

**READER'S DIGEST:** Everyone's thrilled to hear that you've been back in the studio. How would you characterize the new album?

**PAUL McCARTNEY:** It's called *Driving Rain*. And it's about 60 minutes, new music, all new songs, all written by me. A little help from my son, James, on one of them.

I think the one word I kept coming up with and keep coming up with is "fresh." It feels very fresh to me. When we went into the studio to make the album, the producer, David Kahne, said to me, "How do you want to do this?"

I said, "Well, I remember one of my favorite periods of working was with the Beatles, during the *Revolver*, *Rubber Soul*, earlyish recording period. And the one thing that occurred was that John and I came in on Monday morning and we'd show George and Ringo what the song was.

I suddenly realized -- the guys didn't know what song we were bringing in -- so that's really "fresh." George Martin didn't know, the engineer didn't know. John and I would inevitably have just written it the week before. There was no time to run it through. But we didn't need to. We were all grown-ups and we were sort of professionals, so we just took it in Monday morning.

So I said to David Kahne, "Let's do it the same way."

He said, "Can I listen to demos?"

I said, "No. Come in Monday morning, and all will be revealed."

He arranged for three musicians -- American guys who he said were great players with great attitude.

When I got there Monday morning, everything was so fresh because nobody knew what we were going to do. So I said, "Right, there you go. There's the song." Gave them the chords, showed them how it went.

Had a great time. I think we did 18 tracks in those first two weeks. Quite fast for how some people work.

And the word was "fresh." Because each day I would just be running upstairs, saying, "Oh, give me ten minutes to finish this one. It hasn't got a middle. Let me just..."

People have sort of said it's not quite what they'd expect from me. Which is nice.

**RD:** Where does the title *Driving Rain* come from?

**McCARTNEY:** We had this one day off while we were recording, and it rained a lot in February in L.A. But we didn't mind because it was still nice. So I hired a little black Corvette, which is one of my little perks.

I was enjoying myself, driving around. Because it's L.A., you're in America, the land of Corvettes.

Heather and I took off up the Pacific Coast Highway past Malibu, in the rain. So we were driving in the rain and we stopped off for lunch at what we thought was a really classy restaurant. And we got back to the studio and said, "Wow, we had a great day yesterday."

And everyone's saying, "Yeah?"

We said, "Yeah, we stopped at a great classy little restaurant. You probably even know it."

They said, "What was it called?"

"Marie Callender's."

It turned out it's like a chain, famous for like big pies. And we thought really classy, and they're all hollering, they're all screaming, laughing. It's Americana!

I said, "What are you all laughing at?" We thought it was a find, you know.

Anyway, we had a great time, drove back after this high-class lunch, which, I must say, I'll still stick up for it.

So after this lovely day, this very free day, I was playing the piano in the evening. I kind of did this song, which was "Driving Rain." And it started off quite sort of low and ballady. By the time I got into the studio we started moving. I ended up singing it up the octave and it got a bit faster and we redid the drums. And so it's really nice. It's a bit of a driving song.

**RD:** You said in the past that certain songs like "My Love" and "Maybe I'm Amazed" hold real personal meaning for you. Are there any songs in this album that are in that category?

**McCARTNEY:** Yeah, there are a couple of songs which were inspired by my new girlfriend, Heather. As a songwriter -- I've seen other people say this, and I know Billy Joel thinks this -- it's really nice if you have a romance for song writing. It finds its way into your art very easily.

And so there's one song on it called "Heather," which all came about because one morning, I was just jamming on the piano. Heather, because of her upbringing, ended up helping raise a sister and brother. Because of this she missed a lot of normal life, she missed a lot of her childhood. So she doesn't know a lot of Beatles songs. As a matter of fact, in the cab on the way here today, "Back in the USSR" was on. And she said, "Oh that's one of yours." And she got him to turn it up and she said, "Was this with the Beatles?"

I said, "Yeah. Like, everyone knows that."

She's like, "Well, I don't."

So I was jamming this little song and she said, "Oh, which one was that?" You know, thinking she'd missed it.

I said, "No, I'm making this up."

She said, "You're making it up? Oh, wow! We've got to get a recorder."

I said, "I haven't got one."

