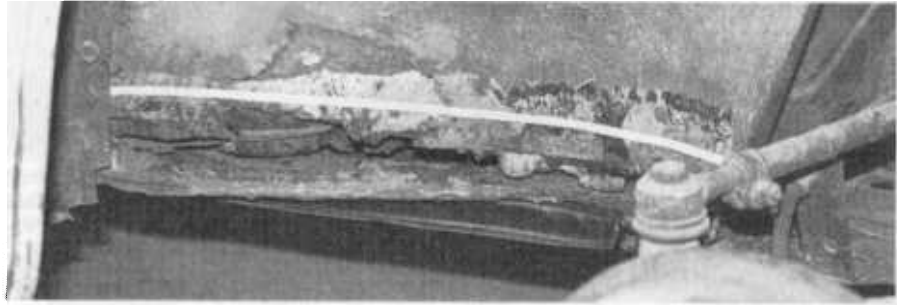
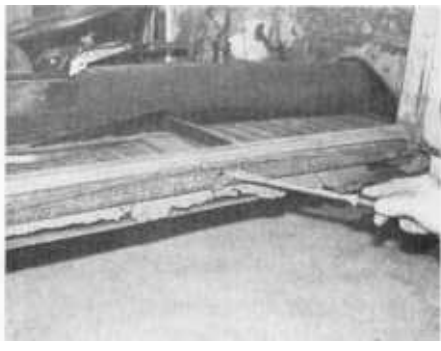


when it came to supplying cabin heat in the Beetle. Warm air is piped from the rear engine to the interior of the car through a rather complicated series of tubes. Warm air is diverted from the rear heater boxes through a connecting pipe under the rear seat. It is then split to each side of the car by means of a "Y" pipe that attaches to the heater channels. Heat for the front seat passengers and the defroster flows through a channel that runs inside the rocker/door sill rails on both sides of the car. This rail is a structural member, so anything that might alter its integrity is a serious concern.

ABOVE LEFT, the replacement heater channel incorporates the upper rocker panel, the front dog-leg extending to the front firewall and the rear connecting pipe. **ABOVE**, this bottom view shows the fastening panel, or bottom plate. Once installed, this part of the heater channel cannot be seen. **BELOW LEFT**, remove the interior before starting to avoid damage. **BELOW RIGHT**, with the running board off (there wasn't anything holding it) you get a good look at an advanced case of heater channel rust.



ABOVE LEFT, you can see the backside of the heater channel. **ABOVE RIGHT**, rocks and road debris chip the coating off the wheelwell and it doesn't take long before the bare metal rusts through at the seam between the heater channel and the fenderwell.



ABOVE LEFT, it is easy to see why there was no front seat heat in this car — there are holes everywhere. **CENTER**, in order for a VW heater to work, the entire system must be in perfect condition. This car has rust holes all along the heater tube. **ABOVE RIGHT**, inside the car, under the back seat, you will find this "Y" connector that diverts hot air to both sides of the car. On all '67 and earlier cars this connector is spot welded to the heater channel and must be cut with a cut-off wheel for removal.

As we've mentioned in past rustoration installments, the front of the heater channel extends into the front fender well. This is where rust usually starts. Rocks and debris thrown off the front tires chips the inner fender well, exposing bare metal. A rust

hole then materializes and allows moisture to enter the heater channel area. From here, the water can travel all the way down the channel to the rear seat area and it isn't long before rust has destroyed this vital component. Prevention is the key, if you see any

corrosion in the fender wells, get it taken care of immediately. An inexpensive repair will turn into a major job if not corrected in short order.

Suplizio is quick to point out that heater channel repair is not for the faint of heart.