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Daily newspaper of the year 70p

So will she put Andrew in clear – or damn him?

RICHARD KAY

SEE PAGE 5



Arrest: Ghislaine Maxwell (circled), with Prince Andrew

'UNSPEAKABLE MAXWELL, CHILD SEX GROOMER'

She's charged as 'bewildered' Prince is told: Time to come in

US prosecutors last night urged Prince Andrew to 'talk to us' after the FBI arrested Ghislaine Maxwell on child sex charges.

They pounced on the British socialite in a dawn raid on her hideaway in New Hampshire

By **Sam Greenhill, Daniel Bates** and **Rebecca English**

yesterday. Hours later she appeared in court charged with the sordid abuse of girls as young as 14, including one in London.

In a bombshell press conference, the prosecutors

called Andrew's former friend an 'unspeakable villain' who groomed girls for abuse by financier Jeffrey Epstein and, at times, herself.

But investigators suggested the alleged madam might now become a 'co-operator' in their probe into Epstein's accomplices. And they renewed their

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'VILLAIN LURED GIRLS INTO TRAP'

■ **Socialite in custody after FBI swoop on luxury bolthole**

■ **One 'victim' was just 14 ... another 'abused' at London home**

By Sam Greenhill
Chief Reporter

GHISLAINE Maxwell pimped vulnerable girls to her paedophile boyfriend Jeffrey Epstein for sordid orgies and sexual abuse, US law officials alleged yesterday.

They claimed the British socialite blatantly disregarded the law and had spun a web of lies to cover the 'unspeakable' truth.

The officials released an 18-page indictment spelling out her alleged crimes, saying she had helped the disgraced US financier 'recruit, groom and abuse' girls as young as 14. It said she sex trafficked the victims to his mansions - and her own London townhouse - which she 'knew and intended' would result in their grooming for sexual abuse.

In an effort to hush up her crimes, she repeatedly lied when questioned about her conduct, the indictment said. Here we examine the accusations:

'CHILD ABUSE'

Ghislaine Maxwell helped Epstein abuse girls as young as 14, according to prosecutor Audrey Strauss, acting US attorney for the southern district of New York.

In an extraordinary press conference live-streamed on the internet, she claimed: 'Maxwell played a critical role in helping Epstein identify, befriend and groom minor victims for abuse. In some cases, Maxwell participated in the abuse herself.'

'The couple's method was to befriend these young girls by asking them questions about their lives, pretending to be taking an interest in them.'

Miss Strauss said: 'They would take them to the movies and treat them to shopping trips. Maxwell would encourage these young girls to accept offers from Epstein to pay for their travel and education, making these young victims feel

indebted. After developing a rapport with victims, Maxwell then tried to normalise sexual abuse with a minor victim through a process known as grooming. For example, Maxwell would discuss sexual topics and undress with the victim, or be present for sex acts involving the young victim and Epstein.'

The prosecutor added: 'Maxwell's presence as an adult woman helped put the victims at ease. As Maxwell and Epstein intended, this grooming process left the

young victim susceptible to abuse.' The indictment, unsealed after news of her arrest broke, described Maxwell as having an intimate relationship with Epstein and said she was also paid to manage his various properties.

'Beginning in at least 1994, Ghislaine Maxwell enticed and groomed multiple minor girls to engage in sex acts with Jeffrey Epstein,' the document said. 'Maxwell and Epstein would spend time building friendships with minor victims by, for example, tak-

ing them to the movies or shopping.' It said Maxwell would try to put a child victim at ease by massaging Epstein in front of them and at other times would 'encourage' a fully or partially naked schoolgirl to give Epstein a massage. She would also take part in the sexual abuse, it is alleged.

Maxwell is also accused of encouraging the children to accept gifts from Epstein and make them believe the couple 'were trying to help them'. It said: 'Ghislaine Maxwell facilitated Jeffrey Epstein's

access to minor victims knowing that he had a sexual preference for underage girls.'

The alleged abuse included him touching the girls all over their bodies, using sex toys on them and forcing them to touch him sexually.

