

# NHS Christmas Window in 1977

Based on a letter from Mr. Joseph Serino, story edited by Bob McQuitty, NAA Archivist

In 1977, as in 19 other years, **Mr. Joe Serino** and the students in his Advanced Art class designed a Christmas mosaic for the large window above the main entrance to Nürnberg American High School.

The idea of holiday window art originated with Principal **George Stevens** in 1963, who asked the art teachers to decorate the front window. The first window was the project of **Anita (Polly) Helmintoller** and **Phylis Berwick**

This window, entitled "Peace" was conceived by **Regina Raab**, '78, and implemented by the members of the Advanced Art class under Mr. Serino's direction.

The composition of a typical window began first with a theme, such as, **Sacrifice, Goodwill, Prayer, Peace, Brotherhood, Giving**, etc.

The high school art students were then given a work sheet with a graph

that was to scale of the window on which they would draw their

ideas with colored pencils. The ideas were then reviewed and one or a combination of several ideas was chosen.

Mr. Serino would then copy the idea on a large worksheet and

usually two advanced art students used it to draw it on larger paper actual size, in outline, of the window pane.

There were 4 rows of 9 panes each. The students worked on the actual size outlines to trace the shapes of color on transparent colored

paper. The shapes were then taped in place and ready to put up. The advanced class taped it to the window.

While Mr. Serino was in charge of the Christmas windows, he received numerous compliments and much positive publicity for the American school. There were letters from post commanders, praise from principals, a full-page picture of the 1986 window in "Stars and Stripes," and pictures and stories in the German press.

After Mr. Serino retired from NHS he took as his project for the NAA Archive to make digital photos of all 20 holiday windows that were under his direction. His first was in 1971 and his last in 1990.

Mr. Serino finished his project after he retired in 1991. Appropriately, he died during the Christmas season in 2015.

