



Eileen Koe

EILEEN (SNOWSHOE) KOE

Peter ts'at Mary Snowshoe kat hàh (Viti' ts'aii), Philip Edward (Dzhii Kàì') ts'at Jane Francis kat hàh (Vahanh ts'aii)

GWICH'IN: Teet'it Gwich'in

TR'OONJIK: Teet'it Zheh gwiz-hit July 11, 1961 dàr' Thomas Koe vat'oonjik

VITR'IININ KAT: Kenny, Diane, Andrew, Julie Anne, Anita ts'at Roxanne kat hàh

PARENTS: Edward and Elizabeth (Edward) Snowshoe

GRANDPARENTS: Peter and Mary Snowshoe (paternal), Phillip Edward (Dzhii Kai') and Jane Francis (maternal)

GWICH'IN: Teet'it Gwich'in

MARRIED: Thomas Koe in Fort McPherson, July 11, 1961

CHILDREN: Kenny, Diane, Andrew, Julie Ann, Anita and Roxanne

VAGÒONLII: Tadhàa Zrìr' 3, 1943

NIJÌN VAGÒONLII: Vindèe Gwàhjat gèhndit danh

VIYÙUGHWÀN KAT:

Edward ts'at Elizabeth Snowshoe

VÌTSII TS'ÀT VÌTSUU:

Eileen zrit Vindèe Gwàhjat gèhndit danh vagòonlii vachaa ihlak eedi'in' ts'at vijuu ihlee gòonli', gehkhee ts'at vuundee tih gidilìh gwunli'. Vaghàn tih gòonlii guu-zhik vahanh vakwaa. Vitsuu Mary hàh ts'at tr'iniinjik k'ighe' viti' zrit Eileen ts'at vachaa, vijuu ts'at vuundee kat hàh duk'aguyahnjik. Vahanh naniindhat guugàa' zrit Eileen vana-dhindau nuh nijuk dàr' adhòh ahshii yeenji' Tr'ineedlaui danh gwà'an akòots'at Eileen een-jit kauritrih altsau ts'at geenjit yunjugwichi'ee iinli' nuu t'nuh. Aklavik gwizhit All Saints Residential School gwunli' gwats'at nìdhì-zhii akòò ts'at Yellowknife gwizhit danh Residential School chan gwats'at chùuzhii chan vanadhindai.

Aii t'ee chan, Teet'it Zheh gwats'at k'anadik, 1960 dàr' ezhik gwànoo zrit Thomas Koe agwàh'aih. Aii t'ee t'at chan, Teet'it Zheh gwizhit July 11, 1961 dàr' nihkhagoothinjik. Ezhik danh t'at ik nadaachuh aii gukhuu kat guts'an altsau akòò ts'at chan diti' ts'at dalàk George Robert hàh Sruh Nìnlui gitr'ahnuii gwidi' nàgòo'oo ts'at vàdzaih giijik'eh atr'ahee'aa geenjit. "Ezhik dàr' dñju kat goodrui' ts'at akòò t'ageedi'in'," juk gweendoo jidiu dagidi'in ànts'at adàr' gwànoo nits'òo nihkhàh gwitr'it gogwàtsaih ganadhindai.

Dagakauk'it gwits'ee nìdhìzhii dàr', nits'òots'at dachan tat adatr'agwada-andau akòò ts'at digiginjik gukhuu àhdàndai' kwaa zrit nuh. Diti' Edward, Jijuu Mary ts'at didin-jii Thomas akòò ts'at izhuu kat juudin yits'at tr'iniinjik kat guk'ighe' jidiu tthak àhdàndau ts'at gayuunìttn geenjit gwintf'òh hají' goo-vahajjaa nuh. Digitr'uinin kat guk'agaanjii geenjit, ts'at juk drin eenjit jùu didinù', "...agadhan googhàii gòonlii kwaa guu-zhik guk'agaanjii geenjit gwunzi ts'at juk

gweendòo aii tthak gaghidandaih." Tr'oochit zrit zhùu digigu kat ejuch'ii gadhàkhaih dàr', duulèh dzan gòò geh dunch'uh ji', "Gwiya'an guyeenjit gwichi'ee k'it dagòonch'uu, geenjit yunjugowichi'ee k'it t'agunch'uh!"

Juk gwizrit, digicheni kat eenjit gootsuu ànts'at chan t'uinch'uh. Social Worker iinli' geenjit, Eileen t'at shik jii geenjit nìnji'adhat, "nakhwanànkat gwizhit dñju nehsrijahch'uu gòonlii kwaa gwàt ezhuu kat juudin goots'at tr'ivudinji' gwizraih gòonlii. Goots'at tr'ivudinji' jii' loo hàh akòò t'agwidi'ii gwiz-raih t'agòonch'uh gàhkhwindaih. Aii gwik'it nakhwegwitr'it zhàn gòonlii." K'eejit kat ts'at gukhuu dàr' jùu didinù', "Gwunzi nakh-wagwandau zhìt gòhndai. Nakhwezhit tthak gwink'yùu gwidi'in chan ganaondaih."

Eileen was born above Rotten Eye and had one younger brother, one sister and three older brothers. Her mother, Elizabeth Edward, passed away when Eileen was only three years old. With the help of her grandmother Jijuu Mary, her father Edward Snowshoe raised Eileen and her siblings. Although Eileen's mother passed away so early in her childhood, she does retain a memory of her mother tanning skins at Three Cabin Creek and making her a pair of shoes of which Eileen was so proud to wear. Eileen went to All Saints Residential School in Aklavik and spent two years in Yellowknife Residential School as well.

For the first time, since returning from residential school, Eileen went back to her

community in 1960 where she met her husband Thomas. Eileen and Thomas were married in Fort McPherson on July 11th, 1961. She remembers her dress was supplied to her by the church and that her father Edward and his friend George Robert went to Rat River and brought back a caribou for their wedding feast. "People did things from their hearts," she says on the difference between her wedding and the endlessly planned wedding ceremonies of today.

Upon returning to her community, Eileen remembers not knowing anything about living on the land, nor could she even speak her own Gwich'in language. She is incredibly grateful to her father Edward, Jijuu Mary, her husband Thomas and other family and relatives for having taught her everything that she knows today. When it came time for her children to learn she says "...they were very fortunate to learn at such a young age, and today they carry that with them." She can remember the first time her children caught any fur, whether it was a muskrat or rabbit, "It meant so much for them, they were so proud of themselves!"

Today, Eileen is not only a grandmother, but a great grandmother as well. As a social worker, Eileen's philosophy has always been this: "There are not only poor people in this world who need our help, there are people from all walks of life who need our help and it is in us to help these people through. That is what Social Work is all about." When she speaks to the younger generation, she advises them to "...carry on with your lives in a positive way. We all have a spiritual being inside of us."