

Lydia Breed

Lydia Newhall Breed was born on September 10, 1925, in Lynn, Massachusetts. Although she spent most of her life in Swampscott, she remained deeply connected to her family's long history as prominent Lynn citizens. Breed and her mother, Aborn, were active, longtime members of the Lynn Historical Society, reflecting their shared commitment to preserving local history.



A fifth-generation member of UUCGL, Breed made significant contributions to the congregation as both an educator and an artist. Her wood sculptures and prints continue to hold a visible place within the church building, underscoring her lasting impact on its artistic life.

Breed was a founding member of The Boston Printmakers in 1947 and exhibited with the group until 1965. Her work is represented today in the permanent print collections of the Lynn Museum and the Boston Public Library, and her woodcuts were widely collected during her career. She was also an active participant in the Marblehead Arts Association.

Although she produced an extensive body of work in printmaking and illustration, Breed considered herself first and foremost a sculptor. Toward the latter years of her career, Lydia put down her gouges and ceased a majority of her printmaking and instead turned to wood sculpture carving. Her most notable sculpture titled "7 Days" hangs in the church foyer. It was a gift to the UUCGL community, which helped shape her beliefs and moral compass her entire life.

When the original Unitarian Universalist Church in Lynn burnt down in early 1977, Lydia took it upon herself to save as much of the wood from the pews and other parts of the building she could and she repurposed them into the sculpture which is usually displayed in the UUCGL Sanctuary.

Her art reflects the influence of her community, her faith, and her love of literature—threads that run consistently through her creative legacy.