So we phoned down to the office. And for hours the girls are scrambling around trying to find

one of those little Dictaphones. Heather wouldn't let me stop. So I eventually put it down. And because of that, later the next day she asked, "What's that one called?"

I said, "Heather."

And then there is a song that I wrote after Linda died. So they're sort of sweet and sour, really, the ballads. There is one about the night that Linda and I met, which opens with: [singing] "There must have been magic the night that we met. If I hadn't stopped you, I'd always regret."

Because that is how it happened. We met in a club, and I saw this girl there who I sort of liked the look of. And she was just about to leave. I got up, I said, "Hi. How are you?"

And I never do that. It takes a bit of front to do that, you know. This guy is trying to play it too cool.

So I sort of go, "Hello. Hi. My name's Paul. What's your name?"

And I always said to the kids, you know, if I hadn't done that, you kids wouldn't be here. So there's a song based on that called "Magic."

So, yeah, there are a number of songs that are personal references. Not all of them. Sometimes you just use something that's in life.

For instance, in the L.A. house we were staying in, they have an alarm system. And all it ever said on this little readout, whenever I'd walk in the door and look to see how we were doing for security, it always just used to say "Something's open." I go, "Well, a lot of use that is."

So we had to close every door in the whole house, and then we'd still come back and it would read "Something's open."

So I went, "Oh, my God. This is like a comedy."

Something's open. Don't blame me. Well, you guys are doing it. Get out of here. This little robot readout.

It kept striking me as funny. Something's open.

So that's the opening line of "Driving Rain": [singing] "Something's open. It's my heart." So I just used it. Sometimes I just steal little things like that just to get me going. You use something else and change it a bit.

And there's another song on there that's called, "She's Given Up Talking." There's a neighbor who was just talking about their grandchild, who was then a sort of pre-teenager. And she went to this little primary school over here. And she'd given up talking, they said to me.

So she goes to the school and the teacher said, "All right, Katie, what do you want now?"

And she'd go – [no answer]

And the kids in the playground would go, "Katie, do you want to play?" And she just did not talk.

They said, when she got home she would talk. And I thought, actually, well, that's a pretty good strategy for school. Not really. I mean, if I'd tried it I would have got the cane. Because I did try those kinds of things. Like I'd try an exam with the arm in a sling. And they'd say, "Just write it with the other hand."

I said, "No, I'm left-handed."

They said, "Tough." And I remember getting two out of 100 for this exam, because I managed my name.

School. God, I tried everything to get out of that stuff. Anyway...

But she'd done that. She's like a normal teenager now. But it was just the idea that she'd given up talking. It's kind of eerie. It's a sort of strange little song. But when you know the real story it's not really creepy.

So I use a lot of personal things that got in on the record.

**RD:** Are you going to go on tour and perform this music?

**McCARTNEY:** I think I am, yeah. I normally kind of decide that when I've made the album. Because the album sort of fires me up and I think, "Ooh, we could play this."

**RD:** It seems like it's been such an incredibly productive time for you the past few years, with your paintings and *Blackbird Singing* and *Run Devil Run*, *Wingspan*, the *Anthology*. And now this album.

What's the source of this most recent rush of creativity?

**McCARTNEY:** I think that when Linda died it was obviously a very, very difficult time for our family. And I wasn't really being very creative, because I had to do other things. We had to just concentrate on sort of trying to get well and things.

So for the first year really I just allowed myself to grieve. Some people said, "Get into work, throw yourself into it." A lot of the doctors said, just get into that.

And I said, "It just doesn't feel right." So I didn't. And I just tried to see how I felt. And I didn't really feel like doing much.

But that period came to an end when I suddenly did start to want to come back into the office, did start to want to look outwards again. And with that came creativity. The first thing really -- there'd been painting, but that was from before.

But the rock and roll album, *Run Devil Run*, was something Linda wanted me to do. So that felt like a good sort of step back into the world. I thought, "Okay, I know she wants me to do this so I'll do it before the end of the 20th century." That's when rock and roll was in, that century. So I did that.

And I think then I just dipped my foot back in, started to come out of my shell and feel better about myself and about life and stuff and sort of feel like, yeah, there was a future.

And then I went to an awards ceremony here in London -- it was very much for courage and for people overcoming difficulties.

