

More About CHORALE AND DANCE

I've always found a bit of a challenge in naming my band compositions. A few of them have gone through two or more titles (and revisions) before I finally settled on one that I was satisfied with. **Chorale and Dance** is a case-in-point.

A worthwhile challenge for grade 3 bands, this piece--in its original version--was written in 1970 for the high school band at my first teaching job in rural Iowa. At a loss for a title, I used an obscure Midwestern town name that I took off a road map. Like **Ponderosa**, which came a year later, we programmed it once, then I put it away. Many years later, after I had studied composition in graduate school and acquired some experience, I started tinkering with both pieces. This produced unsatisfactory results, and I decided to rewrite them entirely, starting from the same basic material. I kept the original name of the other piece through all of its revisions, but didn't like this one's meaningless label, so--for no logical reason--I named the new revision for a Southwestern geographical feature. A dozen-or-so years after that, still not satisfied with either the music or the title, I revised it again and this time went the simple route for its third designation, one that just describes the style of the music: **Chorale and Dance**.

Like its close relative **Fanfare for a Fallen Soldier** (which was written only a year earlier and has some thematic kinship), this piece features rapidly shifting tonality and no key signature. The opening chorale leads without pause into the fast dance section, which develops material from the chorale along with some new themes.