



## **Harvey Lorne Nesbitt**

### **Electrician's Mate, First Class**

Harvey was born on March 17 1920, in Providence, Rhode Island, to Clifford and Leonora Nesbitt. He lived at home until his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.

It appears from the dates of his discharge and reenlistment that he originally enlisted on March 17, 1937 through Boston, Mass.

There is little in the public record about his early career until September 16, 1940 when the logs show that he was received aboard the USS Aylwin (DD-355). Harvey must have been doing well because he reported to the Aylwin as an Electrician's Mate Second Class. At that time the USS Aylwin was just finishing up a refit in Mare Island Navy Shipyard. On September 22 they departed for Pearl Harbor where, due to the possibility of war on the horizon, they were doing Security Patrols around the islands and the mouth of the harbor. At the time, the destroyers were being rotated back to the west coast on a regular basis. That is why they were in San Diego on February 15, 1941 when Harvey was transferred to Navy Receiving Station, San Diego.

On March 18, 1941, at the Navy Receiving Station, San Diego, the day after his twenty-first birthday, Harvey Lorne Nesbitt was honorably discharged.

He went home for a visit but then on March 31, re-enlisted. He was posted to the Navy Receiving Station, New York, N.Y. where he served until February 1, 1942 when he reported aboard the USS Finback for duty.

Having just been commissioned, Finback left New London shortly after Harvey reported, arriving at Pearl Harbor on May 29. Two days later, with the Japanese fleet on the move, was ordered out to patrol during the [Battle of Midway](#). She returned to Pearl Harbor on June 9th to prepare for her first full war patrol. She cleared harbor, bound for the [Aleutian Islands](#), 25 June. *Finback* first contacted the enemy on 5 July, when she attacked two destroyers, and received a heavy return depth charge attack. Two special missions highlighted this first war patrol: a reconnaissance of [Vega Bay](#), [Kiska](#), 11 July, and a surveying operation at Tanaga Bay, Tanaga, 11 August. The submarine ended her patrol at [Dutch Harbor](#) 12 August, and returned to Pearl Harbor 23 August to refit. During this patrol, on July 1, Harvey was advanced to EM1.

Departing Pearl Harbor 23 September 1942, *Finback* made her second war patrol off [Taiwan](#). On 14 October, she sighted a convoy of four merchantmen, guarded by a patrol vessel. The submarine launched two torpedoes at each of the two largest targets, sinking one, the (ex-French merchantman *Ville De Verdun*), *Teison Maru*, (7007 tons), returning empty to Japan, and went deep for the inevitable depth charging. When she surfaced, she found two destroyers in the area, preventing a further attack. With tubes reloaded, she headed for the China coast. Four days later, 18 October, she inflicted heavy damage on a large freighter, and on 20 October, *Finback* made contact with three ships, in route to Yokohama, Japan from Saigon; sinking the passenger-cargo ship; *Africa Maru*, (9476 tons) carrying a cargo of rice and corn, 112 crewmen and 38 passengers including survivors of cargo ship *Teibo Maru* (4,472 tons) torpedoed and sunk on 25 September 1942 by [USS Sargo \(SS-188\)](#), and the cargo ship *Yamafuji Maru* (5359 tons). The submarine completed this patrol with a surface gunfire engagement 3 November, sinking an ocean-going sampan. *Finback* returned to Pearl Harbor 20 November.

During her third war patrol, between 16 December 1942 and 6 February 1943, *Finback* served for some time as escort for a carrier task force, forbidden to reveal herself by making attacks during that part of the patrol. Later, she engaged the Japanese coaster *Yachiyo Maru* (271 tons) in a surface gun duel on 17 January, leaving the enemy craft abandoned and sinking.

While the *Finback* was in for a refit, Harvey transferred to SubBase Midway on February 20, 1943.

On March 13, 1943, Harvey reported aboard the USS Henderson (AP-1) as a passenger for transit to Navy Receiving Station, San Francisco.



The Henderson was a personnel transport ship that was taking her final voyage before being decommissioned in October.

After reporting to Commander Submarine Atlantic Fleet, Harvey was assigned to the USS Corvina. In the months that he was in the Groton area, it appears that he gained a wife by the name of Dolores and set up a home on Tacoma Court, Poquonock Bridge, Groton. I found references that Harvey had one son, who he never met.