And it was a very moving ceremony. The most moving I've ever been to. There was a guy who'd been blinded for wading in, trying to save a guy who was getting beaten up by three thugs. He wasn't a fighter, obviously. And he'd got beaten up, left for dead and was blind. So he was there now, getting a courage award.

And I think everyone was crying.

Heather was giving an award. I just saw her bound up there and I thought, "Well, she's good-looking." And, whoops -- I was surprised at me thinking that. Because I hadn't thought that about anyone for quite a while. In fact, for 30 years. Because while Linda was alive, I must say, I didn't look at any other women.

So I just saw her, and then I admired her speech, and then admired the sort of work she was involved in.

Well, with Heather's charity work, I got in touch with her and had a couple of meetings at the office. Which kind of grew into a friendship, which gradually grew into a romance.

And then I think that really helped my creativity, particularly with this new album. It sort of gave me some more to live for.

And I had all these questions, like, "Oh, my gosh, I've had a wife for 30 years. Is this allowed?" I think most guys who go through that feel quite a degree of guilt.

But I soon felt, yeah, it is. Actually what I felt was that if Linda was alive, I'd be dead meat. She'd kill me. No way would I be getting away with this. But I felt that if she was around, this wouldn't even be happening. But, as she wasn't, she would want me to be happy.

And, yeah, I think the answer to you, the long-winded answer to your question, was yeah, it's helped me quite a bit.

**RD:** You've talked about how hard it was to follow the Beatles with Wings. So now you have this new love following one of the great romances of our day. Given all those inevitable comparisons, it must be tougher the second time around.

**McCARTNEY:** I think so. You know, funny enough, if you like each other, love each other, then all that goes out the window.

And also there's an age difference. I mean, I'd gone through all that stuff. But in the end it just either works or it doesn't. You can get people who are perfectly matched and married, you can get every sort of circumstance you can think of, and it doesn't work. You can get people in the most bizarre circumstances and it does work.

So I must say, I don't give all that a thought anymore. I'm very lucky with that now. It just feels okay.

**RD:** Would you ever consider having more children?

**MCCARTNEY:** I don't know. [laughs] I really don't know. So that in itself is a bit of an admission.

**RD:** You've said in the past that "Yesterday" emerged fully formed from a dream. What do you make of that? What is your personal understanding of inspiration?

**McCARTNEY:** I don't understand it at all. But I love it. I think life is quite mysterious and quite miraculous. I mean, when I saw my first baby, Mary, born, I remember just thinking "That is magic." I know how we did it. But there's still a miracle happening. I still don't know how I write songs. And I don't want to know. Every time I come to write a song there's this sort of magic little thing where I go, "Ooh, ooh, it's happening again. Ooh, ooh, ooh." I'm just thrilling myself with this sort of thing. And I do it all the time. I just sort of sit down at the piano and go, "Oh, my God. I don't know this one." And suddenly there's like a song there.

It's something I love. And, like I say, I find the magic in it so -- it's a faith thing. I think there's a great thing there in life. I think there's also not-so-great, and I think what we're in is a mix, and I prefer to go with the great stuff and maximize that as much as I can.

You can't always. This is life. We're born, we die. But, with creativity, I just have a faith. It's not a faith of any particular religion because I worry that religions start wars. It's a great spiritual belief that there is something really great there that I probably refer to as a spirit of goodness.

I'm doing a choral piece at the moment for a choir in Oxford. I sort of talk to a spirit of goodness, because I don't want to alienate Catholics, Jewish people, Muslims. 'Cause I know we're all good, there's good in all of us.

But that's my belief, that there is something sort of magical there. And that was what helped me write "Yesterday." I don't quite know what it is. Something to do with me, something to do with my love of music and my faith in the process. But I don't quite know what it is and I don't want to know.

**RD:** So what is it, in your opinion, that makes a good musician?

**McCARTNEY:** I think the love of music, really. I think Mozart once said, "I choose the notes that love each other." It's something like that. I mean, I'm not sure if that's an exact quote, but that will do it.

You know, they just make themselves a nice song. A good musician, I think, loves music. And that's the opener. And I love certain music. At the moment I'm listening to a lot of Nat King Cole. Some of those great writers. Cole Porter and Hoagy Carmichael. I mean, I love them. I really do. Fred Astaire. I love listening to Fred Astaire. It doesn't have to be music of my generation. I also love listening to Motown and I love a lot of jazz. Chet Baker, Travis, some of the newer bands. But in it all the common factor is, I just love music.

