

LETTER OF AUTHENTICITY

43 Craig Street
Invercargill 9810
New Zealand

2 October, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Item Description: Hand-crafted piston by Burt Munro

This letter serves as an official **Letter of Authenticity** for a **hand-crafted piston personally modified and fabricated by Herbert James "Burt" Munro** (1899–1978), the legendary New Zealand motorcycle racer and mechanical innovator, best known for setting land speed records at the Bonneville Salt Flats in the 1960s on his heavily modified 1920 Indian Scout.

The piston in question is an original, custom piece that reflects Munro's distinctive engineering style, characterised by hand-machining, material improvisation, and innovative performance tuning methods developed in his home workshop at 105 Bainfield Road, Invercargill, New Zealand.

It displays clear evidence of manual shaping and reworking, consistent with known surviving examples of Munro's engine components.

Provenance and Documentation: This item originates from a private collection and is accompanied by various documentation tracing its ownership and authenticity.

As a previous owner of this piston and the engine build by Burt Munro, I, Mr Ashley Bell, personally provide additional verification without hesitation.

A friend of Burt's since 1954, I spent a great deal of time at his home in Bainfield Road and witnessed his innovations first-hand. For pistons he had a jig which he made for casting. And he almost always finished with the rings in slightly different places.

Due to his bad eyesight, I was often tasked with checking the pistons he crafted for any cracks so I am very familiar with their characteristics.

In 1970, I purchased a 650cc motor for \$100 from Burt which he had built from the various Velocette parts he had stashed and others he manufactured himself.

As some of Burt's motors were prone to do, when we first started it there was a thunderous bang and we ended up collecting bits of it from the gutter outside my work.

Burt then rebuilt the motor, including this piston and a variety of spare parts.

I used Burt's motor in an AJS frame with a Norton gearbox as a beach racer.

Just as Burt, there was a real sense of satisfaction turning up to the race track with something that looked like a heap of junk and then beating the guys on their fancy new factory bikes.

I later sold the bike to Peter Ramage, of Invercargill, who still owns the original engine.

It can be further evidenced this piston matches comparatively with authenticated components held in the E. Hayes & Sons collection and other recognised Burt Munro archives.

This piston is a genuine artifact of Burt Munro's personal craftsmanship and innovation. It stands as a tribute to his enduring legacy in the world of motorcycle engineering and land speed racing. He was a stubborn old bugger in many ways, but I am pleased to be able to say that I knew him.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Ashley Bell