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TUESDAY 02/01/2007 09:10:15

Seach continues for Belfast man

Police in Belfast were today trying to establish the movements of a 21-year-old man over a 40 minute period after he vanished exactly a year ago.

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Martin Kelly has not been seen since he left a bar in Belfast`s docklands on New Year`s Day 2006.

But his family have not given up hope of ever seeing him again.

Despite public appeals, police enquires in Northern Ireland and beyond the UK, land and sea searches and the launch of a website highlighting his disappearance, he has not returned.

Police in Belfast revisited the pub, Pat`s Bar in Garmoyle Street, where he had been drinking with friends before his disappearance.

Detective Chief Inspector Jeff Smyth said they were particularly interested in the missing plumber and part-time barman`s movements over a 40 minute period where he briefly left the public house and returned.

"We understand that Martin left the bar for 40 minutes and then returned," he said.

"We are particularly interested in his movements between 6.30pm and 7.10pm.

"Did he go to the Prudential Building, which is quite well known, nearby and where people like to just go out to talk to other people?

"Did anyone meet him and have a conversation with him there?

We would be keen to hear from them if they did."

Mr Kelly had been working on New Year`s Eve in the Priory Inn in Holywood in County Down.

Afterwards he had gone to two house parties to welcome in the New Year.

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He and his friends went to Pat`s Bar on the afternoon of New Year`s Day to watch a football match, but he remained behind when his friends left and talked to other customers.

After leaving the bar for 40 minutes, he returned and left shortly after 7.10pm.

He is described as six foot one inch tall, of slim build, with short dark hair and green eyes, and was wearing a black Guinness T-shirt and blue jeans.

His family has leafleted people in Belfast city centre and the Odyssey Arena in an attempt to secure information that could help police trace him.

DCI Smyth said police, like the family, were still remaining positive about locating him even one year on.

"The family are trying to keep a positive mind set that Martin is still alive," he noted.

"We are doing the same.

"Obviously you cannot rule out the possibility that he fell into the water, give the proximity of the bar to the docks.

"There have been extensive searches and enquiries in Northern Ireland and beyond in 2006, but they have failed to get any information on where he is.

"Today`s operation, one year on, is an attempt for us to speak to people who may have been there in Pat`s Bar one year ago and to gather any information which could help us trace Martin."

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