**RD:** You're one of the few artists that seems willing to venture outside what you're known for, whether it's painting or poetry or classical music or whatever. What's driving you to take those risks?

**McCARTNEY:** I've always taken risks. You know, it was a risk getting in a group. My dad was not too pleased that I threw out this great teaching career. That's all I had the qualifications for. I was sort of edging towards being a teacher of English, probably. But I'm not sure I would have been a very good one. And I got into music. So obviously that, to him, was a bit of a risk.

The Beatles doing things like "Sergeant Pepper" was a bit of a risk. Certain things we did, putting strings on "Yesterday" or doing "Eleanor Rigby" or some of the more far-out things we did later on, like John doing "Revolution Number 9." Some of that was quite far-out stuff.

So really I feel like I've always taken risks. Getting to school late was a risk. Getting caught in a first-class compartment on a train with a second-class ticket, you know.

So I feel just the way I was brought up involved some kind of risks, and I kind of like it. It sort of adds spice to life for me.

**RD:** Do the critics ever get to you when you venture out and try something new?

**McCARTNEY:** Yeah, there are always a few that do. I just try and ignore them. People say to me, "If you venture outside your field, they're going to have their pencils sharpened for you. They're waiting for you."

And I've seen it happen to a lot of other artists, you know. They just do one little thing that seems a little bit too risky or too pushy or a bit too forward and they'll get down for it.

I mean, there was one painting critic who's quite famous over here. He's a bit of an old fruitcake, I must say. But he said I shouldn't be allowed to do it. Which I thought was a bit of a cheek, you know. But I don't really listen to him. They won't put me off.

But I'm lucky the publishers thought my painting was good enough, certain people thought it's good enough to give it exhibitions. I mean, I have a certain degree of confidence in it. Not pig-headed, but you have to sort of think it's good. Because I'm a great admirer of art and I like a lot of painters. So I have to match it up against all of them. I have to think it's somewhere -- it's obviously not as good -- but it's somewhere in the ballpark for me to sort of let it out.

And the same with poetry. You know, if a couple of great poets say to me, "You know, that's good," then that's enough for me. I'm not going to listen to the critics.

And Allen Ginsberg, the great American poet, once said to me, "That 'Eleanor Rigby' is a hell of a poem." So I thought, "He's not wrong."

**RD:** Throughout your career you have achieved everything from fame and fortune, to the adoration of millions, and critical acclaim in several different areas. By most people's standards they'd say you were very successful. How do you define success?

**McCARTNEY:** Well, you know, I think the same way that people do. With songs and records, it originally was whether they sold well. Which I think is a fair assessment. That's how most people do it. But it has since grown to what pleasure it gives people. That's the real payoff.

And I have had people come up to me -- a kid, he must have been in his twenties or something, said to me, "You saved my life in college."

I said, "You mean with the Beatles records?"

He says, "No, no, no. 'Flaming Pie.'"

So it's still going on. I know how sometimes music has just saved my life. You put it on -- it might have been Elvis for me or something when I was in a real bad mood -- you put Elvis on and you go, "Life's not so bad."

I always say to people, "I'm kind of ordinary." People go, "No, you're not."

I go, "Believe me, I am. I really am." In here, I'm very ordinary.

I like to go on the Underground here. I like being with people. Not always, but often. Whereas there are some people who, once they've reached fame, they don't want to go back. It's like, "Oh, no, get the limo. I want the chauffeur."

Actually, the other night, I was going somewhere. I had a rather long walk up this hill, and I had to be there in five minutes and it was a 20-minute walk. And this bus stopped at a red light and I saw it was quite empty. So I just knocked on the door and the guy looks and then he opened the door. So I got in and I was like, "Yeah!"

So in that way, I do enjoy quite simple things. So I think it's actually quite a good thing, because I think I can relate to people a lot. I think I have the same joys and sorrows that a lot of people have. I do have quite simple tastes in most things.

Sometimes they'll give me a presentation thing. It might be a guitar. And they'll put gold machine heads on it, knobs. And it's not me. I go, "Oh, no, no, you shouldn't have done the gold. I like the silver. I like the metal, chrome."

So, in other words, I'm not one of these people who likes things with gold knobs on. It's not the way I am.