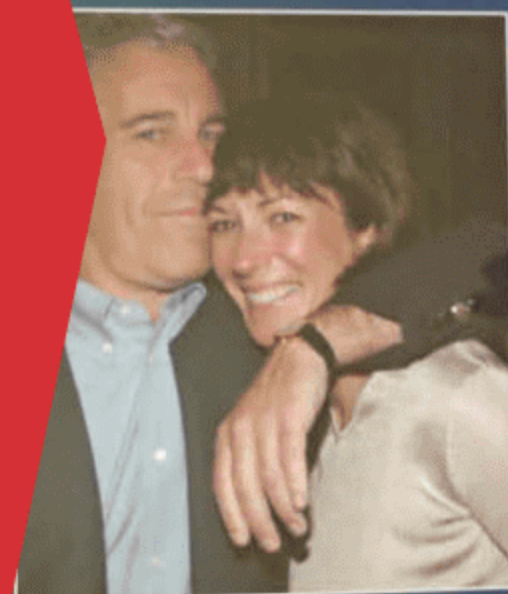
THE RESIDENCES

Maxwell lured the young victims to plush residences where they would be abused, it was claimed. The properties identified by the prosecutors are:

■ Manhattan townhouse - this was infamously where Prince Andrew was later photographed



Lovers: Jeffery Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell



U.S. v. Ghislaine Maxwell

- Maxwell has been charged with facilitating the sexual abuse of underaged girls by Epstein.
- The charged... Mexico, and
- If you recognize either of these persons and feel you may be a victim, please call the following number:
1-800-CALL FBI

Accusations: US attorney Audrey Strauss lays out the charges against Maxwell in a live-streamed news conference yesterday

peering out of the front door; ■ Palm Beach villa - a white-washed house in Florida where staff said schoolgirls were routinely brought by Epstein;

■ Ranch in New Mexico - sprawling property in the desert near Santa Fe;

■ Maxwell's 'personal residence' in London.

THE VICTIMS

None of the victims is named in the indictment, but it outlined brief details of the allegations against Maxwell.

'Child Victim 1' was 14 when

Maxwell allegedly groomed her for group sex with Epstein by taking her on shopping and cinema trips. She quizzed the teenager about school, her classes and her family, the indictment claimed. Then Maxwell attempted to 'normalise' abuse by stripping off in front of the girl and being in the room while the youngster undressed in front of Epstein.

The charges said the abuse happened between 1994 and 1997, and within a year Epstein was sexually abusing her, with Maxwell 'present and involved in some of this abuse'. In particular, it said, she involved the teenager in 'group sexualised

messages' of the financier which involved Maxwell and the teenager while the youngster was topless, then encouraged her to massage Epstein, it was alleged.

The teen - named only as 'Minor Victim 1' - was allegedly abused at Epstein's mansion in Manhattan and at his Florida villa.

'Child Victim 2' was allegedly known by Maxwell to have been underaged when she was flown to Epstein's desert ranch in 1996 'for the purpose of being groomed for and/or subjected to sexual abuse'.

Again, she took the girl shopping and to the cinema, and chatted to her about school, her classes and family, according to the indictment.

At the ranch, Maxwell gave the girl 'an unsolicited massage' while the youngster was topless, then encouraged her to massage Epstein, it was alleged.

'Child Victim 3' was allegedly groomed and befriended by Maxwell in London in 1994 or 1995. She discussed the teenager's life and family and then arranged for 'multiple interactions' between the girl and Epstein, despite allegedly knowing she was underaged.

She encouraged the youngster to massage the paedophile 'knowing that Epstein would engage in sex acts' with her, which he then did, the charges allege.

Did she lie under oath?

Miss Maxwell answered questions on oath in 2016 during two depositions - a sworn out-of-court testimony:

Q Did Jeffrey Epstein have a scheme to recruit underage girls for sexual massage?

A I don't know what you're talking about.

Q: Were you aware of the presence of sex toys or devices used in sexual activities in Mr Epstein's Palm Beach house?

A: No, not that I recall.

Q: Other than yourself and the blonde and brunette that you have identified as having been involved in three-way sexual activities, with whom did Mr Epstein have sexual activities?

A: I wasn't aware that he was having sexual activities with anyone when I was with him other than myself.

Q: Is that your testimony that you've never given anybody a massage?

A: I have not given anyone a massage.

THE CHARGES

■ Conspiracy to entice minors to travel to engage in illegal sex acts (five-year maximum sentence);

■ Enticement of a minor to travel to engage in illegal sex acts (up to 20 years);

■ Conspiracy to transport minors with intent to engage in criminal sexual activity (up to 20 years);

■ Transportation of a minor with intent to engage in criminal sexual activity (ten years minimum);

■ Two counts of perjury (ten years maximum).

of one of the villains in this investigation.'

