

Chamois Spotlight - Part 24 - from Graham Smith

Inside the engine bay of the Singer Chamois there is a 'stoneguard', as the Haynes manual calls it, attached by screws to the car body above the exhaust silencer. The name implies that its purpose is to prevent stones and other debris being flicked up from the road by the right hand rear wheel and into the engine bay. In this Spotlight we discuss the pros and cons



Standard Stoneguard

of having the stoneguard in place, as it is often left off by owners of Chamois and Imps to allow better access for maintenance. We will examine whether it provides any other advantages or disadvantages for the well-being of the engine. The guard certainly provides a barrier to road debris entering the area to the right of the engine.

The carburettor, fuel pipes, air filter and oil filter are all situated in this region of the engine bay, but other than the throttle and choke mechanisms, there are no moving parts in the vicinity. Situated underneath the guard, the exhaust silencer is not protected. The water pump, radiator, fan and dynamo are on the left side of the engine, so are not directly affected.

Another way the presence of the stoneguard could influence the operation of the engine is if it affects the air circulation within the engine compartment. I have discussed this with

an Imp expert who believes the guard is important in restricting the heat from the exhaust rising into the engine compartment and causing fuel in the carb and pipes to vaporise, thus starving the engine of fuel. This may be more important now with modern petrol being more likely to vaporise than in the past. He recommends all Imp/Chamois owners to fit the guard, if only for this reason. I mostly agree with this, the only counter argument being that the guard may restrict the flow of cooler air into the engine bay, causing a hot zone around the carburettor, thereby increasing the probability of vaporisation.

The 1969 Chamois we acquired in March 2017 didn't have its stoneguard fitted, although it was included with the spare parts that came with the car. The previous owner had fitted a Sport exhaust and manifold, requiring modifications to the stoneguard which he hadn't got round to doing. As you may recall, we had fuel starvation problems initially with this car. I think I cured this fault by replacing the fuel filter, fuel pump, and blowing air through the fuel lines to clear any blockage. One of the other things I did just before we took the Chamois on last year's SNCR in Northumberland was to modify and fit the guard, involving cutting away a section of it to allow it to clear the four branch manifold. So far we have had no repeat fuel related problems of the first few weeks of having the car. How much benefit each remedial action made in sorting the problem is difficult to tell.

On a final note, the first 1966 Chamois we owned between 1990 and 2005 didn't have a stoneguard fitted. It never suffered any fuel vaporisation problem during our ownership, so it may be that, as its name implies, the stoneguard's only real benefit is to prevent stones entering the engine bay.



Guard cut away to clear the 'Sport' Manifold

Graham.