

MUSICAL INTRO:

When a tree falls in a forest and no one's around to hear it...It Makes A Sound.

We are outside. On the greens of Rosemary Hills Golf Course. Birds chirp. A bee buzzes close to the microphone. Feral peacocks squawk in the distance every now and then. Every now and then, a distant rumbling of thunder.

DEIRDRE

Live from Rosemary Hills, more specifically live from the middle of Rosemary Hills Golf Course--- I'm Deirdre Gardner, and this is It Makes A Sound. Welcome to our first On Location Show of the celebration of the music of Wim Faros. Here I am, standing outside the house of Tricia Elwood, a lifelong resident, and one of Wim Faros' earliest fans and benefactors. We are here to uncover more about the who/what/where behind the concert that was recorded for posterity, lost, and now found, found after decades of neglect in an attic on the outskirts of the now nearly abandoned golf community...the concert contained within the cassette that we call: The Attic Tape. Tricia Elwood has answers.

For today's show, I stand at a crossroad. Literally I'm in the middle of the road right now, in a place that I haven't been in quite a long time. It's hallowed ground. I am looking at the home that Tricia Elwood grew up in, a sprawling estate on a lot that was once the choices of locations, because it stands across from the Rosemary Hills Clubhouse. Listeners: in a conference/recreation room there on the second floor of that Clubhouse Tricia Elwood held her 8th grade graduation party in 1992. It was at that 8th grade graduation party where Wim Faros took the stage to give his first public concert. So let us turn to that clubhouse.

Deirdre turns around, walks away from Tricia's house up into the grass. She makes little disappointed cry.

DEIRDRE

"Oh...oh no...oh listeners, oh my gosh, I'm looking at the clubhouse, and...it is certainly not as it was. I'm standing here perplexed. I have to tell you, more than two decades after the event that shook the music world, what I see is unsettling, it's eerie. Listeners, we have to, we must go there, we must take a closer look. I am walking up the hill.....

She is walking briskly up the hill. Birds chirp, insects zoom past.

DEIRDRE

Ok, I am walking toward What is that--? Eww, is that
 (She has stepped on peacock poop)
 ---ugh. I'm walking towards the clubhouse--ah, ow!
 (she tripped)
 I'm ok, I think it was a golf ball. Let's see. Yes. I'm taking us towards the clubhouse...for a field investigation. That's right, on today's Live On Location episode of It Makes A Sound we're doing a field investigation at the historical location most associated with the music of Wim Faros, and then, down the hill, we will meet Tricia Elwood, the key organizer of the concert. With Tricia we will unlock more nuanced details of that special night, and ask her to help us complete the lyrics to the songs heard on the Attic Tape. So obviously stay tuned.

More brisk walking through the grass, then she breaks into a run. Panting:

DEIRDRE

Ok. I have reached the roundabout in the driveway in front of the Clubhouse.

DEIRDRE

I'll report what I'm seeing: The large fountain in the center is rusted and cracked, no water flows, there's an abandoned peacock nest inside. And something green...oh it's just crinkled cans of Mountain Dew. Wow. The mansion is so decrepit...my gosh, it all happened so quickly...it's just...like, nature's revenge. It looks almost beautiful in some spots, the decay. Crabgrass and dandelions and ivy have taken over. The ornate glass entrance door, wow, I used to help Mom Windex those doors, the glass was engraved with orchids. Now it's boarded up with planks. The caddies used to stand right here to shake hands goodbye to the golfers, I'd watch them transfer the wad of cash that remained in their warm right hands-- like magicians--seamlessly into their pockets. I can't believe all these windows are shuttered...well, wait two, no three on the second floor are not shuttered, just broken. It doesn't look vandalized...just...left behind. Listeners, let me state that in 1992, at the time of Wim Faros's concert, the Clubhouse's events calendar was full, traffic through this roundabout was at it's peak. I think Tricia's family must have pulled some strings to secure a party/concert. But now...

She travels a bit through the grass

DEIRDRE

I am facing down the hill at these houses, these houses which in the nineties were meant to be so grand and tony--the night of the party they were glittering at dusk--but now on this grey day, they just look bizarre, and bloated, and bland. It's nearly impossible to sell these now, the golf course shut down so many years ago.

