Beth McCabe Bird was raised in the south side of Chicago and was educated at a local parochial grade and high school. She graduated from the University of Iowa with an undergraduate degree in Art Education in 1965. While there, she had the opportunity to study under Mauricio Lasansky in the print making department and take part in the university's Writer's Workshop. These early experiences introduced her to narrative art.

After marrying and raising four children, she attended the Chicago School of the Art Institute and completed a master's degree in art therapy. She found her way back to print making at the Evanston Art Center. For seven years she had the opportunity to test every technique in the field and discovered that etching, dry point and, often hand coloring, were her favored methods of art making. She came to Galena in 1996 and set up her own print studio in a one hundred year old farmhouse in Elizabeth, Illinois.

Beth is an accomplished artist and Ragdale fellow. She has exhibited at the Old Town School of Music, the Union League of Chicago, and the Dubuque Museum of Art. Her works are on permanent exhibition at Mercy Hospital Dubuque, Mercy Hospital Cedar Rapids and Women’s Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa.