



Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga
A Graphic Novel and Public Art Exhibition

- This is not only the story of tragedy, but also one of perseverance, a celebration of the Conestoga people, their kin, and the ancestors who sustain their traditions. With this graphic novel and public art exhibition, the Library Company of Philadelphia has given a platform and a voice to a community that was once excluded from our nation's foundational mythologies.
- *Ghost River* is the Library Company of Philadelphia's first graphic novel developed in close collaboration with our Indigenous partners. This volume was written by Dr. Lee Francis IV (Laguna Pueblo), illustrated by Weshoyot Alvitre (Tongva), published by [Red Planet Books & Comics](#), and printed by [Tribal Print Source](#). The Library Company's director of scholarly innovation, Will Fenton, served as the creative director of the project, editor of the volume, and curator of the exhibition.
- The free public art exhibition (of the same name), invites patrons into the development process that enabled this groundbreaking graphic novel. The exhibition features the original hand-painted pages of the graphic novel, a behind the scenes documentary, a multimedia-enriched digital edition, all interspersed with the Library Company's historical collections. Patrons may purchase first editions of the graphic novel, signed prints, handmade wampum jewelry, and other merchandise.
- The *Ghost River* exhibition is open until April 10, 2020. Contact wfenton@librarycompany.org to schedule a private gallery tour. Visit www.ghostriver.org to explore the digital version of Ghost River.
- In December 1763, a mob of settlers from Paxtang Township, outside of current-day Harrisburg, murdered the last 20 Conestoga people. A month later, hundreds of these so-called "Paxton Boys" marched on Philadelphia to menace refugee Indians placed under the protection of the government.
- After Benjamin Franklin halted the marchers in Germantown, six miles north of Philadelphia supporters and critics of the Paxton mob spent the next year battling in print. That debate, sometimes called the first major "pamphlet war," featuring a rich array of printed materials, including political cartoons, broadsides, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and engravings.
- The Paxton incident marked a turning point in Pennsylvania politics, and the 1764 debate features the same kind of satire, political propaganda, and "fake news" that feel so familiar today.
- This graphic novel and exhibition are part of [Redrawing History: Indigenous Perspectives on Colonial America](#), a grant to the Library Company of Philadelphia from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

About the Library Company of Philadelphia

In 1731, the Library Company was created to be a place of enlightenment, exploration, and education – a place where innovations were born and new ways of thinking encouraged. In the spirit of its founder Benjamin Franklin and his learning community, the Library Company is a place to share and learn from others, build relationships with fellow learners through intimate, salon-style seminars, and connect with scholars and primary materials to gain new knowledge. The Library Company remains a center for innovation and experimentation in the field of history, where scholars are encouraged to create new and interesting ways to bring its collection to larger, more diverse audiences. With its permanent collection, a staff of expert curators and librarians, and resident scholars, the Library Company is a go-to resource for historical commentary, drawing upon the relevance of the nation's past to address topical issues of today, from culture to race to economics.