

## Ken Astell

Ken Astell, one of the 4 founding Trustees of Seaford Museum of Local History (1970) until just after the move to the Martello Tower, and husband of its Curator Joan, died on 25<sup>th</sup> August in Minehead.

Ken and Joan launched the Museum at the Seaford Kaleidoscope at The Downs Hall in 1970, set it up in a caravan in the grounds of West House until the house became usable (c. 1973), and ran the Museum, The Friends of Seaford Museum, and the Seaford Open Air Art Festival there -- also providing a base for Seaford Young Musicians -- until the move to the seafront.

The Museum also ran an extensive artefacts store on the first floor of what is now St. James's. West House contained the Museum Puppet theatre, and also the Baptist Church pipe organ from the demolished Broad Street Church, and its restoration on that site was one of the few projects the Museum was unable to complete.

Ken, a Trustee of the Museum, had worked for General Accident Insurance in Brighton, whilst his wife became a freelance insurance consultant and journalist, and wrote insurance booklets for the Consumers' Association ("Which").

When the Astells left Seaford, they moved to Minehead, a town they had both previously lived in. Whilst Joan started another Museum and continued her writing and broadcasting, Ken branched out into restoring historic photographs. He also took up writing historical articles.

Joan died in 2016. Their great love apart from history was their cats.

The attached pictures show Ken and Joan at the opening of the Seaford Martello Tower as a Museum. Also shown is West House in Pelham Road when it was the Museum's premises, with the original exhibition caravan also visible in the garden.

Ken also undertook publicity walks around Seaford, and is here shown in 1973 in a traditional Sussex Shepherd's 'roundfrock', together with the Town Crier.

*Peter White*

*(Family friend, Town Crier, and one-time Chairman of the Seaford Museum)*