DEIRDRE

And the local government can't get its act together enough to figure out what's next for the land. The handful of residents that remain here, just can't afford to sell, and for one reason or another are holding on for dear life to what they've got. Four houses on this block alone are foreclosed. The shells of the shopping malls that lured people off the highway in the 80s and 90s are waiting to be razed. The new school district closed years ago, now any kids from Rosemary Hills--I mean, there was never many kids in Rosemary Hills, but now those kids are outsourced to a school in another town.

(pats)

Tricia must be living quite differently now.

(Long pause as she surveys the course)

"If you build it they will come," they had thought. Rosemary Hills in the 90s was stirred by a gust of wind that promised to be a sea change but ended up just blowing a few hats off peoples' heads and...well, the people were like, "Oops there goes my hat. Ah well." So those who could just...bought another hat. Hundreds of millions invested towards what would become a great golf ghost town. I understand it now that I have recently returned home from a far-off place. Someone asks you, "Where is Rosemary Hills?" and you can point on a map, "There."

A nearby flutter of wings

DEIRDRE

But there is no "there" there. Is the sad truth--AHHHHHHH!! AHHHH!!!

Scary Squawk! Squawk! Very loud scary squawking. Three peacocks just flew right past Deirdre's face.

DEIRDRE

Jesus!! These--aghhhh---
birds...there's also a feral
peacock infestation, have I
mentioned that, specifically? You
guessed it, tracing back to the
two peacocks that Park Song kept
as trophy pets back two decades
ago. There are more peacocks than
humans on the course now...they
just saunter along--the roads full
of calcified peacock droppings---
they sit on roofs with their
trains displayed, like oligarchs.

Squawk!! Fluttering of wings, another peacock flew past.

DEIRDRE

Ahh. They tend to gather round the
clubhouse for some reason, it
seems. Those three just flew over
to Tricia's oak tree.)

But what was I telling you...right,
ok, look, Rosemary Hills, ok,
perhaps it was never a model of
civilization, perhaps was never a
mecca of greatness. But there was
a time, there was a moment, that
the town had soul, and an
undercurrent of verve. Because it
counted amongst it's 9,638
residents one young Wim Faros. And
we're talking about that time on
It Makes A Sound.

A clap of thunder.

DEIRDRE

Rosemary Hills, that feeling that
there was More...the sense that
there IS more--don't you swallow
that feeling down.

A peacock squawks. A small dog barks nearby.

DEIRDRE

Wim Faros was the light hidden
under a bushel, the flavor in the
salt, the mysterious shadow you
saw flickering before you in the
cave.

DEIRDE

You're not just like a loaf of white bread that's been in the freezer forever and is defrosting into a soggy mess on the table-- strive to be more delicious!

I know that the music on the Attic Tape will help charge us with a much-needed dose of adrenaline and wonder. That's why we're here, on location, back to this historical crossroad, to remember the music, to find that electrified current once again---

A dog that has been barking in the background becomes louder, peacocks are scattering and Tricia Elwood has spotted a person in her yard. She opens her front door and calls--

TRICIA ELWOOD ELWOOD

Oh. Hi there, can I help you with something?

DEIRDRE

And here we go!!

Deirdre walks toward the house. The dog is barking.

DEIRDRE

This is my first encounter with Tricia since the summer after we graduated Rosemary Hills Junior High School in 1992. Here we go. Hi Tricia. Remember me? It's Deirdre Gardner. Hi!

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh my God! Deirdre, wow. Ralphie, stop it. No Ralphie, don't eat the droppings. Stop. Sit. Be quiet. Oh my God how are you? I heard that you're back in town. You look great, you look so different. What are you doing out there in the street, who are you shouting at? Ralphie!!

DEIRDRE

You look nice, too. No more bangs. Wow. Tricia Elwood.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Yeah.

DEIRDRE

So I'm working on a project, and guess what? You are on my show, It Makes A Sound.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Me?

DEIRDRE

Welcome and surprise, you are today's special guest star on our first live on location episode.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh my gosh, what?

DEIRDRE

And who's this? Hi! You're being recorded live on It Makes A Sound, dedicated to the music of Wim Faros.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Cody this is Deirdre Gardner, she was a friend of Mommy's back when we were your age. This is my son Cody.

DEIRDRE

How old are you, Cody?

(silence.)

What's that on your iPad, a video game?

(silence.)

Well, here's something more exciting than that...I am here to interview your mom about a very special artist who came from right here in Rosemary Hills. And I have a show.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh, it's really raining now. So. Um...why don't you...you can come in Deirdre, come in. Ralphie, stop it!

