

# Search for missing plumber Kelly one of largest launched in Ulster

BY ASHLEIGH WALLACE

A SENIOR police officer involved in the hunt for Holywood man Martin Kelly has revealed his missing person inquiry is one of the largest ever launched in Northern Ireland.

Yesterday marked the first anniversary of the disappearance of the 21-year-old apprentice plumber.

As the day unfolded, both plain-clothed and uniformed officers revisited the docks area of Belfast, where Martin was last seen after enjoying drinks with friends at Pat's Bar, in the hope of jogging people's memories.

He was caught on CCTV around 7.15pm on New Year's Day but has not been seen since. Despite major land and water searches in the area, his body has never been recovered.

But the search goes on. An area stretching from Tillysburn to Kinnegar in the Holywood area was searched the week before Christmas and manhole covers in the Tomb Street and Corporation Street areas of Belfast will be removed and the drainage systems searched in the coming weeks.

Detective Chief Inspector Jeff Smyth, who is involved in the investigation, issued an appeal for two unidentified men who were in the docks area the night Martin disappeared to come forward as they may hold vital clues.

One of the men walked through the car park close to the Prudential Insurance building around 8.20pm on New Year's night.

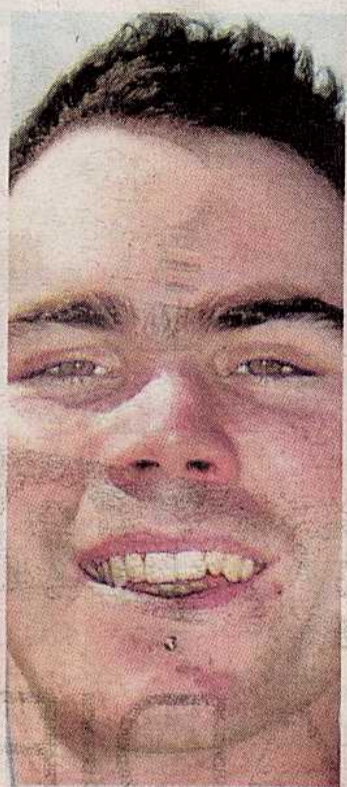
The other man walked from Prince's Docks Street towards Corporation Street 10 minutes later.

DCI Smyth also revealed that, in the 12 months since Martin's disappearance, there have been "no confirmed sightings after he left the bar".

He said: "This has been one of the largest missing persons inquiries I have been involved in."

"In the last year, we have searched over 60 miles of Belfast waterway, including the Lough."

