

# New Venture House

Thinking inside the  
box when storage  
space matters





**About 75 percent of the Island Self Storage facility is warehouse or storage space that features 297 self-storage units plus 20 wine storage units**

Space has always been a highly sought commodity in Bermuda. This is simply not a big country and residents and businesses alike often find themselves struggling against the rising tide of all their stuff.

The new purpose-built Island Self Storage facility was conceived and developed by New Venture Holding's Don Mackenzie along with consultant Glen Smith to meet this constant demand in the Bermuda market.

Located on Mill Reach Lane in Pembroke, Don says Island Self Storage's New Venture House is a versatile facility that offers layers of space, with the self-storage units on the first floor, office space on the top floors and mixed use warehouse and retail space on other floors.

Of course designing and building a multipurpose facility in the marshy land straddling Mills Creek presented a few challenges for the developers. The area is already home to a number of traditional warehouses and he says the goal was to create an aesthetically pleasing building that remained functional without the typical look of a warehouse.

"There are not a lot of new buildings in the area and we wanted to set a standard for a new kind of warehouse," Don explains. "One that actually looks reasonably attractive.

"In some ways we did a fairly tradi-

**'We deliberately created very high ceilings — 18ft. With storage you are really using the cubic space of the room so height is an important feature of the building'**

tional building with concrete block and cladding but we were able to get the steel manufacturer to also manufacture the roofing so it's a very tight building, it's very well constructed."

Architectural technologist Jason Macertich explains: "We wanted to visually break up the structure of the building and we did that with a louvre system that gives the building less of an industrial feel."

He says another unique feature of the building is the concrete cantilevered balcony on the top floor that features solar shading and surprising views across to Agar's Island and Two Rock Passage from one side, and views over Mills Creek from the other side.

"The building is a bit of a hybrid so we used some unique design elements," he concludes.

What is standard for the area is the need to drive piles approximately 90ft down to find hard rock and therefore a solid foundation. Island Self Storage

required 225 such piles that Don says added about 10 percent to the cost of construction and an additional two to three months to the schedule. Despite this the building went up in only 18 months.

The building features a number of other design considerations that make it particularly unique and effective in Bermuda. For instance the insulation is built into the cladding, and while Don stops short of declaring the building green, he says it maintains a high level of efficiency.

"We also deliberately created very high ceilings — 18ft. With storage you are really using the cubic space of the room so height is an important feature of the building.

"The floor space of each level is 16,000 sq ft but we have a tenant who, by putting in a mezzanine, effectively turned one storey into two and created an additional 5,000 sq ft of storage."

In total, Island Self Storage is a 61,000 sq ft facility of which approximately 75 percent is warehouse or storage and 25 percent office space. There are 297 self-storage units ranging in size from 5ft x 5ft to 20ft x 30ft, plus 20 2ft x 3ft wine storage units, all of which benefit from three state-of-the-art climate control systems.

"As far as I am aware the dehumidification system in our self storage units is unique to Bermuda," says Don.



**New Venture House's parking lot accommodates 60 cars and 60 bikes making it convenient for retail and office tenants, as well as those using the self storage units**

In truth there is one other system like it, at the Government archives, but as Craig Stevenson the Manager for Business Development and Sales at Air Care explains, each dehumidification system built by US manufacturer Munters is custom designed so the Island Self Storage system is in fact unique to the self-storage market.

"They are built according to the volume of air and the specific conditions required in each building," he says. "For Island Self Storage that meant no lower than 57 percent relative humidity, which is not so dry that wood items, for instance, will crack, but dry enough to prevent mould growth." An important consideration in Bermuda.

The Munters system uses what is a



**Consultant Glen Smith (left) and New Venture Holding's Don Mackenzie celebrate in the purpose-built facility**

essentially a giant air drying wheel that is more effective than air conditioning because its primary purpose is to dry rather than cool. It can process 6,000 cubic feet of air per minute (compared

to about 400 for an average split system residential unit) and because it "preconditions" the air — by removing moisture — it creates energy savings of around 40 percent annually.

"Temperature is not that important for storage," Don continues. "In fact, a/c will make a space cool and damp. Dehumidification is providing a better environment to the self storage tenants."

Meanwhile a completely separate system installed in the wine storage area provides optimum conditions for aging wine.

The Island Self Storage building also has a 450 KW generator that provides full backup power, a state-of-the-art security system and 24/7 access for tenants.

"We made sure that the parking lot is very well lit so that people feel comfortable coming in at any time," says Don.

The parking lot can hold 60 cars and 60 bikes, which provides a layer of convenience not only for the self storage units but for the retail and office tenants as well.

"We could have added another floor but we were careful not to over populate the facility," he says.

The upper floors feature modular office space with a separate entrance and the possibility for flexible leases and shared facilities such as a meeting rooms, reception and a kitchen.

Don says that by making the design of the building more attractive these office spaces take on added value for his business tenants.

"There is still a demand for office space in Bermuda and this location, with the storage or warehouse space attached, can provide the versatility many businesses need."

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## And more on the way...

**B**ermuda's latest storage facility is in the pipeline with Bermuda Public Storage (BPS) set to open in the near future. Located on Elliot Street in Hamilton, BPS is an eight-storey facility with about 400 storage units ranging in size from 5ft by 5ft to 10ft by 30ft. The building was developed and built by Troy Burrows who is also the company's Director.

"Storage is big business in the rest of the world and Bermuda is no different," he says. "I saw the need for it years ago and am now bringing this building to the market."

Troy says BPS was designed with all the up-to-date features of a modern storage facility including climate control, swipe card security and

CCTV surveillance.

BPS also has the added advantage of having a shipping company, Bermuda Ocean Shipping Services, on site so materials needed for a renovation or other project can go straight from the container into the storage unit. BPS staff are also on hand to help estimate a client's space requirements and all packing materials are on hand to ensure proper storage of a tenant's items.

"We have built a facility with a lot of flexibility to accommodate anyone from a business storing inventory or files to homeowners looking to get rid of clutter," says Troy.

*For more information visit  
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