Deirdre comes inside, the door shuts. Ralphie shakes the water off. Tricia leads Deirdre down the hall to the kitchen.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Who are you talking about, you're recording right now, what? Cody's 10. Oh and, I was so sorry to hear about your mom, how is she doing? Have a seat.

DEIRDRE

Oh, thanks. Um...she... you know. Well, I have some help right, like a home nurse, for just...a few hours a week, so I'll see if that, you know. But we'll catch up on that another time, Tricia. Today I'm here with a mission, so I'm gonna cut right to the chase for my show today. The topic is genius, and its location, these are topics you are very familiar with. Do you like music, Cody?

(Silence)

TRICIA ELWOOD

Cody, don't be rude. Deirdre asked you if you like music. Cody!

CODY

.....no.

DEIRDRE

You haven't heard the right kind yet. And Tricia, that's why I'm here: I'm excited for you to talk to me, and to Rosemary Hills--and to Cody--about Wim Faros.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Who's that.

DEIRDRE

Tricia. Wim Faros. Who made his concert debut at your 8th grade graduation party. In the Clubhouse party room. That incredible night.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh my gosh, I have not thought of that guy in so long. I totally forgot about that, it's so great you remember my 8th grade graduation party! You have such a good memory. Funny.

TRICIA ELWOOD

That guy--he lived down at the end of the cul-de-sac on the other side of the fence when you'd turn out of the gate? Remember? He never talked to anyone. He was so weird but kinda cute, wasn't he?

DEIRDRE

He was beautiful, he was very beautiful. Though Tricia and I weren't terribly close in junior high---

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh wait a minute, come one, we were in Spanish Club--

DEIRDRE

That's right, we were in Spanish Club--

TRICIA ELWOOD

I was Patricia. What was your Spanish Club name?

DEIRDRE

Though we weren't very close, I always admired her, and in retrospect Tricia, I'm so impressed by your taste, that you had such an elevated music aesthetic---

TRICIA ELWOOD

Don't you remember your Spanish name?

DEIRDRE

Dolores. It was Dolores.

TRICIA

Dolores...

DEIRDRE

For you, at such a young age, here around the golf course, to see the potential for greatness existing within the enigma of Wim Faros. We had that in common. I didn't realize back then.

DEIRDRE

So, can you tell us more about what you saw early on in Wim that made you take such a chance on him at your party.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh. Uh. Wim Faros was his name? This is about Wim Faros?

DEIRDRE

Yes.

TRICIA ELWOOD

I barely...Well, I mean. My grandmother made me invite him. She felt bad for him, I guess because he was a loner and poor and I think somebody might have died, someone was dead or something? Um, what else---oh yeah! Dances with Trolls! Oh my God: The Troll Grotto. I have not thought about this in so long... there used to be this little weeded-over box garden in the front yard of his house, that was like, filled with troll dolls in specific arrangements. Sometimes they would be in a winding conga line, or around Christmas they might be in a Nativity Scene. So weird.

Thunder in the background.

TRICIA ELWOOD

And sometimes you'd see this kid sitting really still next to the grotto with his legs tucked under him, like... communing with the trolls. We never really drove directly by him, because the house was so far at the end of the cul-de-sac, no one ever really went that way unless we had to turn around because we forgot something, but you could see him back there, sometimes for hours at a time, he'd be sitting there like, I don't know, having troll therapy.

TRICIA ELWOOD

When Dad visited he called it Dances With Trolls. We all called him that. It started when we were little enough and it was like "OK, you have a troll garden...that's cute, kind of...I don't know, so weird." But he'd still sit there when we got older then it was like...really bizarre.

DEIRDRE

Oh. So then, what was it that turned you onto his young musical genius?

TRICIA ELWOOD

Um. Well, he just brought a guitar to my party and started playing in the corner. But then he wouldn't stop playing. Oh yeah! I remember I was like, "eat some food, eat some cake, be normal..." but he just kept playing. My parents and the other adults were like begging him to have a sandwich, but the band played on. Like in the Titanic, the band played on...Kids. So weird. You're not like that, Cody.

DEIRDRE

But Tricia, no. It wasn't like that. We all thought it was amazing. And special. Remember what happened with the bubbles?

TRICIA ELWOOD

No.

DEIRDRE

The end of the first song. All of us kids were like...minds blown. We felt that connection, we swayed together....

TRICIA

We did?

