

**BORN:**

July 23, 1913

BIRTHPLACE:

Fort McPherson

PARENTS:

*Andrew Koe and
Talitha Vittshekk*

GWICH'IN:

Teet'it Gwichin

MARRIED:

Pierre Benoit in 1956

CHILDREN:

*Thomas, Joe
(adopted), Clayton
(adopted)*

and Mary home because so many of the children were dying of disease at the school.

Annie remembers how important dogs were to her and her people. She says that if you kept your dogs good, gave them good food everyday, they would look after you. Annie loved her dogs because they worked hard for her. She remembers how her dogs understood her Gwich'in language and they would do whatever she asked them to do. Once, in the dark, Annie lost the trail she was travelling on. She untied her leader and told him to find the trail back home. In no time he did and her dogs took her safely home.

Annie and Pierre had a tent frame and later a cabin at Twin Lake near Inuvik. She says they were the first people to live near Inuvik and at that time, there were lots of blueberries and cranberries. Annie said they made a good living there ridding, snaring rabbits, hunting caribou, moose, ducks and swans.

In winter they packed ice for water, packed wood for the fire and in the spring, they had to watch for the rising water in case it would flood the cabin. "I miss that all the time. Good life," says Annie.

Today Annie lives in Aklavik. Sometimes her son Clayton will set a tent and make a smoke house for her up the river so she can go back out on the land, make dryfish and enjoy a good cup of fire tea (tea made on an open fire). "It tastes real good. I like fire tea. I get so lonesome for my fire tea," sighs Annie with a smile.

Annie Benoit

Annie (Koe)
Benoit

As a child, Annie remembers travelling on the land with her parents. In the winter they travelled on the mountains in search of caribou.

In the spring they went ridding in the Mackenzie Delta and in the summer, they went to Alec Vizheh where her father would set a net and make dryfish.

Sometimes he would jiggle for loche and Annie remembers how

her mother used to cook the loche liver and then mix berries and sugar with it. This special food was put away for Christmas and Easter.

When Annie was about 8 years old, she went to school for two years in Hay River with her sister Rachel Reindeer and their cousin Mary Koe. She remembers learning to write on slate boards, read and add up numbers.

Her father came to take her, Rachel