just generally mucking about for a while people started turning up to the meeting point. After the usual meet and greet we asked the locals to show us around the places where they trained. We spent some time doing a solid warm up and then training began. Ballarat has a lot of good, varied training places and some talented traceurs. We were shown a couple of 'Uni campus', the town centre, a fantastic wooden playground next to a dried up lake (what a sight it is to see yacht club pier stretching out into a dry paddock). Over the course of the day a lot of teaching was done, a lot of new things were discovered, a lot of discussion was had and a brick fell on my head. All in all a very successful day.

Given their training grounds, the current general level of the Ballarat traceurs and the moving in of a number of Geelong's traceurs we fully expect Ballarat to have a thriving scene of its own in the very near future.

*By Ruzkin*

### **ACTIVITIES OF THE APA**

The Australian Parkour Association ran its first Melbourne outdoor training session on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> of February, with more than double the expected number of students turning up for the Parkour Basics class. A group of six APA instructors led twenty three students of varying ages through the Alexander Gardens for an intensive session focussing on the training and drilling of proper parkour techniques.

Chippa Campbell led the classes with APA instructors Alex, James, Josh, Ruzkin and Blair assisting students throughout. The two hour class began with a comprehensive warmup of stretches, joint mobility exercises and conditioning. The class then covered the basics of quadrupedal movement, followed by learning how to roll first on grass and later on concrete. Many novice Traceurs found themselves being forced to train rolls over both shoulders for the first time, and quickly learned the importance of developing both sides of the body equally.

After drilling rolls the group moved together up through Alexander Gardens where students trained cat jumps and speed vaults over the nearby obstacles. Again, the importance of drilling movements on both sides of the body was stressed, and many students were seen to advance significantly within a short space of time.

The lesson concluded with warmdown stretches and a feedback session for students. The APA will be taking all their advice into account for planning future lessons, and a number of students expressed interest in returning for both Basic and Advanced classes in future. A small group of students then joined the APA instructors in an informal jam and dinner in the city. Good ties were formed and even APA instructors learned something from the day, as students from varying fitness backgrounds lent their knowledge of alternative stretching and conditioning.

Classes will continue every Sunday, with interest in joining being expressed from youth fitness groups in Geelong.

## INSURANCE

The APA recently obtained public liability insurance. This now allows us to begin conducting training sessions, The first of which will be in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane ,Canberra hopes to follow suit in the near future. This is an exciting progression for the APA.

## *Workshops & training in your state*

For details of any workshops or classes in your state go here  
<http://www.aparkour.com/phpbb/viewforum.php?f=13&sid=1c2316b167c7e10bf6f1f4c05cb91728>

Classes have been held in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane so far. With Canberra to follow suit soon.

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### ***Have your say***

In the upcoming issues we will publish the feedback you give us on the APA and this newsletter in particular.

So if you'd like to give us your opinion, simply write an email to [newsletter@parkour.asn.au](mailto:newsletter@parkour.asn.au)

### ***About the APA***

The Australian Parkour Association Inc. (APA) was formed in 2006 by some of the most experienced and dedicated Parkour practitioners in Australia in order to develop Parkour as a discipline and to foster its growth in Australia. It is a nationally recognised organisation capable of operating in any state or territory within Australia.

### ***Join the APA***

If you have not yet joined the APA and wish to do so then get online and go to <http://www.parkour.asn.au/index.php?id=2,13,0,0,1,0> and download the membership form.

### ***Get in touch with the APA:***

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