DEIDRE

All the grade school cliques just melted away with the music. You were so happy. You blew a bubble that popped over Wim at the end of the song like a blessing.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Gosh, Deirdre...I don't think we had bubbles. I have a soap allergy.

DEIRDRE

No there was definitely bubbles...

TRICIA ELWOOD

I mean, I remember Dances with Trolls being pretty good surprisingly, but it wasn't, like, my style. And then he just played and played and it got annoying. A bunch of us went by the Clubhouse pool and danced to Madonna and Spice Girls. Aww that was so fun. Kayleen Becker was there.

DEIRDRE

Listeners, as you know, going by the pool with Kayleen Becker on that June night in 1992 was like being in a fallout shelter when the Beatles came to America. Like facing away from the Taj Mahal. Like sleeping through the birth of your child.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Deirdre, what is this show, are people listening to this?

DEIRDRE

Well, you know, Tricia, it's a show for people who want to believe that when tree falls in a forest, it makes a sound. Because they gave a damn about the tree in the first place. They knew the extraordinary when they saw it. It's a show about a big thing that went BOOM. The sound of Wim Faros.

DEIRDRE

And the responsibility to remember it. We have a responsibility. To remember the music. Bring it to the present. In Rosemary Hills. Here and Now. Tricia. That's what it's about, ok? Cody, don't you want to know more about this concert?.... Hey, Cody.

CODY

I know what you did to Tommy Neidhart. He's my friend. I know who you are.
(silence)

DEIRDRE

Yeah, well I know who you are, kid. Because I'm standing right in front of you and your mom introduced us and that's how civilized people get to know each other the old-fashioned way.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Ok, Deirdre.

DEIRDRE

And you should know who Wim Faros is. Everyone should. I have his music, Tricia. I recorded every song he played that night at your party on my cassette recorder. You and Kayleen Becker may have missed it. But I didn't—not a single note. And here's the tape.

She has pulled the tape from her bag

CODY

What's that?

TRICIA ELWOOD

That's a cassette tape. It plays music.

CODY

It's an instrument?

TRICIA ELWOOD
No, uh. It's like iTunes...kind
of... but if your phone only
played about 10ish songs.

DEIRDRE
And wasn't a phone.

CODY
Any 10 songs?

TRICIA ELWOOD
Well no, just the same ten songs.

DEIRDRE
This one has nine songs.

CODY
Forever without changing?

TRICIA ELWOOD
Yes.

CODY
Why?

TRICIA ELWOOD
Well you would have to erase the
songs on this tape and record
something else over it.

CODY
How?

TRICIA ELWOOD
You'd need to take songs off the
radio, or other cassette tapes.

DEIRDRE
Or record them live.

CODY

So...how many of those do you need, then?

TRICIA ELWOOD

Well I used to have hundreds.

CODY

What?! Where do you keep them?

TRICIA ELWOOD

Well, you'd need a tower...like a special bookshelf.

CODY

What?! Just use youtube

DEIRDRE

There was no iTunes, this is how we used to keep music.

CODY

That sucks. Can I see?

DEIRDRE

Uh, yes. Be careful.

CODY

(fumbling with tape)

What do you press to play it?

[/ indicates overlapping dialogue]

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh honey it doesn't/ play itself, you need a special machine.

DEIRDRE

You need a cassette tape player.
You need a cassette tape player.

CODY

That sucks.

TRICIA ELWOOD
Stop saying/ sucks.

DEIRDRE
Or a boom box.

CODY
BOOM BOX. What's that?

TRICIA ELWOOD
Well/

DEIRDRE
/That's the special machine--

TRICIA ELWOOD
--It was you know, boxy, it could be really big, or not, and it had a handle, so you could carry it around to play your music, and lots of buttons, and usually two decks for the cassettes.

DEIRDRE
Sometimes three...

TRICIA ELWOOD
And when you press the eject button the tape deck falls open like a fan, and later they would make them so on top you could also play CDs--

CODY
What are--

DEIRDRE
Less important.

TRICIA ELWOOD
And big usually circular stereos that the music would...boom through.

CODY
Did the stereos have nets?

CODY
And look like giant fly eyes?

TRICIA ELWOOD
Yeah, yes...I guess they did. The
mesh on top.

CODY
Oh yeah. I have one of those.

Deirdre makes a sound.

TRICIA ELWOOD
No, honey, we don't have a
boombox, I threw my last one away,
gosh...like before you were, like,
born.

