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MONTREAL NEWS

The Montreal tech entrepreneur named in the Epstein files

“Our group stayed off-island, and met Epstein outdoors on his island over several daylight hours,” Hill said, adding that he regretted “any association” and “unequivocally” condemned Epstein’s crimes.

To: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: (No subject)
Date: Sat, 19 Apr 2014 00:19:39 +0000

No problem at all. Today was fun - looking forward to tomorrow.
Have a good night.
Sent from [Mailbox](#) for iPhone

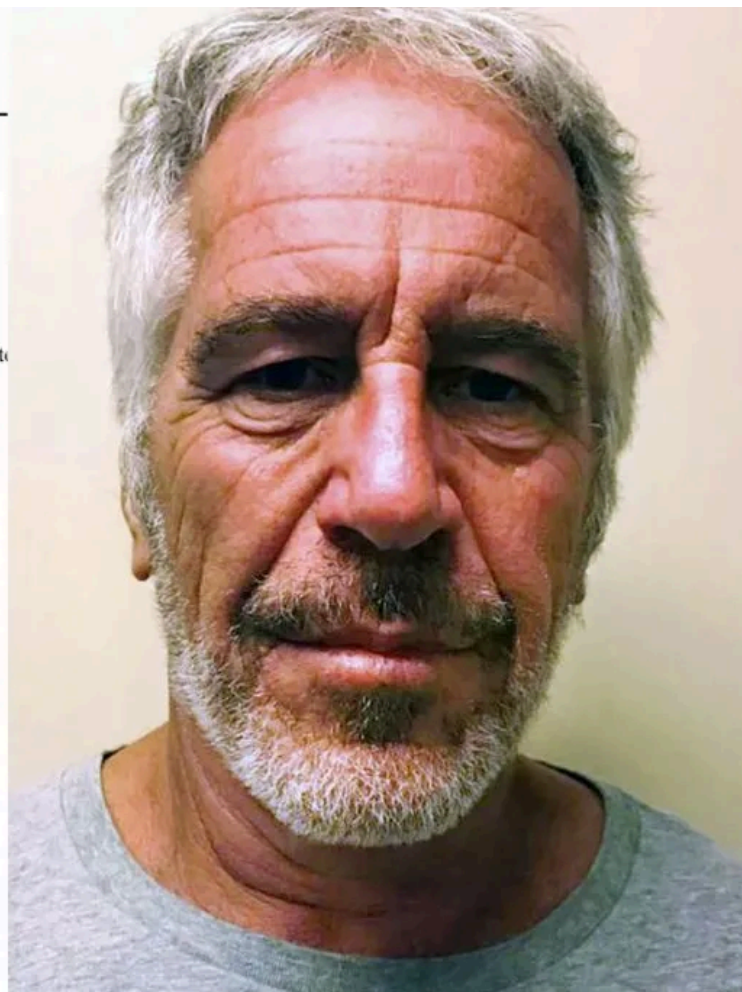
On Fri, Apr 18, 2014 at 8:18 PM, Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com> wrote:
running late tomorw morning will have you picked up at 11 at hotel

--
To: Austin Hill [REDACTED]
From: Jeffrey Epstein
Sent: Sat 4/12/2014 4:10:51 PM
Subject: Re:
yes, st thomas, or sunday new york?

On Sat, Apr 12, 2014 at 10:42 AM, Austin Hill [REDACTED] wrote:
Thanks for the invite - I'd love too, but scheduling might be tight.
I'm doing a major workshop until 9pm Wednesday with my operations guy & dev team. Then I have to be in SFO for investor meetings on Monday. I could potentially do Thursday-Sunday. Fly into St. Thomas right?
Adam could join us as well I believe.
-Austin

Austin Hill - Brudde Ventures [REDACTED]

On Fri, Apr 11, 2014 at 6:59 PM, Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com> wrote:





By **Harry North**

February 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Last Updated: February 7, 2026 at 12:33 p.m.

A veteran Montreal technology entrepreneur has acknowledged visiting Jeffrey Epstein on the financier’s Caribbean island while raising money for a startup after newly released U.S. government files detailed years of contact between the two men.

