



Removing Darkness

Knox Church Christchurch

Broken but not Beaten

26 June 2012



Re: 'Lighting Knox Church' Project, December 2011

We are delighted that Kevin has chosen to enter Knox Church into the IES Lighting Awards.

The idea to light the heritage timberwork on the interior of the earthquake-damaged church building belonging to the congregation of Knox Church, Christchurch, arose from a meeting of the Victoria Street Project Group held shortly before Christmas 2011. In the course of the meeting, the CEO of the Christchurch Casino, Brett Anderson, recommended Lighting Designer Kevin Cawley, who duly made contact with the minister of Knox Church, Geoff King. The brief was simple: to light up the beautiful wooden interior of our damaged church building in time for Christmas, in order to provide passing motorists, pedestrians, visitors, and residents of our city with a visible sign of warmth and hope.

Following a meeting on site at Knox Church to inspect what remained of the church's power and lighting systems, Kevin undertook to provide a lighting design to maximize the effect on the paneled ceiling, and provided helpful advice about other lighting options available to us. He also provided at no cost to Knox and thanks to one of his own suppliers a number of metal shades to direct the light, and he contributed several hours of his own and one of his employees' time to setting the system up.

Whilst the aftershocks on 23 December interfered with the timing of our plans slightly, thanks to Kevin's generosity and technical assistance, Knox Church has been able to light our damaged historic building as a simple symbol of hope to our troubled city. We could not be more delighted with the effect, which has drawn many unsolicited appreciative comments from neighbours, visitors, and members of the wider community, and we are deeply grateful to Kevin for giving us the benefit of his considerable professional expertise and his time. We wish also to acknowledge the support received from Joe Penning of Aotea Electrical, whose work in re-connecting the necessary power supply safely enabled this project to proceed. The whole project has been an uplifting example of Christchurch's community spirit, and until the proposed rebuild obliges us once again to disconnect the power supply to the building, it will continue to be lit up at night as a sign of warmth and hope.

Yours sincerely

(Rev. Dr.) Geoff King
Minister

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Concept

What was the best way to show respect and gently treat this challenge given that 60 percent of the building had been destroyed? Kevin chose to make the 100-year old ceiling come alive and give back the soul to the building and enhance its architecture using light effect to resurrect a stunning interior architecture feature now exposed to the outside atmosphere.

Inspiration

We took inspiration from the building. Being a place of spiritual worship, a place where the city came to celebrate or honour events, people, weddings, funerals, Christmas or Easter we wanted to expose at night the splendour of the 100-year wooden ceiling. We used light to be a ray of hope, a symbol to the City reminding all who passed by that life is continuous despite tragedy.



Summary

We gave this project to the Knox Church Community and the City of Christchurch as another fine example of what can be done when focusing light on what only needs to be illuminated. Even when there is destruction we can create beauty, as light is a ray of hope.

Acknowledgements:

- Rev. Dr. Geoff King (Knox Church)
- David Lynch (Momentum Public Relations Ltd)
- Brett Anderson (Christchurch Casino)
- Blair McIntyre (Christchurch Casino)
- Mike Wynands (Total Lighting & Electrical)
- Joe Penning (Aotea Electrical)
- Richard Lines (Metafrom)
- Kevin Cawley (Lighting Designer)

No power, no money and being in the red “no go” zone in Christchurch, were just some of the many challenges facing this exciting and inspirational project.

Knox Church, a Presbyterian Icon of the Christchurch community, at the entrance of Victoria Street was severely damaged as a result of the Christchurch earthquakes or “events” as they say among the professional “evaluators” of these challenging occasions. It was broken but not beaten. So, with no power and a broken building Kevin was asked “can he light it up as a beacon to give hope to the Christchurch community”... so he assembled a team.

The first step was examining the power to see what was possible, then what, where and how to light a broken building? There were lots of possibilities, as well as the existing fittings to choose from.