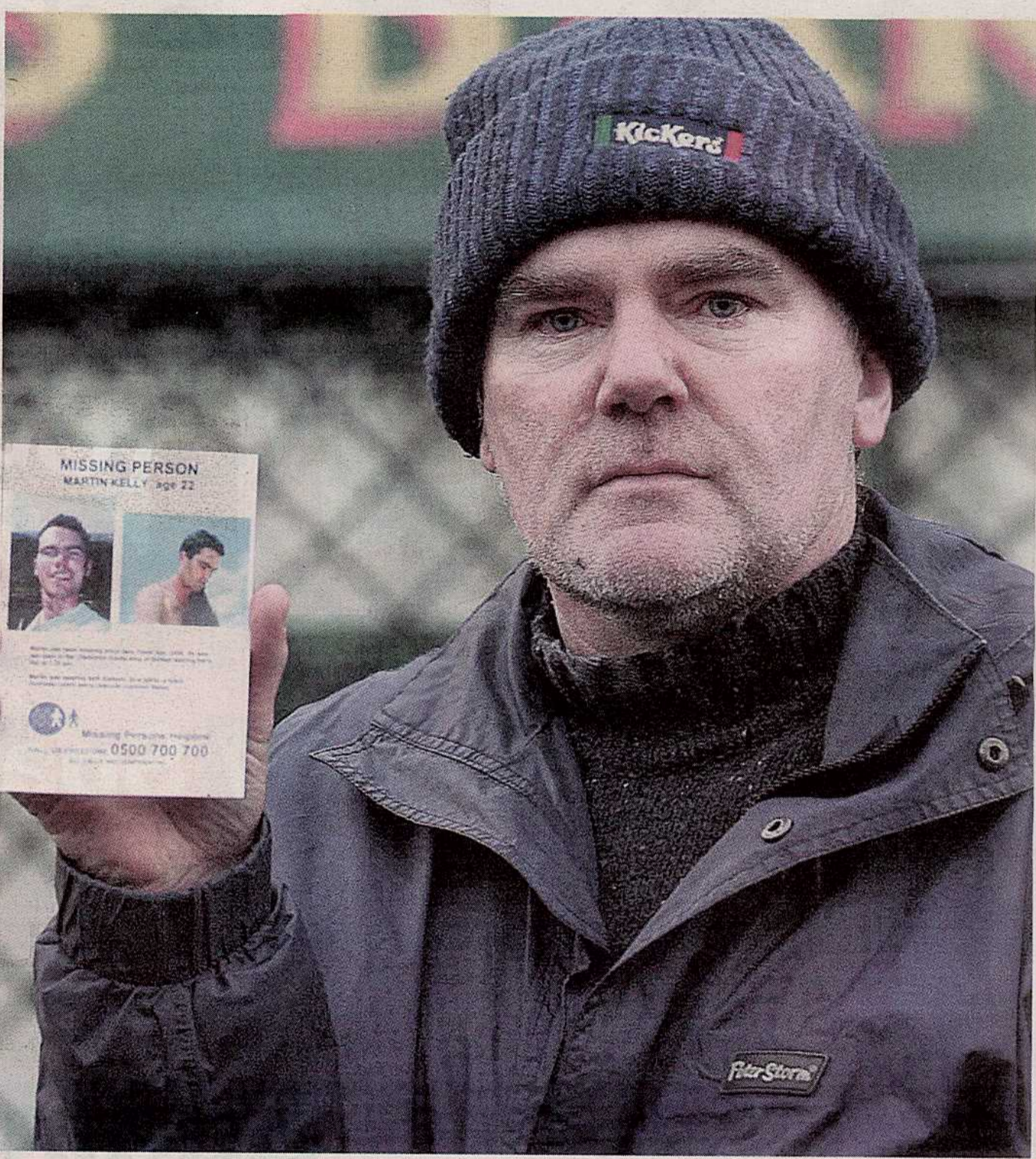
Describing Martin's disappearance as "out of character",



Missing: Martin Kelly



Appeal: Detective Chief Inspector Jeff Smyth



Raymond Kelly holds one of the cards yesterday that will be handed out about his missing son Martin Kelly COLM LENAGHAN

## Father: We just need new scrap of information

BY ASHLEIGH WALLACE

MARTIN Kelly's father spent the first anniversary of his son's disappearance circulating new posters in the area where he was last seen in a bid for fresh information.

The 21-year old apprentice plumber and part-time barman went missing last New

Year's Day after enjoying drinks with friends in Pat's Bar in the docks area of Belfast.

The apprentice plumber left the bar with his friends to get a taxi home to Holywood around 6.20pm.

But for some reason Martin failed to get into a taxi and around 40 minutes after leav-

ing the pub, he returned for another drink on his own.

He again left Pat's Bar and CCTV footage taken from the area shows him walking towards the Prudential Building at Clarendon Dock around 7.15pm. He has not been seen since.

Exactly one year after his son's disappearance, Ray-

mond — armed with a clipboard — spend yesterday distributing posters in the docks area in a bid to jog people's memories.

He said: "We're looking for any new scrap of information, someone who may have been in the area last New Year's Day and who may have seen something."

"It might have been someone in the apartment blocks on the docks or someone who was at the Odyssey."

He also revealed that he hopes that his son is alive.

The 55-year old said: "When Martin left the bar the first time, everyone thought he got in a taxi for Holywood."

"Two witnesses in the bar

said he arrived back in about 40 minutes later on his own and what happened in those 40 minutes remain a mystery."

Raymond also revealed that despite not being seen for a year, he believes his son is still alive.

"I can't give up hope, I have to stay positive. I've never had a feeling Martin is dead."