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Family and Friends of British Woman Who Disappeared in St. John Call for Immediate and Urgent Investigation

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Sarm Joan Lillian Heslop By. VIA FACEBOOK

Family and friends of Southampton, England resident, 41-year-old Sarm Joan Lillian Heslop who went missing from a catamaran in St. John during the early hours of Monday March 8, are calling for an "immediate and urgent investigation" into her disappearance as well as a thorough search of the boat, which the owner, Sarm's boyfriend Ryan F. Bane, has blocked access to through an attorney.

Ms. Heslop was first reported missing on March 8 by Mr. Bane, who also operates the boat.

Ms. Heslop's best friend in the UK, Andrew Baldwin, 41, who has known her for more than 25 years, said the following, according to a release provided to the Consortium:

“We know that Mr. Bane called the local police at 2: 30 a.m. and was told to call the Coastguard. The Coastguard was reported as saying that it was alerted to her disappearance by Mr. Bane at 11: 46 a.m. on Monday. This timeline just does not make sense to us.

“We also cannot understand why Mr. Bane’s lawyer has denied officers’ requests to search the boat and exercised his constitutional rights to remain silent.

“We know they had dinner in a local restaurant and left at 10:00 p.m. What we don’t know is what happened in those intervening hours.”

According to V.I. Police Department Public Information Officer Toby Derima, “Heslop was last seen on March 7 aboard the vessel Siren Song, that was moored off the coast of St. John.”

Ms. Heslop's family has released a statement as follows:

“We are shocked and distraught that Sarm is missing. We would like assurance that the authorities in the Virgin Islands are doing everything possible to find her and that the investigation into our beautiful and cherished daughter’s disappearance includes a comprehensive fingertip search of the boat.

“Our daughter is a UK citizen and we ask for all of the support that the UK authorities have to offer. Our thanks go to the local people of St. John who continue to search for Sarm.

“We will never give up looking for Sarm and we still have hope of finding her safe.”

Mr. Baldwin, Ms. Heslop's best friend in the UK, continued; “We have heard that Sarm’s phone, passport and all belongings were left on the boat, where she was living with Mr. Bane. She would not just disappear, leaving no trace. She is savvy and sensible, it’s not like her at all, it just doesn’t add up.

“Given that Sarm lived on the boat with Mr. Bane and he claims she has gone missing from that boat it would be natural for this to be the first place for police to search. We struggle to understand why, as we hear, he would not permit this to happen and we continue to ask for a thorough search of Siren Song given that it is almost two weeks since Sarm went missing.

“We are asking for an urgent and immediate investigation into this incident as her friends here at home are devastated and just need her disappearance to be made a critical priority as there also seem to be many discrepancies in the timeline of what we have heard.”

According to press reports, a U.S. Coast Guard spokesman said that Sector San Juan received a call from a man at 11:46 a.m. Monday, “who reported that his girlfriend may have fallen from their 47-foot catamaran, the Siren Song, the night before.” The caller said they had gone to sleep at around 10 p.m. and “at 2 a.m. he woke up and realized that she was not on board.”

Mr. Baldwin added “We would like to thank all the local community for their support in searching for Sarm both on water and land. They have been so amazing but we urge them not to give up until she is found or we have more information.”

Ms. Heslop is described as a Caucasian female of 5 feet 8 inches and of slim build. She has a large, colored tattoo on her left shoulder depicting a seahorse, butterfly and bird.

A Facebook page has been set up [here](#), where information is provided on latest updates. Persons with information relative to Ms. Heslop's disappearance can also send messages to the page.

The V.I.P.D. is asking for the community's assistance in locating her and asking for any information about her disappearance.

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