**RD:** Do you have a philosophy that has guided your life? You've had so many really intense experiences. A lot of people would be very thrown by some of the things that happened to you. What keeps you as centered as you seem to be?

**McCARTNEY:** That's a really hard question. I don't know. I think there is a sort of faith in things and in life being a miracle. But when it's tough times, you sort of know there's a good chance that it will come good. So I sort of have faith in that.

Coming from where I'm from, my upbringing, there was no silver spoon in my mouth. So I had to do things like paper rounds and odd jobs and stuff. It sort of gave me a love of life, I think. And knowing that if a thing is tough, you've got to try and think, "Right, what's the way out of this?" I think that's my first thought: "How do we get out of this, in a bad situation?" Where I think some other people aren't as fortunate and might just think, "That's it. I'm gone."

I'm not really like that. My first thought is "Oh, holy cow, what do we do now?" And I'm a bit of a fighter that way.

**RD:** For so many people you'll always be one of the Beatles. We see you as brothers, as members of a family. You can grow up and go on, but you never leave them behind. What is that like for you?

**McCARTNEY:** It's great. It is exactly like that, members of a family.

I mean, we went through our problems at the end of the '60s, which were really business problems. But we got through all of that. And we love each other very dearly. And so we are like brothers. We ring each other quite a bit, try and see each other quite a bit. It's great. I love it.

Something like the anthology gives us a good excuse. We sit around and natter. We go out to dinner. We visit each other, even though we kind of tend to be at different parts of the globe at different times.

But it's great. They're great guys. And I have a lot to be grateful for, that wherever I've got to, they certainly helped me a thousand percent.

Obviously, John I remember with great love and great affection. Because we were the two who sort of sat in that room making those beautiful songs. So I feel very privileged to have been the guy who wrote with John. And very privileged that he wanted me to be the guy who wrote with him.

**RD:** Why do you think that writing relationship with John was so special?

**McCARTNEY:** We were both really cool, actually. [laughs] I mean, all the Beatles are really cool. I always say the Beatles is like four sides of a square. Without any side, the square collapses. And we were very much four elements that had to be in that group.

But with me and John, we admired each other a lot. We both had drive and desire to succeed and to write music that was not so strong at the beginning. But as we got better and refined the songs and stuff, it became something very strong.

And one of the things I'm really proud of is that we wrote 194 songs together. No, actually, it's more. Because there were a few unpublished ones before the Beatles. There's "You're in My Little Book," which I wish I could find. There was one called "Just Fun." There were a couple that never saw the light of day.

But the most amazing fact about it is that every time we went to sit down -- and it was normally about a three-hour writing session -- we never came out without a finished song. So that was like 200 days that we sat down to do that. And never had a dry moment.

**RD:** So it was magic, chemistry.

**McCARTNEY:** I think the point was we were both bloody good. I'm sorry, folks, but there's a point at which you have to suspend your modesty. I mean, we had something. And I think it's just, it was the love of it, which developed into skill.

But there's one song that nearly had us foxed, which was "Drive My Car." Because I'd come in with the idea and the basic thing of, "I can buy you golden rings, da, da, da, golden rings and things." It was all ings and pings and pong. It was all going nowhere. So we had a little break, I think we had a cup of tea or something. And it was like, "Wait a minute." We got this idea out of nowhere about drive my car. There's a girl and a chauffeur. It all became tongue in cheek. "Beep beep, beep beep, yeah." And it was like she was offering this guy a job. And suddenly it wrote itself. "Baby, you can drive my car." Once we got rid of those golden rings...

**RD:** In the *Wingspan* special, you said something along the lines that "John did okay, but not any better than me."

**McCARTNEY:** It was very controversial.

**RD:** But that competitive edge, was it part of the strength of your partnership with John?

**McCARTNEY:** Yes. It was good, though. I would bring in a song and you could sort of see John stiffen a bit. Next day he'd bring in a song and I'd sort of stiffen. And it was like, "Oh, you're going to do that, are you? Right. You wait till I come up with something tomorrow."

So it was good. We bounced -- it led to a sort of stairway of achievement, rather than just plateauing out. You know there was a good, friendly competition, never really too serious. Until we got to arguing in the Beatles breakup time. Then it got sort of sticky.

