

# Former mayor Jack Peake never bored

By Tyler Clarke - Lake Cowichan Gazette  
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Former Mayor Jack Peake has kept busy. Although his name appears in the paper less frequently than when he served as mayor (until 2008), it doesn't mean he's kept still. One of the projects closest to his heart is the Kinsol Trestle, which he chaired the board of in the late 90s and remains a part of to this day, most recently chairing the fund-raising committee.

"I feel proud that this project is on its way to completion," he said.

The Kinsol Trestle project should be complete this year, with people able to walk across it by July at the latest. The project is important because history in western Canada is too often overlooked, as it isn't that old.

"We have not taken time to look at old structures. It's only 100 years old, but where will it be when it's another hundred years old," he said.

Some Cowichan Lake area residents haven't been happy to see a .66¢ per \$100,000 of assessed property value on their CVRD taxes allotted to the Kinsol Trestle restoration project, as it's located outside the immediate Cowichan Lake area. Peake maintains that the trestle is an important historical structure for the entire Cowichan Valley.

"That includes Lake Cowichan as much as any other area in the valley," he said. "Railway was the key infrastructure that developed Vancouver Island... We benefited hugely from the railway in town."

In addition to historical significance, it should help tourism in the area, as the Trans Canada Trail organizers plan on using a picture of the trestle on the cover of their nation-wide brochure.

"The Cowichan Lake area will benefit from the visitors who come up from that trail," he said. "It's a world-wide attraction."

In addition to his involvement in the Kinsol Trestle project Peake has been keeping himself busy with the Cowichan Lake Baptist Church, which he has been a member of for the past 35 years.

"I've held pretty much every position with the church," he said. "You name it, I'll do it."

In the near future, Peake plans to begin co-hosting a Sunday gospel show on local community radio station CICV 98.7-FM.

"I think this will be a fun project for me," he said.

The Island Corridor Foundation has been another project, though he's disappointed to see that Youbou/Meade Creek Area Director Klaus Kuhn has been named chair of the project. The Island Corridor Foundation serves to preserve Vancouver Island railways.

"I am extremely concerned about its future," Peake said. When politics get involved, politics make their way into the decision making process, he clarified.

Never keeping politics too far behind him, Peake serves as the regional director for the BC Conservative Party. Specifically the Malahat North region, which is made up of seven ridings.

"It will be a force in the next provincial election," he said, of the BC Conservatives.

His main reason for supporting the BC Conservatives is to keep democracy alive, he said. Whereas the BC Liberals have been run like a dictatorship, with Gordon Campbell at its head, the Conservatives are a different story.

"We listen to everyone, and we'll pay attention to all MLAs," he said.

When asked if he'll ever run for Cowichan Valley MLA, Peake said that it's not in his current plans.

"I wouldn't put it outside the realm of possibility," he added.

Although his running for the position of MLA remains in the realm of possibility, Peake said that he will not run in municipal politics, again.

"15 years in local government; I served the town well... I'm pleased with my time in politics," he said.

"Eventually you garner enough negatives they select someone else, and you're thrown out... Politics is not an easy career. Making people happy is difficult."

In addition to his volunteer work with various organizations, Peake remains on on-call guard duty with a security guard business in Nanaimo.

"I'm not bored," he said.

Before entering semi-retirement, Peake owned a hardware store in Lake Cowichan, from 1975 to 1986, after which time he served as a school bus driver until 2001. He was previously employed by three different railway companies, at different times, including a stint in the United States.