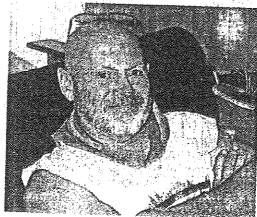


Police search for missing resident

By Catherine O'Hara
REVIEW STAFF

The Hamilton Police Service (HPS) conducted ground searches Tuesday and Wednesday this week, in hope of locating 55-year-old Michael Hamm, who was last seen walking away from his home at 10 p.m. on Monday (Jan. 29).

Hamm's wife reported to police that he was appropriately dressed for the weather as she saw her husband leave the house for what she thought was a late-night walk — not an uncommon activity for Hamm, who suffers from



Michael Hamm

insomnia. But according to his eldest daughter, Christine, 26, he doesn't usually go on his own.

A call was placed to police at 1 a.m. on Tuesday, when Hamm

had yet to return home. According to HPS Inspector Robert Buck, this behaviour is markedly out of character for Hamm, who is employed at Mountainside Auto Tech.

"When he did not show up for work yesterday (Jan. 30) it elevated our concerns for his well-being and at around two o'clock yesterday afternoon (Jan. 30), we escalated our attempts to locate him to an organized ground search with our ground search team," said Insp. Buck.

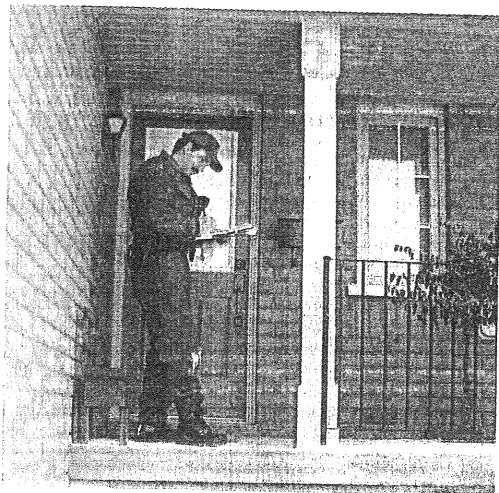
Operating from the command centre at the Waterdown Police

Centre, three trained search dogs were on the scene with proper handlers, trying to locate the missing man. Tuesday's search began at 4:30 p.m. and ended at 10:30.

According to Insp. Buck, ground searches resumed early Wednesday afternoon after the search managers assigned the search locations.

Using an ARGO all terrain vehicle, a helicopter provided by the Durham Regional Police for an aerial perspective and trained search dogs, the Hamm family, as

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Const. Michael Fazari (left) canvasses the Rockhaven Lane area on Wednesday, while walking through their yards in hopes of find Michael Hamm. At right Hetty Abma and K-9 rescue partner Ryker search for the missing man along the railroad tracks.

Helicopter and search teams deployed

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well as the HPS officers, hoped their search efforts prevail.

"Our only point to start is the house," said Buck. "That's the last place he was seen, and there's been no sight-

Ties to Halton

Hamm has strong ties to the Burlington and Oakville communities. According to his wife, Hamm did complain of some pain in his knees on Monday evening, therefore he could be walking with a limp.

Hamm was last seen wearing a three-in-one blue and white winter jacket, jeans, hiking boots, green flip gloves and a dark toque covering his bald head.

Michael Hamm is described as a white male with a fair complexion and freckles. He is 5'6", has a solid build and usually sports a full gray beard.

Insp. Buck is asking for members of the community to aid in this missing person's case by taking a good look around their homes and yards, in the event that Hamm has sat down or laid down on their property.

"Anybody living in the Waterdown area of Hamilton Street from Hwy. 5 to Parkside Drive, we would appreciate that you take a look on your property in any outhouses, garages, out-buildings and sheds," he added.

If you have any information on Michael Hamm's whereabouts, please contact the Hamilton Police Services, Mountain Station Staff Sergeant or call Crime Stoppers at (905) 522-TIPS

ings reported to us, no contact from him, no contact on any of his personal banking, friends," adding that all of these resources were canvassed and still no communication.

According to his other daughter, Shannon, 25, Hamm has been feeling "a bit down lately" and has reportedly not slept well over the past three to four days.

He has been suffering from knee problems and has been prescribed mild anti-depressants.

No other medical conditions have been noted.

A citizen search was underway Wednesday afternoon, with family members and their friends.

Each team was accompanied by an officer as they canvassed streets in the area, going door to door asking residents if they had seen Hamm. Members of the search also canvassed backyards and sheds and carried a photograph of Hamm.