

Basic Detail Report



00052486

Title

Glass Christmas tree decorations

Date

1950s - 1960s

Medium

Glass

Dimensions

Overall: 127 x 10 mm, 6 g

Name

Decoration

History

When Russia invaded Estonia in 1944, Oskar and Magda Mihkelson packed their most cherished family possessions – the family silver, jewellery, monogrammed linen and photo albums – and fled to Sweden on a merchant ship. In Sweden they joined other Estonians who worked together to maintain a sense of community and nurture Estonian traditions and language. Magda gave birth to her only child, Anu, in Sweden in 1945. The Mihkelson family were sponsored to migrate to Australia by an Estonian family living in Sydney and embarked from Italy on TOSCANA in 1948. Upon arrival in Sydney they were advised to head north to the cane cutting communities in Queensland. Like many post-World War II migrants, Oskar was lured to the mines in Mount Isa, living in single men's barracks before sending for Magda and Anu. He worked as a carpenter for Mount Isa Mines and the family built a house with the assistance other Estonian migrants. After her parents' death, Anu returned to Estonia to retrace her parent's lives and reunite with old family friends. She collected souvenirs during this trip and was given material connected with her family's past. In 1999 Anu published her family's story in the eloquent memoir *Three Suitcases and a Three-year-old*.