He said the Crimes Against Children Taskforce had been 'discreetly keeping tabs on Maxwell'. He added: 'We learned she had slithered away to a gorgeous property in New Hampshire, continuing to live a life of privilege while her victims live with the trauma inflicted upon them years ago.'

'Miss Maxwell was arrested without incident. Like Epstein, Miss Maxwell chose to blatantly disregard the law and her responsibilities as an adult, using whatever means she had at her disposal to lure vulnerable youth into behaviour they should never have been exposed to.'

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calls for Andrew to talk to them about Epstein as they promised the surprise arrest of Maxwell would not be the end of their inquiries.

A source close to Andrew told the Mail: 'We remain bewildered that despite our difficulties with the Department of Justice earlier in the year, we have twice in the last month reached out to them to re-engage with the process of the duke helping the inquiry - and have received no response. We remain willing to engage.'

Maxwell has strongly denied any knowledge of or involvement in Epstein's crimes and in 2011 released a statement that said: 'The alle-

gations made against me are abhorrent and entirely untrue.'

Amid speculation she could strike a plea-deal to lessen a potential 35-year sentence:

■ Maxwell was charged with the sex abuse and trafficking of three children;

■ The daughter of the late Robert Maxwell was accused of befriending underage girls and 'luring' them into her sordid 'trap';

■ She spun a web of lies to cover her 'unspeakable' crimes against children, it was alleged;

■ Maxwell was found hiding in New Hampshire, where the FBI said she had 'slithered' away;

memo from prosecutors. Her 'substantial resources' - she transferred \$500,000 between accounts in a single day - made her a high risk of fleeing, according to the memo.

Maxwell last night appeared via video link - owing to coronavirus rules - before the US district court in Concord, New Hampshire.

Asked if she could see the judge and her lawyer, she said 'I can' in a cut-glass accent.

Magistrate Judge Andrea Johnstone read Maxwell her rights and no plea was entered.

When asked if she needed consular assistance from another country - she has British, American and French citizenship - Maxwell appeared to indicate 'No'. At the end of the

20-minute hearing, the judge told Maxwell she would be sent to New York where the charges have been laid.

She added: 'You're remanded to the custody of the United States marshals.'

It was not among the three alleged victims.

She alleges that she was Epstein's sex slave and was forced to have underage sex with Prince Andrew, a claim he has emphatically and repeatedly denied.

At the press conference, Audrey Strauss, acting US attorney for the southern district of New York, said of Andrew: 'We would like to have the benefit of his state-

ment. Our doors remain open. We would welcome him coming in and giving us an opportunity to hear his statement.'

Last night the threat of a legal move in this country was still hanging over the prince. Sources confirmed a special legal request sent to the UK by the US was still being processed. A specialist unit of civil servants within the Home Office is considering Washington's application for so-called 'mutual legal assistance'.

This could potentially lead to Andrew being required to give evidence in a British court regarding Epstein's activities. Miss Strauss claimed Maxwell had lied to

cover up her crimes 'because the truth, as alleged, was almost unspeakable'.

Epstein, who was Maxwell's former boyfriend, hanged himself last August after he was charged with multiple sex child crimes. The charges against Maxwell were yesterday dubbed 'the prequel' to that case by prosecutors.

They said Maxwell had groomed three underage girls for abuse in London, New York, Florida and New Mexico between 1994 and 1997. She was last seen ten days after Epstein's suicide.

William Sweeney, an FBI assistant director, said last night: 'We announce the arrest



Last photo? Maxwell, outside an LA restaurant in a now-discredited shot

From Tom Leonard in Bradford, New Hampshire

The \$1m lair she 'slithered' off to (AND IT'S CALLED 'TUCKED AWAY')

(AND IT'S CALLED 'TUCKED AWAY')



Paid for anonymously in cash, the house where Maxwell hid, deep in woods of New Hampshire

GHISLAINE Maxwell was secretly living a life of luxury in a house named 'Tuckedaway' in a sleepy American town before the authorities came calling yesterday.

She paid more than \$1 million (£800,000) cash in December for the timber frame house - advertised as perfect for someone who 'wants total privacy' - after finding it through upmarket international estate agents Four Seasons Sotheby's.

