

## **More About FANFARE FOR A FALLEN SOLDIER**

My one and only patriotic-themed composition, this piece has always stirred deep emotions in me whenever I've worked on it, conducted it...or now, write about it.

The concept for **Fanfare for a Fallen Soldier** dates from the summer of 1968, when one of my high school friends was lost in Viet Nam. A few months later, I began this composition for concert band as a tribute to him. Before it was even finished, I sadly had to add another name to the dedication when a college classmate--who was also the son of one of my favorite professors--joined him on the growing list of fallen soldiers. I conducted the premiere with my college concert band the following spring.

I then did nothing with the piece for many years...never shopped it around, and never played it with any of the school bands that I directed. But when the number of casualties from the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars started mounting in the early 2000s, I felt compelled to bring it out, give it a facelift, and make it available. I also expanded the dedication to include "all who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country."

Most fitting for Memorial Day programs or spring concerts that fall close to Memorial Day, it can also be used for Veterans Day, and I even conducted it once for a Flag Day program with a community band that I played in. It is also appropriate for contest repertoire.