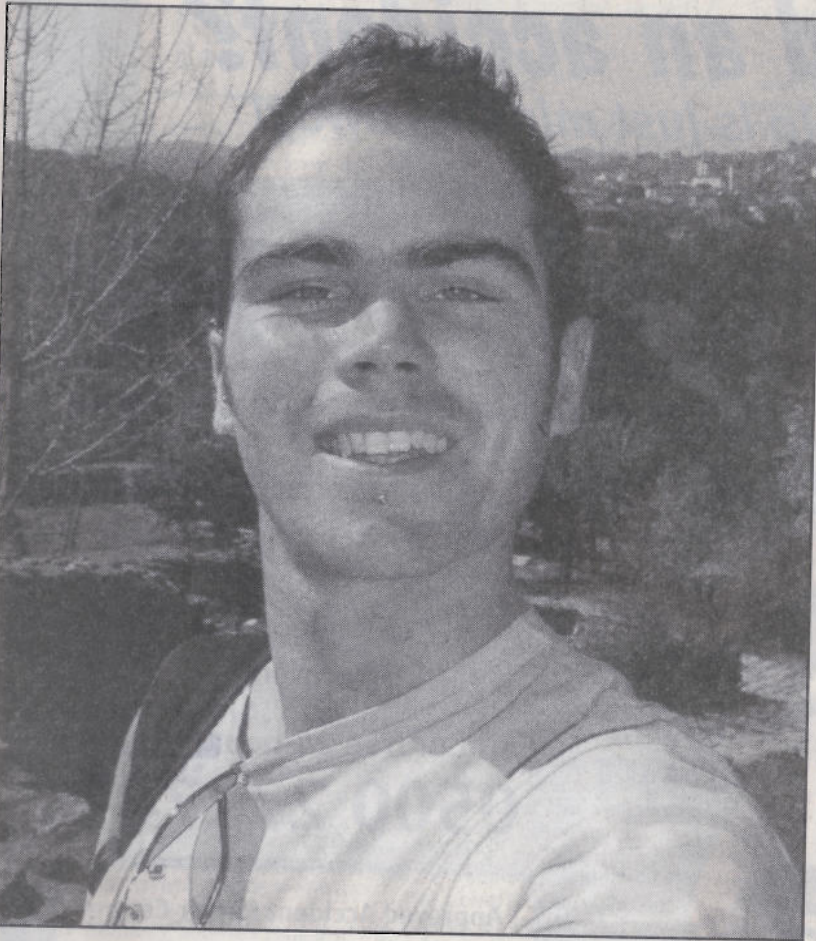


# UK wide appeal for news of missing Martin



Missing - Martin Kelly

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**M I S S I N G**  
Holywood man Martin Kelly is to be the subject of a nationwide information appeal on Monday, the day after his 26th birthday and over four years since he vanished.

Martin's disappearance will feature in the latest edition of the 'Big Issue'

the national magazine which is sold around the streets of the United Kingdom by the homeless.

It is the latest attempt to find any clue at all about what became of Martin, who will be 26 on Sunday, since he went missing outside a Belfast bar on January 1, 2006.

And the new appeal is, says Martin's father, Raymond, an indication that his family will never give up hope of discovering what has happened to his much loved son.

He hopes the 'Big Issue' appeal could result in the first crucial piece of the

information jigsaw which then completes the full picture of what has become of Martin.

He said, "As a national magazine the 'Big Issue' offers us a huge platform from which we can highlight Martin's case and we can only hope that something comes out of it."

"Obviously as time goes on it gets more difficult to generate that all important media interest in Martin's case, so this coverage is very welcome indeed from all aspects.

"We can only hope that appeals like this will at some point jog someone's memory or prick

someone's conscience and ultimately solve the mystery of Martin's whereabouts.

"We are obviously grateful to the 'Big Issue' and all the other media outlets who continue to highlight Martin's case despite the passage of so much time."

Raymond has also revealed that the PSNI file on his son remains open and that the case is still being actively investigated over four years since his son's disappearance.

He added, "A new officer has taken charge of the case recently and has gone over the whole file very thoroughly to make sure that nothing at all has been overlooked."

"One of the things that has been pinned down is the precise timing of Martin's movements in the critical period of time before his disappearance."

"It was initially thought that he stayed outside the bar for some 30 to 40 minutes after his friends left by taxi for Holywood, raising questions about his movements."

"However, the police are now satisfied that he came back into the bar after just a few minutes because they now know he made a mobile phone call from there."

Martin, an apprentice plumber and part-time barman in the Old Priory Inn in Holywood, was last seen on January 1, 2006.

He had spent New Year's Eve working in the Holywood bar and was celebrating the New Year with friends in Pat's Bar in Belfast's Clarendon Dock the next day.

Martin was last seen when he left the bar at about 7.15pm, possibly intending to return to his home in the Kinnegar area of Holywood.

Exhaustive land and sea searches and a high profile publicity campaign across Britain and Ireland have so far failed to turn up any clues as to what happened to Martin Kelly.

The young Holywood man had everything to live for and was in the prime of his life.

He had embarked on a promising apprenticeship and supplemented that income with part-time work in the Holywood bar. He hoped one day to buy a property abroad.

Just a few years prior to his disappearance Martin had worked in an orphanage in Africa between the ages of 17 and 18 and aspired to return there to help again.

Just a few nights before his disappearance Martin attended a party in Carmichaels of Holywood, where he was seen chatting, joking and laughing with friends.

There are only theories as to what has become of the young Holywood man who was then aged 21.

Could he have fallen into the docks and tragically drowned, with his body becoming trapped or snagged under the water in some way?

Could he have lost his memory after being innocently injured in some way or even been attacked by persons unknown?

Searches were conducted by police and other divers of the harbour where Martin disappeared.

Hundreds of volunteers joined extensive searches along the shores of Belfast Lough and the marshlands, known as the Kinnegar Lagoons, which border the harbour estate.

At one point a specially trained dog, which can sniff out evidence of human remains in the

water, was used in additional searches of the harbour.

Martin's family members conducted their own relentless search for any scrap of information as to what has become of him.

His mum Karen embarked on her own month long search mission to highlight his case across England, Scotland and Wales.

Her trip, during which she fell ill with suspected heart trouble, publicised his case in 14 cities with accompanying TV, radio and newspaper information appeals.

The journey was funded with the proceeds of two charity tribute concerts which were held for Martin in his home town and raised over £12,000.

Martin's dad Raymond extended his own search for his missing son to the south of the border.

He has gone to the Republic on a number of occasions in search of any scrap of information, including trips to Dublin, Limerick and Clare.

Martin Kelly is described as being six feet one inch tall and of slim build with short dark black hair.

When last seen almost two years ago he was wearing a black Guinness T-shirt and a pair of blue jeans.

Further information can be obtained via [www.ourmartykelly.com](http://www.ourmartykelly.com)

The investigation into Martin's case is being conducted by the PSNI at Musgrave Street station in Belfast. It can be contacted on 0845 600 8000.

Anyone with information can also contact the Missing Persons Helpline. The free phone number for that is 0800 700 700.