The agent who sold it to Maxwell told the Daily Mail she hadn't known who she was when she bought it.

Maxwell reportedly shielded her name by buying the property through a limited liability company called Granite LLC.

Set deep in woodland, the small town of Bradford, New Hampshire, is a quiet, unassuming place. Even local estate agents admit that 'out of the way' doesn't begin to describe the sleepy location.

Indeed, it may seem like a perfect place for hiding out - and its 1,600 residents could surely have had no idea that one of the most

'She continued to live a life of privilege'

wanted women in the world had 'slithered' into their midst.

Following her arrest, the FBI's Bill Sweeney said last night: 'We have been discreetly keeping tabs on Maxwell's whereabouts as we work this investigation and more recently we learned she had slithered away to a gorgeous property in New Hampshire, continuing to live a life of privilege while her victims live with the trauma inflicted upon them years ago.'

The 4,365 sq ft house, set on 156 acres of fields and woodland with sweeping views, was built in 2002 and sits on a secluded road south of Bradford. With four bedrooms and four bathrooms, it is described as 'stunning' and - handily for a fugitive criminal suspect who reinvented herself as an environmental activist - 'an amazing retreat for the nature lover who wants total privacy'.

Rooms have views of the beautiful Mt Sunapee foothills to the west. Inside, a 'great room' has a floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace, 'cathedral ceiling', and a chandelier.

Billed as an 'open concept home', it has a ground-floor master bedroom with a walk-in closet, stone fireplace, window seat and a large en suite bathroom.

The 'gourmet' kitchen has cherry wood cabinets, an expensive Viking 6 burner stove, two Wolf ovens, a Sub Zero fridge and a breakfast bar. Large windows look out over gardens and a waterfall.

Maxwell's exact whereabouts had been a mystery for nearly four years. There have been reports and theories that the Duke of York's friend might have been in

one of half a dozen different countries where she either has a home, or rich and powerful friends. Even her own lawyers were said not to know precisely where she was because they communicated with her only via email. Court papers last night revealed

Maxwell had travelled internationally at least 15 times in the past three years, including trips to the UK, Japan and Qatar. She also has about 15 bank accounts, holding up to £18million, the documents said. Earlier this year David Boies, a

lawyer acting for Prince Andrew's alleged victim [redacted] said: 'We heard she was in Cameroon, the South of France, Israel, the UK... we have not been able to establish any credible evidence of where she actually is.' Last month, the latest reported

sighting of the 58-year-old was that she had been hiding out in a secret luxury bolthole in Paris linked to a millionaire business contact. Prior to that, in August 2019 - a few days after Epstein killed himself in prison while awaiting trial on sex trafficking

charges - she was said to have been photographed at a restaurant in Los Angeles. But the photographs were later discredited as Photoshopped fakes. Maxwell owns a £3.7million news house in Belgravia,

London, scene of the notorious 2001 photo of Prince Andrew placing an arm around the midriff of Epstein's then 17-year-old victim, Miss [redacted]. But neighbours have not seen Maxwell there for almost a decade.



Main picture: The New Hampshire house was an ideal hideout. Above: The interior with its stunning views. Right: The property (circled) offered Maxwell the seclusion she sought



Agonising question for Queen and Palace...



by Richard Kay

EDITOR AT LARGE

THERE is never a good time for the proverbial 'bad penny' to turn up, so imagine how the Queen received news of the arrest of Ghislaine Maxwell and her appearance in court on sex-trafficking charges.

Maxwell was once a welcome visitor to royal homes, an overnight guest at Sandringham as well as being invited to one of the starriest parties ever thrown at Windsor Castle, the so-called Dance of the Decades in the summer of 2000.

Nor was that her only invitation to royal glamour at Windsor. In 2006 she was a guest at Princess Beatrice's lavish costume ball to mark her 18th birthday. On another occasion the vivacious socialite was photographed at Prince Andrew's side in the Royal Enclosure at Ascot, where admission is at Her Majesty's discretion.

Yesterday, with the Queen still in lockdown with Prince Philip at Windsor, there must have been the iciest of feelings at the news that the daughter of disgraced media tycoon Robert Maxwell had been taken into custody. As a mother, Her Majesty will, of course, be anxious about what Maxwell's arrest and her knowledge of the alleged activities of paedophile financier Jeffrey Epstein mean for her son.

