

only eight years old when her parents died. Relatives were too poor to look after Brenton and her sister. So both girls went to an orphanage and lived there until they turned 16.

Brenton then took a job as a maid and spent almost a decade in that role before coming to Corbyville in 1930. She was 25 years old when she arrived in the Quinte area.

The sudden death of her half-brother in Corbyville — he was riding a horse and

buggy when he was killed by a drunk driver — is what brought her to Canada.

"My sister-in-law had two young children so I thought I could be of help to them," Brenton said.

She got a maid's job at the Joel Brenton farm in Corbyville and, in 1939, married their son, Doug Brenton.

"I was 34 years old and my husband was 51. But he was an awfully nice man. Everyone liked him. We got along well together. We had a happy family," she said.

The couple lived on a large farm. Her husband tended to the dairy cattle and pigs while Brenton raised chickens.

"I remember selling unpasteurized milk for six cents a quart and then putting it up to eight cents a quart. And no one died of any disease," she laughed.

The couple had two daughters, Gladys and Carolyn.

When her husband died in 1969, Brenton stayed in the house for a short while before deciding to move in with her daughter, Gladys, and son-in-law.

Brenton has been heavily involved in her church, St. Mark's United Church in Cannifton.

She is especially proud of her quilting prowess and has won numerous awards at the Picton and Belleville fairs.

She was even named quilting's grand champion one year at the Quinte Exhibition.

Even though she's unable to sew or quilt now because of her poor eyesight, Brenton keeps active in other ways.

She enjoys keeping up on current events and enjoys daily walks with her cat on the family's five-acre property.

Brenton said she is fortunate not to suffer from any pain and she takes no medication.

"I am very lucky and I know it. I appreciate my health."

When asked what her secret to longevity is, she paused for a moment.

"I haven't any secret. I've just lived day-to-day and taken everything that came along."

Even she is surprised to reach the century birthday mark.

"I was kind of a delicate kid, skinny and pale," she said with a laugh.

"I have been very fortunate. I've always had to work hard and I have been blessed with good health.

"I haven't had time to be sick."

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