Austin Hill, a co-founder and former chief executive of cryptocurrency firm Blockstream, told The Gazette he met Epstein on the financier’s island in April 2014 for a business meeting with colleagues and that the group stayed off-island and met him outdoors during the day.

Hill also confirmed that Epstein ended up indirectly investing US\$500,000 in the company through a venture fund.

The relationship is documented in a trove of some three million files released last week by the U.S. Department of Justice pertaining to the deceased financier, a convicted sex offender who had been awaiting trial on charges of sex trafficking of minors. The material shows correspondence from 2014 to 2018, including discussions about Bitcoin, government regulation and potential investments, along with several in-person meetings.

Hill said his interactions with Epstein were related to business or technology, adding that he regretted “any association” and “unequivocally” condemned Epstein’s crimes.



Tech entrepreneur Austin Hill. Photo from LinkedIn

The newly released files have brought renewed scrutiny over how Epstein continued to mingle among the elite financial, technological and academic circles years after his 2008 conviction for soliciting a minor for prostitution.

Much of that attention has focused on Epstein's ties to U.S. President Donald Trump, prominent American businessmen and British royalty. The records, however, show that his network extended into Canada.

Emails from April 2014 place Hill and colleagues at a Ritz-Carlton in St. Thomas, co-ordinating daily visits to Epstein's nearby island, Little St. James.

Prosecutors and survivors have identified the island as a site where Epstein trafficked and sexually abused underage girls.

The emails do not allege any wrongdoing by Hill or his colleagues.

Epstein's investment, which the emails show Hill discussing directly with him, was made through a fund managed by Joi Ito, then director of the MIT Media Lab.

As this investment was through Ito's fund, "no separate vetting was conducted on (Epstein) beyond relying on professional introductions and his reputation on Wall Street," Hill said.

Hill added that the investment represented less than three per cent of Blockstream's capitalization at the time and was divested in early 2015 because of "an unrelated conflict of interest between MIT, Joi Ito and Blockstream."

From: jeffrey E.

Fri May 23, 2014

My investment in your deal will be made through
Joi Ito investment co. when do you expect papers?

--

From: Austin Hill

Tue Jul 15, 2014

To: jeffrey E.; Joichi Ito

Subject: Final Blockstream
allocation

Hey Joi & Jeffrey ;

We are down to the wire on closing this round. We are 10x oversubscribed on an \$18m seed round and Reid at the last minute told us to bump your allocation from \$50k to \$500k : this is causing no small amount of headaches but [redacted] and I respect you both and have learned so much from you in our discussions we have everyone else a haircut to make room.

Where should we send the docs? The best CFO in the game Hammie Hill is running the deal for me and is Cc'd on this so he can lock down the paperwork with the suits.

Looking forward to sitting down face to face again
Soon.

[redacted]

In a separate statement, Blockstream's co-founder and current chief executive, Adam Back, said the company has "no direct or indirect financial connection with Jeffrey Epstein, or his estate." The emails suggest Back visited the island with Hill.

Hill, now in his 50s, has been a long-standing figure in Canada's technology sector, having built much of his career in Montreal. Before Blockstream, he co-founded TotalNet, one of the country's early internet service providers. Blockstream later positioned itself as core infrastructure for Bitcoin and raised tens of millions of dollars in the process.

Epstein: I'm with two pretty girls

The emails show Hill first contacted Epstein in March 2014, introducing himself as working on "global finance technologies based on blockchain & bitcoin infrastructures" and proposing a meeting.

Hill said his interactions with Epstein were related to fundraising for Blockstream and "were initiated at the request of investors." Both men were attending the TED conference in Vancouver at the time.

From: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>

Wed, Mar 19, 2014 at 3:12 PM

Coming?

From: Austin Hill

Wed, Mar 19, 2014 at 3:58 PM

On my way over 5 min

From: Austin Hill

Wed, Mar 19, 2014 at 4:09 PM

Here - where are you? I'm the guy who obviously conquered anorexia (big) dressed in black.

From: Austin Hill

Wed Mar 19, 2014 at 4:13 PM

I'm sitting in the lobby across from reception Fairmont waterfront.

From: Jeffrey Epstein
<jeevacation@gmail.com>

Wed Mar 19, 2014

pacific rim fairmont im with two pretty girls

Subsequent correspondence suggests they met at a Fairmont hotel where Epstein was staying.

