



## Emotional opening of Parry Field's new home

By Grant Adams

When the partners of Parry Field Lawyers started planning the opening of our new building in Riccarton, we wanted it to be special.

As we reflected on the long journey our firm has been on over the past four years, one of the partners suggested we should honour the crane operators who had rescued us in the February 2011 earthquake.

Everyone will remember where they were at 12.55pm on 22 February 2011. Our city office team, in our offices on the 15th floor of the Forsyth Barr building, were suddenly thrown into chaos and fear as the building began swaying from side to side.

A pink cloud of brick dust billowed upwards and as it settled, outside we could see the Cathedral Spire and many other buildings destroyed.

It soon transpired that the stairwells in the building had collapsed. Everyone above the 14th level congregated on the 17th floor to await rescue. The building shook with aftershocks. We did not know where our family and friends were, or some of our staff who had been out for lunch.

Paul Cowey, one of our partners, recalls some of the group making a sign to hang out the window alerting people outside to our plight. After seeing our sign a policeman at the intersection below spray-painted a message 'help is on its way' on the ground, and this was somewhat reassuring. However as we looked down onto the pancaked PGG building, we soon realised that we could be there for a while. After a few hours and several different ideas as to how we could get out, we saw a huge crane coming into Victoria Square and parking beside the building. Smith Cranes had come to the rescue, with a large crane boom and a man cage platform which we would all get into and be winched down to safety.



*The tumultuous events of 22 February 2011 are recalled as staff of Smith Cranes take part in the ceremony to open the new Parry Field building in Riccarton.*

Jason Campbell and Jason Bourke operated the crane and man cage, putting themselves in great danger as the crane shook with aftershocks coming through.

The entire rescue was filmed by a local news crew and streamed live on CNN, so some of our friends and family were watching as the event unfolded.

Nearly four years later, that day is still etched in our memories and we thought it would be fitting to recognise the heroic actions of the men from Smith Cranes and ask them to open our new building on Rimu Street.

They readily accepted and offered to bring a crane to use in the ceremony, to lift some staff up to the balcony of the new building.

Despite a thunder and hail storm during the practice run, the opening and ceremonial crane lifting went off without a hitch. Peter van Rij gave a poignant speech thanking all the people who helped us on our journey from that memorable day in 2011 to the day we could move into our new building, including our staff

who worked through some trying circumstances in various temporary locations. Four of our staff were harnessed, dressed in high-vis and lifted up to the first floor in the man cage, and Paul Cowey was interviewed by John Selwyn from Campbell Live on the journey upwards. Peter van Rij was waiting on the balcony to thank Jason and Jason, who then unveiled a special commemorative plaque as a small group of our staff, partners and key suppliers applauded them from our boardroom.

The plaque recognises Smith Cranes and their rescue efforts and will be mounted in our new building as a reminder of our journey.

The opening night was a great success and a very special evening for Parry Field Lawyers. The event was featured on Campbell Live on the 4th November 2014 and the video can be viewed at [www.parryfield.com](http://www.parryfield.com) <<http://www.parryfield.com>>

**More photos from the opening Page 3**


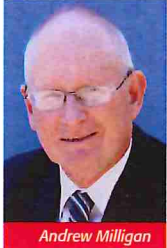


# Parry Field's emotional day

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*Below, Ken Lord, Alex Summerlee and Joseph Morris. Right, Kris Morrison, Jason Bourke, Tim Rankin, Paul Cowey, Jason Campbell, Peter van Rij, Joseph Morris and Hannah Carey. Below right, Owen Rees and Peter van Rij. Below right, Paul Cowey, Kris Morrison, Joseph Morris and Hannah Carey. Bottom, Sarah Herron, Kristen Acker, Jess Hastings and Ruth Judkins.*



Andrew Milligan

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