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Divers search lough for missing barman

By John McGurk

29 January 2006

TWO MAJOR searches will be carried out by cops and the public today - as the bid to solve the mystery of missing man, Martin Kelly intensifies.

Air, land and sea sweeps of the Belfast docks and east of the city area will be carried out by specialist police teams, in the hunt to discover clues about the whereabouts of the 21-year-old barman.

Martin disappeared after leaving a pub in the Belfast docks' area on New Years' Night. Searches of the water near Pat's Bar have, so far, yielded no clues.

Last night, Martin's brother-in-law, Paul Kelly told Sunday Life that 25 PSNI officers, sniffer dogs, a helicopter and two boats would be involved in the search around the docks and lough shoreline this morning.

After that, a separate, Kelly family organised, public search will be carried out - from Sydenham to Martin's home town.

Said Paul: "I think that we are coming to terms with the possibility that Martin may not now be found alive. But the family is also still holding on to that little bit of hope that he is alive somewhere."

Paul added that the family of missing Ulster woman, Lisa Dorrian had pledged to take part in today's search.

A total of 100 yellow balloons will be released as symbols of hope for Martin's well-being - at a pre-search event in Barrow Square, adjacent to Pat's Bar, at 12.30pm.

A PSNI spokesman confirmed last night that it is providing air support, boats and officers, as part of its ongoing investigation.

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