

## It was Twenty Years Ago Today . . . . .

As the lyrics in the Beatles rendition of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* say, "It was twenty years ago today," that Paul & Linda McCartney were the honored visitors to Fairmont. To be more precise regarding that specific event, the lyrics could be slightly altered to say "It was twenty years ago this month," as their visit took place in March of 1994.

Anyone unfamiliar with their 1994 visit may wonder why the famed former member of the Beatles and his wife visited Fairmont. The event actually involved a business venture that the late Linda McCartney had with a local company, Fairmont Foods. The McCartney's had at that time been vegetarians for about twenty years. She felt strongly that meatless food was better for people and it consumed fewer resources in its preparation. In addition, she had a great love for animals.

Consequently, their visit to Fairmont was intended to launch a new line of meatless frozen foods that would be produced and marketed by Fairmont Foods called *Linda McCartney's Home Style Cooking* featuring meatless entrees. According to an article in the March 25, 1994, edition of the *Sentinel*, Fairmont Foods was to be the first American company to come out with a totally meatless line of food products. In addition, the recipes that were personally developed by Linda McCartney were to be included. Linda McCartney chose Fairmont Foods because she liked its managers and felt the company had the right values. The McCartney's went on to say that their visit would also give them the opportunity to meet the people that would be preparing their line of food.

Their arrival was scheduled for Friday, March 25, 1994, by chartered jet. They planned to tour Fairmont Foods and then host an afternoon press conference that would include Minnesota's Governor at that time, Arne Carlson. The event attracted television crews, Twin Cities reporters, and as would be expected, a large crowd of sightseers.

Onlookers waited at the airport and the hotel to get a glimpse of the famous couple, some seeking autographs, and others hoping to be able to shake their hands. Many were probably thrilled just having the opportunity to be in their presence.

Reporters, city officials, and local business representatives filled a banquet room at the Holiday Inn to hear what the McCartney's had to say as a security detail stood watch at the doors. Governor Carlson welcomed the group and introduced Linda McCartney. She stated that she had launched a similar product line in England and decided against choosing a large company in the U. S. for fear of her product getting lost in the production process; consequently, she selected Fairmont Foods.

Linda McCartney's vegetarian food line produced by Fairmont Foods was relatively short-lived, lasting only slightly longer than two years, due to Linda's illness. Linda McCartney was an author, photographer, musician and social activist. She passed away as a result of cancer on April 17, 1998.

Fairmont Foods, the city of Fairmont, and Martin County can be proud of an accomplishment of this nature, albeit somewhat brief. The ability of the management of Fairmont Foods to acquire that contract, the positive public relations generated as a result, coupled with the work ethic of their employees speaks volumes as to the quality and ability of that local industry and labor force.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Larry McGuire, CEO, Fairmont Foods of Minnesota for his contribution to this article.

For more information on this topic, or to become a member, visit the Pioneer Museum in Fairmont.

# Linda McCartney's Home Style Cooking™

MEATLESS ENTREES

## LASAGNA ROMA

Layered Lasagna with Chunky Marinara Sauce  
and Garden Vegetables



SERVING  
SUGGESTION

NET WT. 12 OZ.  
(340g)

KEEP FROZEN

**NEW**



Gov. Arne Carlson, Paul and Linda McCartney and Fairmont Foods President Larry McGuire pose for photographs after a press conference Friday afternoon to kick off Linda McCartney's new line of vegetarian dinner entrees, being produced at Fairmont Foods. Bob Steenson