

[MUSIC - THE BEATLES, "I'VE JUST SEEN A FACE"]

(SINGING) I've just seen a face. I can't forget the time or place where we just met. She's just the girl for me and I want all the world to see we've met. Mm-mm-mm-mm-mm.

Had it been another day, I might have looked the other way. And I'd have never been aware, but as it is, I'll dream of her tonight.

Falling, yes, I'm falling, and she keeps calling me back again.

**CATHY WURZER:** It's been more than 58 years since the Beatles appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and Beatlemania hit American shores. At the time, critics believed the lads from Liverpool-- John, Paul, George, and Ringo-- would be a flash in the pan. But we're still talking about them and their music.

The Beatles toured the US from 1964 to 1966, but only appeared once in Minnesota-- August 21, 1965. That was yesterday, and their management swore they would never come back. As part of our history segment, "Then and Now," we're going to talk about that famed concert.

Laurie Lundstrom's dad owned a Minneapolis ambulance company and provided limos to the Beatles during their stay. Laurie's here with us to talk about the only time the Beatles visited Minnesota. Hey, Laurie. Welcome.

**LAURIE LUNDSTROM:** Hey, Cathy. Thanks for having me.

**CATHY WURZER:** Absolutely. I'm dying to find out more here. How did your dad get connected to the Beatles?

**LAURIE LUNDSTROM:** Well, since he had the limousine service, he knew Ray Colihan, who went by the name Big Reggie, who ran the Excelsior Amusement Park and Danceland. I think he may have owned it also, but back in those days, you didn't have Jam Productions and the like, so you had to go with local promoters. And he knew my dad and called him up and said, you want to take this contract?

**CATHY WURZER:** Yeah, but your dad had an ambulance company?

**LAURIE LUNDSTROM:** Yeah, so it was actually when he acquired James Ambulance-- a very young age. He was just out of college. And as part of James Ambulance, he also had a livery. They called it livery, which was actually limousine and hearses. So it was all kind of a massive enterprise.

**CATHY WURZER:** OK. So he agrees to do this, and he I presume he arrives at MSP in time to get to the plane. Did your dad have any interactions with the Beatles while he was driving them around?

**LAURIE LUNDSTROM:** There was a lot of last-minute changeups with the Beatles. So as far as I know, my father only drove them from the airport, or from the hotel back to the airport, the day that they left. When they arrived here, there was four limousines waiting. At the last minute they decided to not put each individual in the limousines and just put them into a Cadillac, because there was just so much pandemonium at the airport.

And then when the concert was over with, they actually snuck them out in a laundry vehicle. So there was a lot of last-minute changes. So as far as I know, my father only drove them when they left town the next day.

**CATHY** OK. Did your dad point out any of the lovely landmarks that we have here at all, or no?

**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** He did. My father loved telling stories about the Foshay Tower, and I'm sure he was looking to regale them with all these stories, and I think they were just really tired at that point, if you have read up about the events leading up to when they left. It was pretty crazy.

So he didn't really get much conversation out of them. He pointed out the tower, and he said that they just had this British twitter, or cockney twitter. They'd say ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. That was about all he got from them.

**CATHY** So you mentioned that he drove them from-- did they spend the night-- which hotel would it have been in downtown--

**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** The Leamington.

**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** The Leamington.

**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** It was called the Leamington Motor Lodge.

**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** Right. Exactly. Of course, long gone. So it was pretty chaotic?

**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** Yes. Originally I think they were supposed to be taken from the airport to Leamington and chill out, and there was so much pandemonium, they were taken directly to Met Stadium and just hung out in the locker room. And then they didn't take them to the hotel till the concert was over with then. And when they got down there, they did ask my father to help them with crowd control, because it was so crazy.

I think they put them on the fifth floor, because that was where the freight elevator went up to, and they decided that they can't have them using the regular elevators. So obviously, there's other people staying in the hotel. They had their entourage with them, and they had to control these crowds. So my father talked about-- he called it sawed off broom handles. They would use it to push the crowds back trying to get up the regular elevators, and they'd push them back into the hallways. Yeah.

**CATHY** Oh my gosh. That's a mess.

**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** Yeah.

**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** Oy. Oh my gosh. And of course, for folks who are not familiar, they played at the old Met Stadium, which was the home of the Twins in Bloomington there. And that seemed like that was also just kind of a messy situation.

