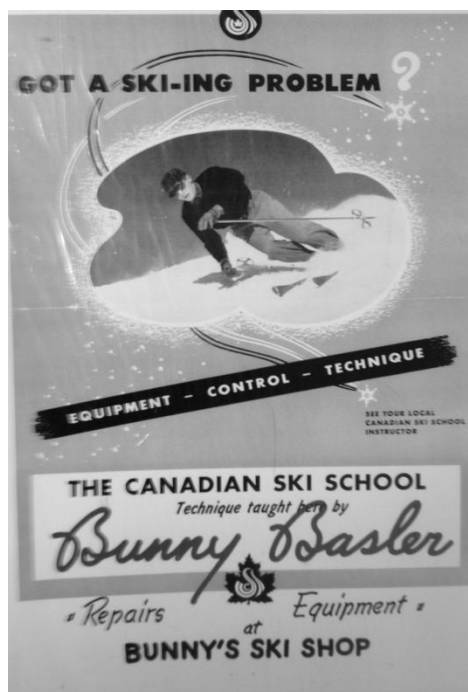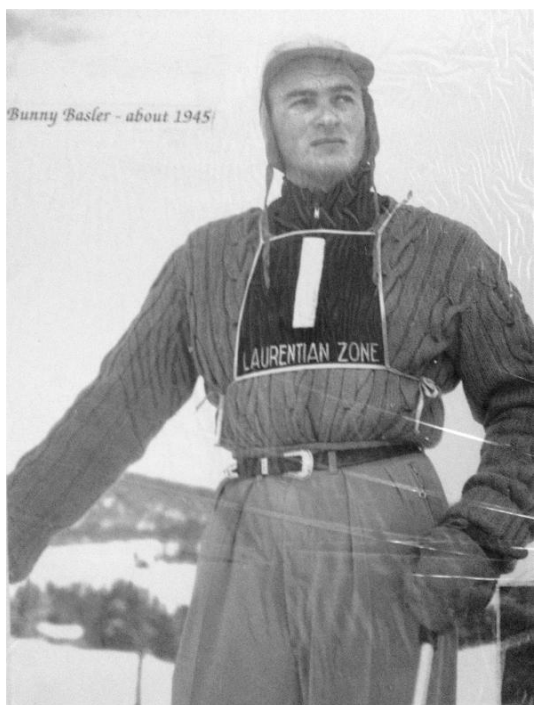# Bunny Basler: a lifetime of community achievement

The first-ever Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement was given to George B. "Bunny" Basler at a gala dinner at Restaurant La Grange on September 17, 2016. Bunny, born in 1928, is one of the town's most ardent supporters of the Morin Heights Historical Association, attending most events and always ready with a word of encouragement. But he's also a dedicated worker who has participated for decades in efforts to preserve the community's heritage. Amazingly, he was a member of all three committees that planned events to celebrate the town's 100th anniversary in 1955, 125th in 1980, and 150th in 2005. His legacy includes the donation of the original St. John's Ambulance building to the Morin Heights Historical Association, now the association headquarters. The building is now named after him—the Bunny Basler Historical Centre.

Of course Bunny hasn't only helped preserve our heritage, but has also been a direct part of it, as champion skier, ski instructor and proprietor (along with his brother Albert) of both the Bellevue Hotel and Mont Bellevue Ski Centre, located on either side of today's chemin du Lac Echo close to the old train station.

Bunny's father came to Montreal from Switzerland in 1911, worked at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, and married a girl from the Gaspé. A few years later they acquired a farm in the centre of what was then Morin Flats close to the train station. Soon they opened a boarding house, and after it burned in 1945, built a large hotel, Hotel Bellevue, now the municipal community centre.

By the late 40s, Bunny had become an expert skier and ski teacher. He captured first place amongst the many final year students at the Canadian Alliance Ski School in 1950. Within a few years, Bunny opened Mont Bellevue—one of the great small family ski hills in the region—with his brother Albert, and together the Basler brothers ran it for 40 years. Bunny also kept busy as an insurance broker (Basler Insurance) and as a real estate developer (Sunset Hill). Bunny, along with his brother, was one of the early recipients (1990) of the prestigious Laurentian Ski Hall of Fame awards.

Bunny Basler - about 1945

GOT A SKI-ING PROBLEM?

EQUIPMENT - CONTROL - TECHNIQUE

SEE YOUR LOCAL CANADIAN SKI SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR

THE CANADIAN SKI SCHOOL
Technique taught here by
Bunny Basler

• Repairs •   • Equipment •
at
BUNNY'S SKI SHOP

*Three views of
Mont Bellevue in the 1960s.*