

STORY  
DISCOVERYEPSTEIN FILES REVEAL TIES  
TO PINELLAS COUNTY

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VICTIMS' CLAIMS, LANDMARK RESORT AMONG LOCAL REFERENCES

**"MOST OF THE VICTIMS ARE IN THE MIAMI/WEST PALM BEACH AREA, HOWEVER, TWO VICTIMS ARE BELIEVED TO BE IN WINTER GARDENS AND PALM HARBOR,"**  
THE REDACTED JULY 9, 2019 EMAIL READS.

**LOCAL WOMAN CLAIMS THAT SHE AND HER SIBLINGS WERE TRAFFICKED BY THEIR FATHER TO JEFFREY EPSTEIN BEGINNING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD.**

**P**INELLAS COUNTY—In 2020, a Tarpon Springs woman called the FBI to report a dark secret that had haunted her for decades: that she and her siblings were trafficked by their father to Jeffrey Epstein beginning in early childhood.

The 28-year-old woman said she first met the wealthy financier when she was 4 and that she was coming forward because "she cannot do it anymore," according to a redacted investigative document. It could not be determined whether the allegations were ever corroborated.

The disturbing claim is among several references tying Pinellas County to Epstein in U.S. Department of Justice files. The online records include alleged victims, associates, even correspondence related to a stalled redevelopment project involving the former Belleview Biltmore Resort & Spa in Belleair.

Across millions of file pages, Pinellas appears dozens of times, though not every mention is tied to criminal activity.

For instance, a 2017 receipt from a bath and beauty shop in Tarpon Springs appears because Epstein's last girlfriend – Karyna Shuliak, the last person he spoke to by phone before his death by

*Jeffrey Epstein was sought as a potential investor for redeveloping the Belleview Biltmore resort. Credit: Dept. of Justice.*



*This 2001 photo of then-Prince Andrew and Virginia Giuffre may have been taken by a Tarpon Springs woman. Credit: US District Court – Southern District of New York*



suicide in 2019 — placed an order for loofahs.

More substantial references place investigators and alleged victims directly in the area.

After Epstein was indicted on federal charges in 2019, FBI agents from the Crimes Against Children and Human Trafficking Unit traveled from New York City to Florida to interview about 25 victims of alleged sexual abuse, one of them local, according to an email sent to the FBI's Tampa field office.

"Most of the victims are in the Miami/West Palm Beach area, however, two victims are believed to be in Winter Gardens and Palm Harbor," the redacted July 9, 2019 email reads.

The Tarpon Springs woman who anonymously called the FBI's National Threat Operations Center at 11:20 p.m. on Aug. 10, 2020 said

she and her five siblings were "sold" throughout their entire childhoods by their father, an attorney and former Epstein "recruiter," the two-page intake form reads. She stated she often "blacked out" as a child and that some of her memories are unclear, the form shows.

"Anonymous reported her siblings would never come forward with the information and would never bring it up," the form reads.

The woman was potentially willing to provide additional information in person, the form states, although it could not be determined whether that ever happened.

The Tarpon Springs Police Department did not respond to an email from Pinellas Press last week asking whether it was involved in investigating the caller's allegations.

The woman also told the intake specialist that "she was the one to take the photograph of Prince Andrew" and another person, whose name was redacted, in 2001.

It was unclear whether she was referring to the widely circulated image showing the former royal with his arm around then-17-year-old Virginia Giuffre, who died by suicide last year. Previous reports have said Epstein took the photo.

The files further show that Ghislaine Maxwell, Epstein's longtime associate, had addresses in Dunedin, Tampa and other nearby locations during the early and mid-2000s, according to documents included along with a New York grand jury subpoena issued to Maxwell in 2019.

Maxwell was convicted in 2021 of child sex trafficking and is currently serving a 20-year sentence.

References to the Belleview Biltmore appear in a June 2011 investment pitch titled "Clearwater project" and emailed to Epstein's chief assistant, Lesley Groff. The overture came three years after Epstein was convicted in Florida for soliciting a minor for prostitution.

It discusses a redevelopment project involving the shuttered hotel, whose owners had put up for sale after they were unable to secure a demolition permit from the Town of Belleair amid a public outcry.

The email was accompanied by a two-page executive summary that outlines "a new focus" to rebrand the resort and carry out "a historically appropriate rehabilitation" that would be financed

*The Belleview Inn opened in 2018 after the rest of the landmark resort was demolished in 2015. Credit: The Belleview Inn.*



partly by the sale of historic tax credits.

The proposal offered "high net worth" individuals or corporations up to \$10 million in discounted tax credits that buyers could purchase for 92 cents on the dollar while deducting a full dollar from their taxable income, reads the email from Philip G. Crifasi Jr., the project's redeveloper/historic preservationist.

The plan also included a "deeded fractional sales" program allowing investors to hold recorded ownership shares of the resort.

"Please show this to your company accountant to see if he/she would be interested in this purchase of historic tax credits," Crifasi wrote to Groff.

There is no indication that Epstein ever invested in the project, which ultimately did not move forward.

After sitting vacant for six years, the deteriorating landmark was sold in 2015 to St. Petersburg-based JMC Communities. Most of the original 1897 wooden structure was "deconstructed" for condominiums and town homes, but the most historic portion was relocated and restored.

It reopened in 2018 as the Belleview Inn.