**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** Yes. My father was at Met Stadium, and he remembers-- and I don't recall anybody else ever telling the story in  
**LUNDSTROM:** all the articles I've read about it-- he swears that at the end, and it may have been Dave Clark Five, because he drove them also, but he swears that they turned the lights on really bright at the end of the concert just to kind of blind everybody so they could have an opportunity to whisk them out.

**CATHY** So they leave, they go to the Leamington. That was chaotic. By the way, we're going to play-- we have to play the  
**WURZER:** song "Help!" That's about the chaos of Beatlemania getting to the Beatles, and I know they played it in their Minneapolis set that night.

[MUSIC - THE BEATLES, "HELP!"]

(SINGING) Help. I need somebody. Help. Not just anybody. Help. You know I need someone. Help. When I was younger, so much younger than today, I never needed anybody's help in any way.

**CATHY** Well, yeah, actually they needed a lot of help when they were in Minneapolis. Beatles management said they  
**WURZER:** were never coming back to the city. What happened? Do you know?

**LAURIE** I think what they were I think what they were angered about was the police chief at the time, Dwyer, was just  
**LUNDSTROM:** talking about them being a traveling three-ring circus, and it was his obligation to protect the underage girls of Minneapolis, and accused Paul of having a girl in his room. And it turns out she wasn't a local girl. She was 21 when they finally got her out. So they weren't whisking underage girls in their room, like they were being accused of doing.

**CATHY** Oh my gosh. And then, of course, that whole hotel experience was obviously out of control.  
**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** Right. So the aftermath of it was pretty crazy. My father had to actually have one of his limos repainted, because  
**LUNDSTROM:** they had scrawled-- with a knife or whatever-- they had scrawled their initials, or "I love Paul," so yeah, he had to have the limousine repainted.

And the Beatles, as you know, were-- they smoked quite a bit. So the limousine was-- the ashtrays were overflowing, and my father had to vacuum them out, and these girls would show up the next day saying, oh, can we buy their cigarette butts? And my dad said no, I've already vacuumed those. Get out of here. They're not for sale.

**CATHY** Get out of here. They wanted to be given the cigarette butts? Oh.  
**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** Yes.  
**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** So not attractive. How did you, by the way, find out-- did your dad talk a lot about this? The whole story-- was  
**WURZER:** that something that he regaled the family with, this story?

**LAURIE** Well, my father talked a lot about the ambulance business, but he had never actually brought up the Beatles, as I  
**LUNDSTROM:** recalled. And when I was about 12, I was babysitting. There was two couples that lived near us, and both of them had-- were kind of like '60s people, and I think the husbands in both families had substantial Beatles collections. So between the two of them, I think they had every Beatles collection.

So when I would put the kids to bed at night, I listened to the Beatles and really became a huge fan. And back in those days, KQRS and KWB were playing them all the time as well. And I went-- I sat at the dinner table and started telling my dad about how much I love the Beatles, and he said, well, did you know I drove them? I was actually-- I was kind of shocked.

**CATHY** I'm sure you were. And that's-- these are the stories that he told, obviously. Do you remember-- did he talk at all  
**WURZER:** about-- it's a pretty famous news conference in Minnesota history, with-- they had reporters from, of course, all the different news organizations there. And Bill Diehl, who I think was with-- oh, shoot. Was WDGY radio?

**LAURIE** I think so. Yes.  
**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** Yeah, I think it was Bill Diehl had some great audio of the Beatles at this news conference. It was just-- it also  
**WURZER:** seemed like a strange news conference, given that they weren't very talkative.

**LAURIE** Yeah, my father was not at the news conference, unfortunately. So he didn't have any stories about that.  
**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** By the way, did you have a favorite Beatle?  
**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** I did. It was George.  
**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** Yeah, see. Yeah. He's one of my favorites, too.  
**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** I loved his guitar style, and I think when they all put out solo albums, that was my favorite.  
**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** Yeah. Well, Laurie, you told a good story. I think your dad would be proud of you. Interesting.  
**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** I'd like to think.  
**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** Yeah. Thank you for sharing.  
**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** There's more, believe me.  
**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY** Oh, I'm sure there's a lot more. I'm sure. Laurie, thanks for joining us.  
**WURZER:**

**LAURIE** Have a good day.  
**LUNDSTROM:**

**CATHY**

You, too. Laurie Lundstrom is the daughter of David Lundstrom, whose limo company chauffeured the Beatles at the music group's one and only Minnesota concert. It was August 21-- just yesterday, for goodness' sakes-- 1965.

**WURZER:**

[MUSIC - THE BEATLES, "HELP!"]

(SINGING) But now I find I change my mind and open up the doors.