And as monarch there will be anger at the prospect of the good name of the Royal Family being dragged through the mud once again. No family matter has concerned her more than the shadow hanging over Andrew. To her, it is infinitely more serious than the selfish trivialities of the exiled Prince Harry and the Duchess of Sussex.

For more than seven months it has been an ongoing crisis, with every sordid revelation lapping that bit closer to Buckingham Palace. Ever since that Newsnight interview in which Andrew spectacularly failed to offer any sympathy for Epstein's victims and showed no remorse over his friendship with the billionaire sex offender, fears about the implications for the Prince have multiplied.

Maxwell's arrest changes everything. She, remember, is in the famous photo of Andrew with his arm around the bare midriff of teenager [redacted] - a picture of which the Duke of York has no recollection - which was taken by Epstein in Maxwell's Belgravia home.

Does she really believe Andrew's insinuations that the photo was doctored or manipulated?

Then there is the most damaging claim of all from [redacted] who says that, aged 17, she and Andrew had sex three times. The Prince denies it.

If anyone knows the truth it must be Maxwell, whom Andrew befriended during visits to New York after his divorce from the Duchess of York.

It was through Maxwell that Andrew was introduced to Epstein, who was found dead in his New York prison cell a year ago. And on all those social occasions - including Beatrice's party - where Ghislaine was a guest of Andrew, so, too, was Epstein.

As the Royal Family and their advisers have agonised over how best to protect the integrity of the monarchy from the fall-out of the Epstein affair, there may be some slim consolation.

The charges brought by the FBI against Maxwell relate to a period in the mid-1990s - before Prince Andrew had ever met the sleazy Epstein.

Perhaps more significantly, the decision to strip Andrew of all royal duties and force him to step down from official engagements looks even more of a wise move.

With the benefit of hindsight, the prompt action - brokered by Prince Charles and Prince William - has been the only moment when the royals

So will she clear Prince - or damn him?



Close: Prince Andrew with Ghislaine at Ascot in 2000

are going to a restaurant then a club. Do come, it will be fun.' She was persuasive, too, and Andrew loved that.'

By 2000 Maxwell and Andrew, who were introduced by the Duchess when she was a regular fixture on the New York party circuit, were very close.

But they were not a couple. She would even introduce him to future girlfriends, such as [redacted]. They were often seen together in public.

The pair caused a minor stir when they made an appearance at a Ralph Lauren launch in the city. One source observed: 'They certainly seemed to have a good time together.' Andrew was also a regular guest at the dinner parties she would hold at the home of Epstein, who was by then her ex-boyfriend, on the Upper East Side.

Such was the importance of the role Maxwell played in Andrew's life that it was even claimed he once asked the Queen's permission to take her on an official work trip. This was refused.

Andrew was widely criticised after he appeared with Maxwell at a 'pimps and prostitutes' theme party thrown by the model Heidi Klum. To his ex-wife, such behaviour was beginning to damage his reputation. She was also concerned at the effect it would have on their daughters.

In 2001, when Andrew was about to take up his role as Britain's trade envoy, a friend of the Duchess told the Mail on Sunday: 'Fergie and a lot of other people who love Andrew believe his friendship with Ghislaine Maxwell and Jeffrey Epstein has become really dangerous. They're using him just for his name and access and he is so innocent he doesn't realise.'

How prophetic those words were to become. Among courtiers there is considerable anxiety about what Maxwell's arrest means for the Duke of York. They believe that such is her intimate knowledge of Epstein, she could damn Andrew or clear him.

For Andrew, his reputation is gone - but for the Queen at 94, this latest twist to one of the most unpalatable episodes of her reign can only be troubling.

Victims hail 'a great day for justice'

From Daniel Bates in New York

ONE of Jeffrey Epstein's victims yesterday declared his sex trafficking ring had finally been 'taken down'.

█ who claims the financier raped her when she was 15, described Ghislaine Maxwell as 'the centre of that ring'.

She said Epstein's victims could 'take a breath of relief' following Maxwell's dramatic arrest, adding: 'I know that I can't be hurt any more.'

Miss █ claims one of Epstein's recruiters picked her up outside her school in New York in 2001 when she was just 14. They persuaded her to come to Epstein's \$65million mansion, where he later raped her.