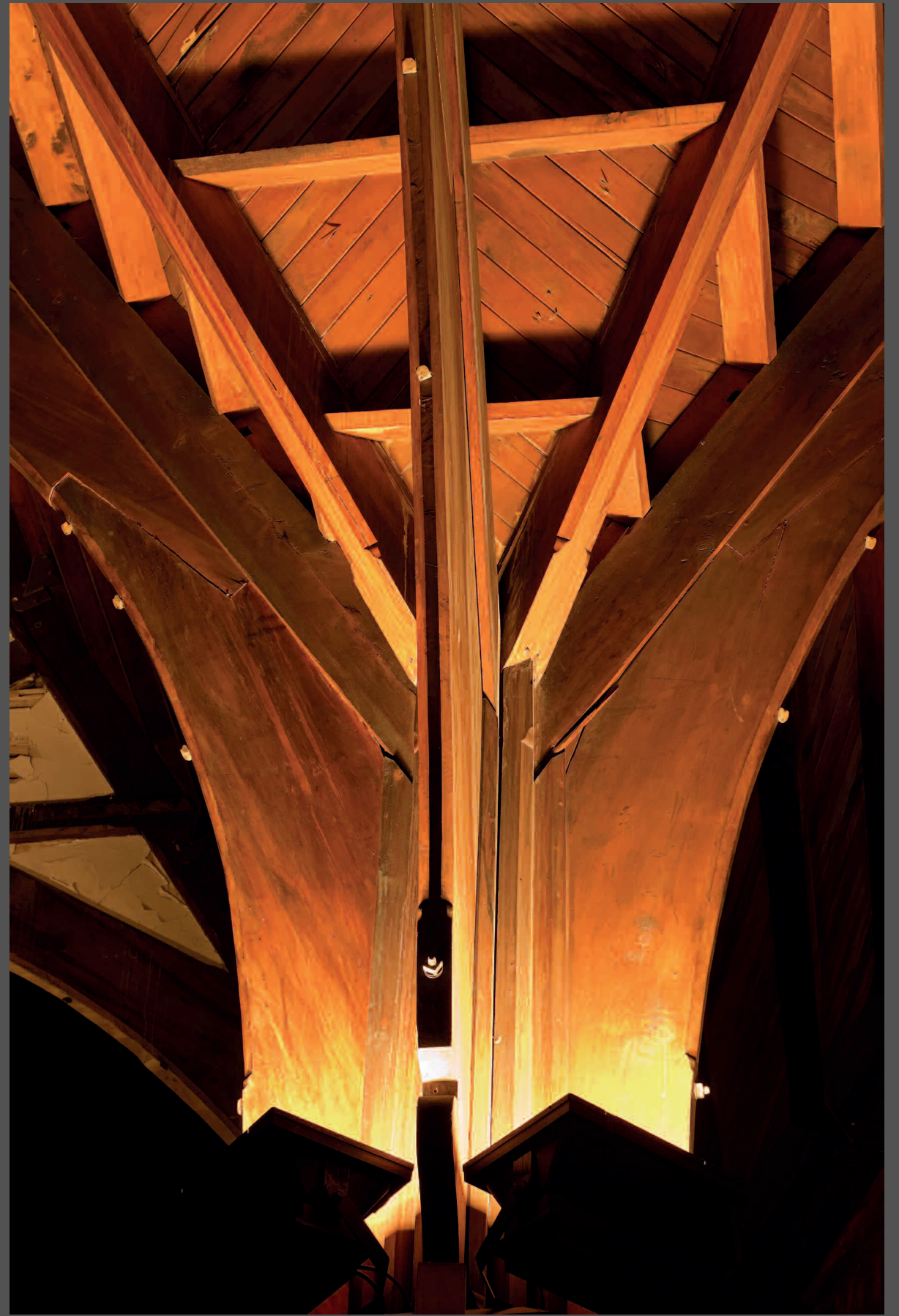
Solution

Recycling existing sodium floods that had been installed previously we were able to create a magical solution giving back dignity to the magnificent architectural structured ceiling while utilising floods that had survived each event.

Given the fact the earthquake had destroyed 80% of the walls it left the ceiling totally exposed for all to see. We had to be very aware of visual comfort to the viewers as well as the traffic and that there was no disability glare from the fittings as the church is situated on one of the main intersections in Christchurch.

The key was to focus and sculpture the light. We had to take light away by disconnecting fittings leaving only the ceiling exposed. Then we placed light to only the parts of the ceiling that would achieve the effect that would show off the splendour of the ceiling. We had shutters made to mask the glare. This was a true design challenge having the team at different parts of the road intersections while others focused fittings.





Kevin Cawley : Lighting Designer : Christchurch