**RD:** Is it true that you're looking to alter the writing credits on some of the songs that you wrote as a Beatle so your name appears before John's?

**McCARTNEY:** No, not really. In actual fact what happened was we were making the anthology. And because of an old -- it's not actually an official agreement or anything -- but because of the way things worked out, we always used to call things Lennon/McCartney. I went to a meeting once with Brian [Epstein] and John, and unfortunately I'm the only surviving member of that trio. John had got there before me, with Brian, and they said, "We think it would be a good idea to call it Lennon/McCartney."

I said "Oh yeah? Wait a minute, I think McCartney/Lennon sounds good."

We had a little, sort of tussle about that. And they said, "Well, look. Let's call it Lennon/McCartney for now, but we can change it any time we want to." So I said, "Okay." I bought that. I mean, it's alphabetical, it sounds better. So obviously now it does. It's like Rodgers and

Hammerstein – Hammerstein and Rodgers doesn't sound right. So it's good. So I'm generally very happy with that.

But at the time of the anthology, I was going through a bit of a tough period with Linda, and the song "Yesterday" was in the anthology. Instead of Lennon/McCartney, someone proposed putting in the full names, so that all the songs would be by John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

So with "Yesterday," with that particular one, I thought, "Wouldn't it be nice after all these years, particularly in light of that meeting, if we just change it and put "Yesterday" by Paul McCartney and John Lennon?"

And I know John always said he had nothing to do with that song so I figured that would be okay. In fact, a pianist used to play it whenever he came into a certain restaurant: "Da, da, da" [hums the first few chords of "Yesterday"] and he'd go, "Oh no! It's not even mine." So, you know, I thought John would be okay with that.

But what happened is we got into a little sticky moment 'cause I rang Yoko and said, "Just on this one occasion could I have this as a favor? I'm not going through a great time in my life and I'd like it."

And she first said, "Yeah," but then she rang back and said, "No." And I thought, "But you weren't there when I wrote it." But the power had passed to her. And I thought, "You know, that's not very nice." So it actually is one of the reasons that we're not the greatest of friends. We're not enemies. We're friends -- sort of. But it's one of the things that didn't help cement our relationship, really.

Actually Linda then rang her up and said, "You know, this would mean a lot to Paul." And she turned Linda down too. She said she was sorry, but that they would never change it.

So it's become a little bit of a bone of contention. And then later I thought, "It should be changed on all of my songs – 'Fool on the Hill,' 'Hey Jude,' 'Let It Be' – they should all say, only when both names are used in full, those are my songs, those are John's."

I don't see what's wrong with that.

But it's been refused, so I got off it and I thought I was cool with it and I calmed down and it was all right and it was all going great until I happened to go to Vienna. It was late at night, and I was in a bar and I'd been out to dinner and I was sitting around and the piano player had finished. I was just having a drink with Heather. And I saw the piano player's fake book. So I grabbed it, and it's interesting, I'm going through it and it's like, "Fly Me to the Moon," "Moon River," "Hey Jude." And he hadn't had room at the top of the page, so it read "Hey Jude," by John Lennon. He didn't have room for my name. So I must say it really bummed me out. I thought, "Oh God, now this is exactly what I'm worried about."

I really am okay about all this now. It is something I still would like, but I understand that I probably can't get it. So that's okay. But the other thing is, computers have this way of giving you a box to name something.

**RD:** Only so many characters.

**McCARTNEY:** And you've only got so many... And in the future, "Hey Jude" is going to get credited to John Lennon. It just worries me, because it's my reputation. So it's a little bone of contention, but I stress it's a little bone of contention. I really am okay with it. I've done very well

with my life and da, da, da, da. But if you're reading this, Yoko, there's still time.

You know, we actually did a list of who wrote which songs with Barry Miles's book, *Many Years From Now*, and John's *Playboy* interview. And there's only one we disputed out of everything we wrote.

So let's not go on too much about this because people now think it's a major bone of contention with me, like I'm worried about John overshadowing me. I'm not. I love John dearly. I think he would have done it. But it's one of these things that happens in life and I'm -- he said twitching -- I'm okay with it now.

**RD:** What's the one song you and John disagreed on?

**McCARTNEY:** What was the one? It's the melody of "In My Life." [singing] "There are places I'll remember." I think I wrote it. But John thinks he wrote it. So you know what? He can have it. One out of 200.