She said yesterday: 'My fellow Epstein survivors and I are able to take a breath of relief, as Maxwell's arrest means some justice for survivors can exist.'

'For years I feared Epstein and his ring. Maxwell was the centre of that sex trafficking ring. Now that the ring has been taken down, I know that I can't be hurt any more.'

'Day after day, I have waited for the news that Maxwell would be arrested and held accountable for her actions.'

'Brutal, ruthless behaviour'

Her arrest is a step in that direction, and it truly means that the justice system didn't forget about us.'

Among those who welcomed the news was lawyer David Boies, whose clients include Prince Andrew's accuser █.

█ The 36-year-old says she was forced to have sex with the Duke of York three times when she was just 17.

Mr Boies, who also represents Epstein victims █.

█ said: 'This is a great day for justice. Jeffrey Epstein did not and could not have acted alone.'

'Our clients are very pleased, and very grateful, to the prosecutors that this important step has been taken towards bringing Jeffrey Epstein's co-conspirators to justice.'

Gloria Allred, who represents 16 of Epstein's victims, said: 'I hope that finally █ (Maxwell) will be accountable if the evidence presented in court proves beyond a reasonable doubt that she had a role in assisting and recruiting young girls to be sex trafficked and sexually victimized.'

Lisa Bloom, who represents five Epstein victims, said: 'Maxwell's brutal, ruthless behaviour caused my client tremendous pain.'

'We applaud her long overdue arrest today. All others accused of enabling Jeffrey Epstein's predations must immediately be brought to justice as well.' Spencer Kuvin, who represents six Epstein victims,

sounded a note of caution. 'We are very happy that the attorney's office has decided to move forward on this arrest, which is hopefully just the beginning,' he said.

'We're hopeful that there will continue to be additional arrests with

'Hopefully just the beginning'

respect to other co-conspirators.' However, he added some victims are very skeptical because there have been arrests in the past and the US government has not followed through.'

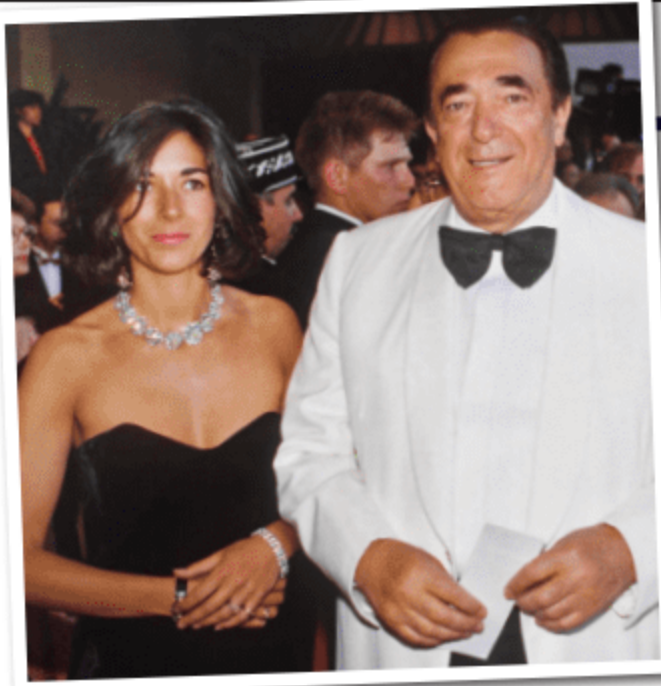
Epstein struck a deal with officials in 2009 which saw him admit

soliciting a minor for prostitution but receive just 18 months in jail. He was rearrested last year but killed himself in prison while awaiting trial for sex trafficking.

His victims - feared to number in the hundreds - include British

█ who says she was groomed as a child by Epstein after meeting him in London in the 1990s.

'When Jeffrey would see me he would physically shake because he wanted to get at me,' she recounted last year, telling US TV network NBC: 'If you're a young person walking into a mansion... and all the people who are present are acting as though this is OK and you're the only one who thinks it's weird, it's hard to say something.'



Daddy dearest: Ghislaine in Cannes with her father in 1987

JEFFREY EPSTEIN, in one of the few on-the-record interviews he gave to someone who was neither a lawyer nor a policeman, was asked to explain his close but somewhat mysterious relationship with Ghislaine Maxwell.

