



Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility

Bremerton, Washington

Cultural Resources Fact Sheet



Figure 1. Present-Day View of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard

Location

Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility (PSNS & IMF) is a 179-acre Special Area within the Naval Base Kitsap Bremerton (NBK Bremerton) fence line bordered by the City of Bremerton to the north and east, NBK Bremerton to the west, and Sinclair Inlet to the south. PSNS & IMF is the largest of the four naval shipyards in the nation. PSNS & IMF has six dry docks (over one-third of the total naval dry dock infrastructure) and employing over one-third of total naval shipyard personnel with a 13,500+ person workforce.

Mission

PSNS & IMF performs maintenance on fast-attack (SSN), ballistic-missile (SSBN), guided-missile nuclear (SSGN) submarines, and nuclear aircraft carriers (CVN), houses the only CVN-capable dry dock on the West Coast, com-

pletes nuclear defueling and inactivations of SSN, SSBN, and SSGN submarines, is authorized to dispose of nuclear reactor compartments and recycle nuclear powered ships, and completes nuclear refueling of SSBNs.

The PSNS & IMF mission has evolved since establishment in 1891, from ship repair and shipbuilding in World War I (WW I), to repair of the Pacific Fleet and limited shipbuilding during World War II (WWII), to vessel deactivation, carrier modernization and eventually submarine repair and nuclear-capable repair and disposition. PSNS & IMF anticipates a workload increase to support an evolving and expanding mission. New responsibilities include: servicing the new FORD Class carriers, transitioning to a 12-carrier Navy, longer operational and shorter maintenance periods required for Pacific theater operations, and increasing inactivation, reactor compartment disposal (RCD), and recycling (REC) submarine throughput.



Figure 2. Dry Dock 2, 1931

History

The site that is now NBK Bremerton was established as Puget Sound Naval Station in 1891 and Dry Dock 1 (DD-1), the first major structure, was completed in 1896. The original 90-acre site was designated as Navy Yard Puget Sound (NYPS) in 1901 and operated as a repair facility. During WW I (1917-1918) the Shipyard expanded to shipbuilding and added hundreds of new ships and boats to the Allied war. During the Great Depression (1929-1939), the Shipyard expanded as part of the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act. As the United States moved closer to war with Japan, NYPS reduced its shipbuilding capacity to smaller warships and reserved its facilities for vessel repair. NYPS's workforce peaked during WWII at 32,500 personnel, when its primary mission was the repair of Pacific Fleet warships damaged in battle. On November 30, 1945, NYPS's name was changed to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS) and its mission changed from repair to deactivation of Pacific Fleet vessels. PSNS also modernized aircraft carriers, which included converting conventional flight decks to the angled decks used by the new jet aircraft. During the Korean Conflict (1950-1953) PSNS reactivated many ships in the reserve "mothball" fleet and deactivated them again in 1954. During the 1950s the Shipyard entered into a new era of construction building two guided missile frigates. In 1961, the Shipyard was designated as a submarine repair facility. By 1965 PSNS was established as a nuclear-capable repair facility. The shipyard underwent a new building construction program in the 1960s. In the early 1970s, the Shipyard went through a modernization program resulting in major changes in the facilities capabilities and appearance. In the 1990s, PSNS pioneered an environmentally safe method to dispose nuclear-powered vessels. Today, PSNS is the largest and most diverse shipyard on the West Coast and one of Washington State's largest industrial complexes.

Historic Properties

NBK Bremerton has been in operation as a Navy installation since 1891. Many of the buildings in use within the PSNS-IMF Special Area, known as the Controlled Industrial Area (CIA) have historic significance and are listed or determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Most of the eastern half of the CIA is covered by the Navy Yard Puget Sound National Historic Landmark (NHL) District, which includes 22 buildings, five dry docks, and associated structures and piers. The NHL period of significance is 1938 – 1945, with generally heavy industrial facilities contributing for their direct and primary use for large warship repair and construction during WWII.

In 2018, a survey of historic buildings within the CIA identified a NRHP-eligible historic district, the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard Historic District, with the same boundary as the CIA. The contributing resources span the period between purchase of the site and end of Cold War. Resources built within the CIA during this period of significance hold significance under one or more of three historic contexts: 1891–1945, Cold War, and Naval Shipyard Architecture.

NBK Bremerton, outside of the CIA and PSNS & IMF Special Area is also home to four additional NRHP-listed historic districts:

- The Officers' Row Historic District, constructed between 1896 and 1913, contains an integrated architectural unit of housing. The buildings symbolize the Navy's need to provide housing for the officers responsible for the activities within the shipyard and industrial area.
- The Marine Reservation Historic District buildings, constructed between 1911 and 1914, symbolize the role the Marine Corps played as a security and training arm of the United States Navy from 1896 to 1977.
- The Hospital Reservation Historic District buildings, constructed between 1923 and 1942, symbolize the United States commitment to medical care and to the Navy's need to provide housing for medical workers within Puget Sound prior to WWII.
- The Puget Sound Radio Station Historic District, constructed between 1894 and 1941, symbolizes the roles which the station and shipyard played during the developing years of radio technology from 1906 through WW II.