

MY '62 FRAME VIN—AT LAST

By J.G. Mattson

I had looked for the frame VIN number on my '62 several times, and even though I knew the general location I was without success. There just wasn't enough room between the body floor pan and top of frame. What to do? During the '61/'62 seminar at Bloomington Gold '90, I asked that question to Noland. It seems the answer is "Good Luck", pull the body, or cut a hole in the floor pan. Now that last one I wasn't expecting, and is certainly a new restoration technique to me — and totally unexceptionable. Pulling the body at this time is an awful lot of work just to read a number. So, I guess "Good Luck" has to be the answer!

"Good Luck" came in SACE Vol. 2, No. 4, Page 13 (Thanks Tony!), and followed up in Vol. 3, No. 1, Page 8 by our editor, Roy. I was excited and just couldn't wait for another assault on that evasive VIN number. I rolled the '62 out of my overstuffed garage and onto the driveway. I looked at her, set my jaw, and felt the stubborn, persistent, Norwegian blood course through my veins. "Today's the day", I said. Armed with my new information, I rolled back the far from original carpeting on the drivers floor pan of my project. THERE IT WAS! The plug that promised to unlock and open the door to my long sought frame VIN. With trembling hands I removed the plug, the anticipation was killing me, there was the frame! WHERE WAS THE NUMBER? I searched with flashlights and dental type mirrors, peeked, stretched, and contorted my body and face into all kinds of grotesque positions, but "Good Luck" wasn't there. Even though this is a Wisconsin Corvette, the frame has only a light coating of surface rust. I bought it as a project in 1972, and due to one thing or another it has remained so to this date. There is a New Mexico Park sticker on the windshield, so my suspicion is that it may have spent part of its 80,000 mile life in the southwest. A little coarse steel wool worked through the plug hole, and the frame was clean enough to show any numbers there, but they just were not. Before the day was over though, I did finally find the evasive VIN. Here's how I did it, and where I found it.

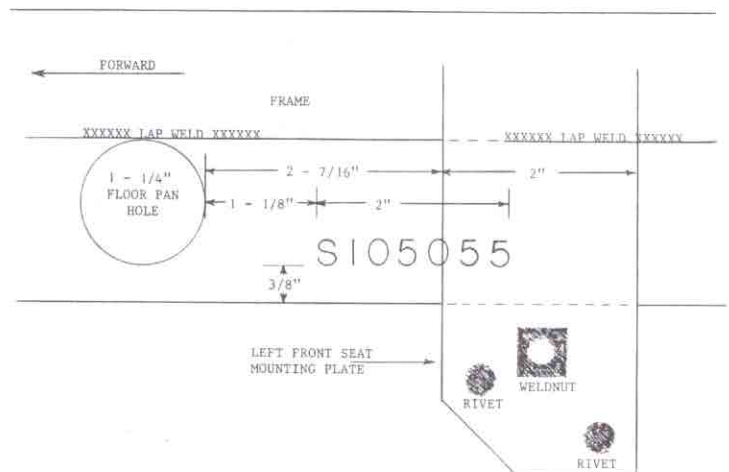
I didn't know if the number was forward or rearward of this floor pan plug hole. I used wooden tapered shims to carefully spread the floor pan and frame forward of the hole. Rearward is impossible due to attaching hardware (unless you remove it). This doesn't gain much extra clearance, but every little bit helps! I then used coarse steel wool (also tried emery cloth) stuffed between frame and floor pan, and scrubbed the frame top. There is not much room, so whatever works to scrub the steel wool back and forth with downward pressure, is the thing to use. What worked for me was a long thin blade screwdriver and a small curved nail puller. As a note, you might want to tape a piece of plastic milk jug or thin metal (tin can) to the floor pan above the

frame so you don't also scrub the fiberglass. It's not easy, but remember I've already used the words stubborn and persistent! Then with a piece of broken mirror glass (from my truck) and a good flashlight plus the right combination of angles — I FOUND IT! Just the first part at first, but now I knew where it was. A concentrated cleaning to this area and I couldn't have asked for a prettier sight. Now that I knew where it was, and it was clean, I looked back through the floor pan plug hole. The best I could do was to now see the first two characters "SI", which from this angle looked like "51".

I have tried to diagram my finding close to actual scale, and if Roy prints it that way it will be FULL SIZE. So use the thinnest mirror you can find (purse, stainless steel), a good bright flashlight, stubbornness, persistence, and — "Good Luck".

As a follow up related item, I have also made a diagram of the plug I found in the floor pan. Can anyone tell me if it's correct?

VIEW LOOKING DOWN ON DRIVERS LEFT SIDE FRAME RAIL



FLOOR PAN HOLE PLUG

VIEW FROM
UNDERSIDE
OF PLUG



BLACK PLASTIC