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Nettie Pettway Young Biography

Nettie Pettway Young was born in June of 1917 in the area known as Young's, which was part of the old Young Plantation of Gee's Bend, Alabama. Her father was the son of a slave named Irby, but when he was sold to the Pettways, like all of Pettway's other slaves, he became a Pettway. Young learned quilting from her mother, and made her first quilt at the age of 11. She continued quilting from those early days throughout her life, and she died just a few days shy of her 92nd birthday. Until her death, she was very active, both in her community and beyond. She was a founding member of the Freedom Quilting Bee in Rehoboth, Alabama; founded in 1966, it provided the first real jobs for the women of Gee's Bend, Rehoboth, Alberta and the vicinity. Young traveled extensively, promoting her community and the rich history of the quilting tradition of Gee's Bend.