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## Portable Memorials

*Coins and paper money collected during times of war recall encounters with friends and foes.*

ANY OF the talks my husband and I have had over the years involve his

father, Harry, whom I never had the pleasure of meeting. Born and raised in Colorado Springs, Harry, the only son of Leslie and Blanche, enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1940, where he serviced dive bombers on aircraft carriers during World War II. On June 4, 1942, he was aboard the U.S.S. *Yorktown* when it was attacked by Japanese planes. He awaited rescue in Pacific waters for more than three hours, a harrowing experience for a man who couldn’t swim.

Associate Editor Jerri Raitz recalls her father, Jerry Crockenberg, who was assigned to a U.S. Air Force explosive ordinance disposal squadron in Yokota, Japan, in the 1960s. One day, as he worked carefully to defuse a World War II-vintage device, a fellow airman watched behind him, fingers in his ears.

Senior Editor Marilyn Reback’s father-in-law, Peter, was in the Merchant Marines in World War II. The Liberty Ships on which he served were mass produced, and in 1943, three could be built in a day. Two of Peter’s vessels were sunk: one was rammed by another ship in the convoy and split in two; the second was in the convoy’s “coffin corner” when it was torpedoed by a German submarine.

Just about everyone in the baby-boom generation has a parent or fam-

ily member who saw service in World War II, Korea or Vietnam, and nearly all have stories to share about their wartime experiences. Numismatic items often are an integral part of those stories, from the salaries paid in military currency to the coins collected as remembrances.

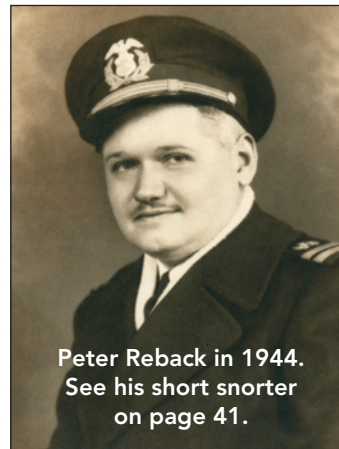
Then there are the “short snorters,” bank notes bearing the autographs of servicemen, often fastened together

to form long streamers. Wrote ANA author and columnist Michael Marotta in the November 2002 issue of *The Numismatist*, “[Short snorters] are portable memorials to the men and women who died for freedom and to the thousands who persevered to share the tale.”

This month, Paul McIlvaine acquaints readers with these col-

orful collectibles in “Short Snorters of World War II” (p. 39). Returning author Joe Lasser, with the help of Erik Goldstein, relates the significance of each piece in his own 14-note short snorter, assembled in 1944-45 when he was a bombardier/navigator in the 391st Bomb Group of the 9th Air Force (p. 44). You’ll also learn about “The Short Snorter Project” ([www.shortsnorter.org](http://www.shortsnorter.org)) and the dedicated collector who launched it (p. 33).

As we observe Memorial Day, remember those who fought to preserve our freedom—and shared their experiences through thoughtful collections of coins and paper money.



Peter Reback in 1944. See his short snorter on page 41.

PHOTO: REBACK FAMILY

*Barbara*