**RD:** If you could put together your dream band, composed of any musicians past or present, living or dead, who would you pick?

**McCARTNEY:** The Beatles.

**RD:** Really?

**McCARTNEY:** The first would be the Beatles, just because we were a really cool little band. If I could extend it, we could go for, um, the Beatles. Linda. Jimi Hendrix. Keith Moon. Eric Clapton. We don't need all these guys. This is getting too big as a band. I could go on, but that will do.

**RD:** What would you like to tell readers around the world about your work with Adopt-A-Minefield? How did you get into it, what does it mean to you and what kind of impact do you hope for?

**McCARTNEY:** Yeah, I didn't really know too much about it except through Princess Diana. But Heather has been involved since before Diana. And her main emphasis is in helping victims who tend, like her, to be amputees. And she will talk to people, particularly who are recent amputees, who are very worried about their future. And she'll say, "What are you worried about?"

And they'll say, "Well, you know, I'm a great sportsman" or something. Like a young soldier, for instance, it often happens to. These are fit young guys who, until the day before that, could do everything. And suddenly they're looking at a very bleak future.

She says, "No, no, no. Wait a minute. I ski. I rollerblade. I run. I work out." And it lifts them, as only she can tell them.

So I think that's really cool and really important. That's the main involvement. And the single most cruel reason why people have limbs amputated is land mines.

We just recently hooked up with this U.N. outfit called Adopt-A-Minefield, where communities and schools and towns and organizations like Rotary Clubs will collect enough money to have a field cleared in their name. For instance, Heather and I have done one in Croatia, where it means that the people who live in that village can actually walk in that field. It means these people can tend their ancestors' graves.

I say to people, "Imagine you were living in a war zone and peace is declared. And then a

couple of weeks later, Monday morning, you're in the traffic and you're going to work like normal. Suddenly there's snipers shooting at you from the trees. You go, 'Wait a minute. Peace.' Or you take your kids to the beach and something blows up. We'd say, 'No, that's unacceptable. Wait a minute. Peace has been declared. Get the war out of here.'" And so that's one of my thrusts, and Heather's.

We had a meeting with Colin Powell. He's a great man. I have a lot of respect for him. The American position, unfortunately, is that you won't sign the Mine Ban Treaty because of Korea. I'd like to see America sign this treaty, because until America signs it, China won't do it, Russia won't do it. And it's a knock-on effect. America must take the lead. So we're trying to persuade him of that.

But he's very supportive. And, to give them their due, the American government does put a lot of funding into clearing minefields. But I think even soldiers, who are really brave guys, who will walk forward, whereas we'd want to run away from a war, I don't think they want to leave the war behind them. They're so brave, I don't think they want to be involved with a cowardly act.

**RD:** So many people would give their eyeteeth to meet you. Is there anyone in the world today you'd like to meet?

**McCARTNEY:** I don't really think there are too many people like that. I've really met a lot of people. Who haven't I met? Oh, you know who I'd like to meet? Nelson Mandela. I haven't met Nelson Mandela, and I admire him a lot.

**RD:** What advice would you give young kids today about experimenting with drugs?

**McCARTNEY:** My advice would be "Straight is great and it's the best." So that would be the essential advice that I think a lot of us come around to in the end.

But, having said that, I know that's unreal and that the world is quite a stressful place, particularly when you're growing up and there's a lot of peer pressure. So I would think "Be very careful" would be the second line of advice, really. And try not to bow to peer pressure.

That's the big danger. People say, "Oh, you haven't tried that?"

Don't worry. Say, "No, I haven't, and I don't want to."

**RD:** If you could go back in time and meet, say, the 12-year-old Paul McCartney, what advice would you give him?

**McCARTNEY:** Oh, my God. What would I tell him? Keep a good sense of humor, man. You're going to need it. And enjoy yourself.

**RD:** Enjoy.

**McCARTNEY:** Enjoy.

Did you hear that story of Maharishi? Did you read that we [the Beatles] met him? And he said that. And then 30 years on we [my kids and I] met him again. And he said it again. I really do think it's very important.

Because, you know, we don't know how long we're here for. We don't know the deal, really. And so I think if you enjoy, it certainly helps. I think it helps people around you too. It helps them to enjoy.