When Hill arrived, he dropped Epstein a note to tell him. Epstein replied that he was “with two pretty girls.”

Hill later followed up after their meeting to say he wanted to continue the conversation.

“Ps.,” he added. “Yes they were pretty :).”

The two men remained in contact, which ultimately led Hill to visit Epstein's New York City townhouse.

Epstein also nearly travelled to Montreal to visit Hill on at least two occasions. However, the emails suggest those plans fell through.

On one planned trip to Montreal in 2014, as part of a stopover back to the U.S., Epstein was set to stay at the Ritz-Carlton and see comedian Bobby Slayton's Nasty Show at the Just for Laughs festival.

Their communication tapered off after 2015. Around that time, Hill also stepped down from his executive role at Blockstream. The company said the reason for Hill's departure was so he could pursue other opportunities.

After that period, Hill said he had "limited and sporadic contact with Epstein on technology-related topics."

The emails show how their exchanges picked up again in 2017, focusing on cryptocurrency regulation and government policy.

In one message, Hill wrote that he and others were attempting to persuade then-prime minister Justin Trudeau and provincial governments to move first on cryptocurrency regulation and establish what he described as a safe framework.

Epstein discussed sending Hill \$75,000, asking that the payment be itemized because it exceeded \$25,000.

It is unclear from the emails whether the money was transferred. Hill did not comment on the proposed payment.

Epstein, at one point, described Hill to an associate as "a bullshit artist ... but has good info."

In November 2017, Hill confirmed plans to meet Epstein at his Manhattan townhouse.

He also shared a news article about the departure of venture capitalist Steve Jurvetson from Draper Fisher Jurvetson over allegations of sexual misconduct.

“It’s happening in my industry as well,” Hill wrote in the subject line.

Hill did not comment on the article he shared or the specifics of those exchanges. The emails do not show how Epstein responded.

Correspondence continued into 2018, when Hill was copied on emails concerning a proposed “designer baby” venture involving another entrepreneur.

Hill said his relationship with Epstein concluded in 2018 as he was “no longer actively involved in the fintech or Bitcoin scenes, and no longer had business reasons for continued contact with him.”

“I stand with the victims, and I support full transparency and accountability so that all responsible parties are brought to justice,” Hill said.

According to Hill’s LinkedIn, he has since moved to the U.S.

Epstein died in custody while awaiting trial in 2019.

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hnorth@postmedia.com*

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Soraya Martinez Ferrada was criticized for not attending a public meeting on the allegations.

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Quebec abolished the requirement in 2022 after three PQ members refused the oath and were barred from sitting.

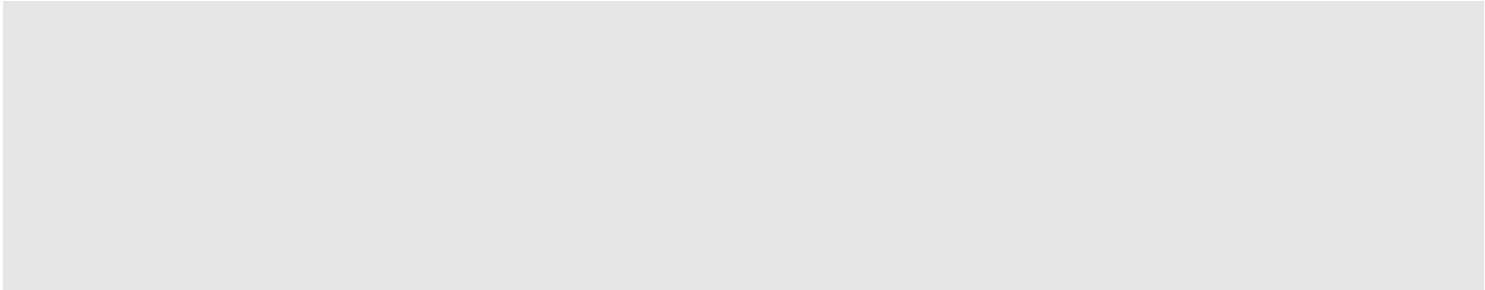
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