CODY
We have one. In the basement, next
to the toolbox. By the ladders.
And R2D2.

TRICIA ELWOOD
That's what he calls the wet-vac.

DEIRDRE
Ladies and gentlemen...I'm Deirdre
Gardner. This is our first Live on
Location episode of It Makes a
Sound, in the home of Tricia
Elwood. Her small son, Cody
Elwood/has just claimed that they
are in possession of a vintage
boombox cassette tape player. You
understand what this means.

CODY
/Hey, I am not small, I'm ten!
And my name is not Cody ELWOOD.
It's hypehenated.

DEIRDRE
Cody.

CODY
I'm not small

DEIRDRE

Cody...can you...go in the basement...and get that boombox for us? Please. Right now.

CODY

I'm tall for my age.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Cody, be nice and get the boombox for Deirdre, ok?

CODY

I don't have to, but I will.

We hear him leave the kitchen and head towards the basement. The rain outside is getting stronger.

DEIRDRE

Tricia. This. People of Rosemary Hills. Oh my god, Tricia, it's--serendipity. Have we at last found the means to play the Attic Tape? Here? Did we just need to return to the source? We're here in the ancestral home of Tricia Elwood, the woman responsible (even inadvertently) for Wim Faros's first public concert, given at her 8th grade graduation party.

Just now, Tricia's son, Cody Elwood/

TRICIA ELWOOD

/His last name is actually Elwood-Nowakowski

DEIRDRE

Cody Elwood-Nowakowski could deliver up to us from their dusty basement our analog Rosetta Stone, and we will finally be able to hear the music that has been until this moment entombed in this little plastic sarcophagus.

DEIRDRE

I'm holding up this little cassette, listen—right now all you can hear is the dinky rattle of the tape spools. But, in moments, perhaps, finally, it will finally be able to reveal its secrets.

We hear Cody run back into the kitchen. It is pouring outside, we can hear the rain on the roof.

CODY

Can I have my iPad back now.

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh my gosh/my boombox! I TOTALLY had no idea that we still had this. Oh my god, I saved up so much money to buy this, I went with Kayleen Becker to Radio Shack...

DEIRDRE

He found it. Can we plug it in. Plug it in. Does it work? Can we plug it in?

TRICIA ELWOOD

Cody honey will you plug it in for us?

CODY

Ugh it's so heavy and dusty ewww this is so old

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh my god, just plug it in for Mom and her friend./This was kinda like our iPad, but way better, in our opinion,/right Deirdre?

DEIRDRE

I'll do it, give it to me, where's the/ outlet.

CODY

I can do it.

TRICIA ELWOOD

I remember I bought a cassette
tape that day, too. En Vogue.

DEIRDRE

Cody can you just plug it into the
outlet please.

Cody plugs it in and we hear an electrical zap.

CODY

AGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!
!

TRICIA ELWOOD

Oh gosh baby did you get
shocked????!!

CODY

Aghhowwww. I hate your stupid
thing!!

Cody starts crying. The radio plays. We hear broken clips from
the local station. Between static, a male radio announcer,
"Things have really taken a turn, huh. Gosh, be careful out
there, folks. I say stay inside..."

DEIRDRE

...It works.

Lightning strikes and a tremendous clap of thunder!!
Through the static we hear snippets of the radio announcer
saying, "Say again, what's that? I'm just getting in we have a
tornado watch for the western edge of St. Clare County. It's
getting close."
The lashing rain continues, the rolling of the thunder.

Music outro. End credits

It Makes A Sound is written by Jacquelyn Landgraf. Co-directed
by Jacquelyn Landgraf and Anya Saffir. Sound designed and mixed
by me, Vincent Cacchione. Original music composed by Nate
Weida. With Jacquelyn Landgraf as Deirdre Gardner. Today's
episode features Siobhan Fallon-Hogan as Tricia Elwood, and
Melissa Mahoney, as Cody. Oh, and that's me playing the weather
guy on Tricia's boombox. It Makes A Sound is a Night Vale
Presents production. For more information on this show and
other Night Vale podcasts, go to nightvalepresents.com.

You can follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, and unpack your attic at itmakesasound.rocks. For instance, here's a question for this week: What's your best memory from 8th grade. If you dig our show, don't forget to rate and review It Makes A Sound at Apple podcasts. Thanks for listening. Remember to tell kids to be careful around power outlets, and remember Wim Faros.