He responded simply: 'She's my best friend.'

It was 2003 and the colourful financier was speaking to Vanity Fair. The magazine's reporter was puzzled by the exact role played by the British socialite, then aged 41, whose duties seemed to range from organising Epstein's personal diary to running various households and popping up on his arm at glamorous social functions.

Although the squalid chain of events that would end with Epstein taking his own life in prison had not yet begun, the magazine writer, Vicky Ward, got an inkling that something wasn't quite right.

'One young woman recalls being summoned by Ghislaine Maxwell to a concert at Epstein's townhouse where the women seemed to outnumber the men by far,' she wrote. 'These were not women you'd see at Upper East Side dinners... many seemed foreign and dressed a little bizarrely.'

A source told Ward that at another cocktail party, also thrown by Maxwell and attended by Prince Andrew, the room was 'filled with young Russian models', adding: 'Some guests were horrified.' Compared with the revelations of subsequent years, in which Maxwell was directly implicated in a global paedophile scandal involving scores of victims, some as young as 12, this might seem relatively insignificant stuff.

YET it speaks to a simple truth: the journey that culminated yesterday with well-spoken, 58-year-old Maxwell being arrested by the FBI and taken into custody reflects her decision to embrace the role of Epstein's official 'best friend'.

The question of whether she will spend the rest of her life behind bars hinges on a simple question.

Was she really, as various accusers have already testified on oath, a sleazy madam who not only recruited vulnerable teenage girls to provide sexual services to her ex-boyfriend but illegally trafficked them around the world and took part in appalling episodes of abuse?

Or was she merely a naive party girl with a gift for networking, who helped the rich but somewhat awkward Epstein climb the social ladder,



By Guy Adams

yet had little idea about the sordid sex crimes he was committing?

One thing which can't be denied is that no one has a better knowledge of the billionaire paedophile and his relationships with the great and good than Maxwell.

She beams like a proud mother in the notorious 2001 photograph of the Duke of York with █ then a 17-year-old, who now claims Epstein paid her to sleep with the Prince after a late-night visit to the nightclub Tramp. Epstein himself took the picture at Maxwell's news house in Belgravia.

Maxwell looks on as the Prince drapes an arm round his painfully young acquaintance.

Maxwell also pops up in photographs of Epstein and Donald Trump taken at the latter's Florida resort Mar-a-Lago, and in pictures that show her socialising with teenage girls (plus a middle-aged French model agent called Jean Luc Brunel, also allegedly implicated in Epstein's crimes) on the late financier's private island in the Caribbean.

And Maxwell's name runs, like letters in a stick of rock, through the many lawsuits and legal depositions filed by Epstein's alleged victims, many of whom accuse her of recruiting them, flying them around the world and, in several cases, presiding over sickening abuse.

Flight records show █

Born into fabulous wealth. Impeccable connections. Toast of New York party set. So...

How DID she plunge from society darling to sleazy 'pimp' and disgrace?



Royal guests: Epstein and Maxwell at a shoot in Norfolk, 2000



Defiant party girl: Ghislaine poses in a stars and stripes bikini and heels

Picture: HOLISTER LOWE

victims have doubtless been helping the FBI with their investigations. But however the legal case plays out, Maxwell has had plenty of practice at coping with public disgrace.

The favourite child of crooked newspaper tycoon Robert Maxwell, she had a gilded upbringing, attending Marlborough College and then Oxford University before moving to London in the 1980s to start the Kit Kat Club, which purported to be an alternative to the old-school-tie network for high-powered women.

She then worked for her father's newspaper The European and was made a director of Oxford United football club, which he owned.

This happy existence imploded in November 1991 when her father drowned after falling off a yacht named Lady Ghislaine, after his daughter.

It soon emerged that his newspaper empire was built on the proceeds of epic financial criminality, which had seen him defraud its pension fund of almost half a billion pounds.

Villified in the UK, where Robert Maxwell's victims were angered by the plush lifestyle his family had enjoyed at their expense, Ghislaine relocated to New York, where she took up residence in a small apartment and set about reinventing herself as a socialite. It was an inspired move.

'Ghislaine has always been a prodigious networker,' an acquaintance once told me. 'People in New York didn't care about the pensions scandal. And, of course, they are all suckers for an English accent.'

Maxwell, then 30, quickly met

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