

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 19, 2022**

Event Contact

Summers Miya

[summers@portofbenton.com](mailto:summers@portofbenton.com), 509-375-3060

**Port to Honor USS Triton's Top-Secret Mission Crew Members**

*Public Invited to Attend the May 12 Recognition Ceremony*

**Richland, Wash.** – Port of Benton is holding a recognition ceremony to honor the original crew members aboard USS Triton (SSRN 586) during the submarine's historic Operation Sandblast mission.

The ceremony is Thursday, May 12 at 10 a.m. at the USS Triton Sail Park, 3300 Port of Benton Boulevard in Richland – the same week Triton surfaced off the coast of Delaware following its successful 1960 mission to circumnavigate the globe, entirely submerged and undetected.

The top-secret expedition proved invaluable to the U.S., gathering valuable oceanographic data and demonstrating the crew's endurance and the submarine's technical capabilities during the Cold War.

Triton's 75-foot-long sail and conning tower are on display at the USS Triton Sail Park to honor submariners and highlight the significance of Triton's impact on the Nuclear Age. The sail park overlooks the port's barge slip and high dock where the U.S. Navy transfers nuclear reactor compartments from decommissioned vessels (including Triton) onshore for delivery to the nearby Hanford Site for permanent storage.

**About USS Triton (586) and Operation Sandblast**

Triton was one of the first nuclear-powered submarines, operated solely by dual nuclear reactors, direct descendants of Hanford reactors, including the B Reactor. At the time of Triton's commissioning in 1959, it was considered the largest, most powerful and most expensive submarine ever built.

The submerged circumnavigation covered 26,723 nautical miles between February 24 to April 25, 1960, and generally followed the route explorer Ferdinand Magellan had attempted to navigate in 1521. Once the journey around the world was complete, Triton remained underwater, continued to Spain, where a plaque was presented to honor Magellan's and Triton's historic voyages, then arrived in Delaware and surfaced on May 10, 1960.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower presented Capt. Edward Beach with the Legion of Merit and Triton's crew received the Presidential Unit Citation.

The New York Times described Triton's mission as *"a triumph of human prowess and engineering skill, a feat which the United States Navy can rank as one of its bright victories in man's ultimate conquest of the seas."*

#####