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(NEWPORT)

Orbs: 50 giant orange lanterns were released into the midnight sky



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS: Helen Willison, of Christchurch, Newport

Meet the hostess who set off city's UFO alert

All aglow: Strange lights over the city

ET or not ET? That is the question



SPOOKY: Mark Holmes from Ringland saw strange lights in the sky above his house on Saturday night

EERIE lights photographed above Newport led one resident to think the city might need its own X-File.
Mark Holmes, 48, of Stanford Road, was walking his girlfriend home on Saturday night. They suddenly saw

moving around and they looked like they were on fire.
And although the quick-thinking Mr Holmes managed to record some footage of the bizarre objects, he said after about a minute, they just disappeared. "It was really weird," he said. "I just couldn't believe it. The lights seemed to be on

STRANGE SIGHTING: Mark Holmes above told his story to the Argus on Thursday. Right the party which sparked the alert

Step aside Mulder and Scully and move over Ghostbusters as the Argus investigates the strange goings on in the skies above Newport. As they say in sci-fi circles – the truth is out there, as DAVID DEANS found out...

ONE mother's birthday celebrations sent people in Newport on an alien hunting spree.

Orange orbs seen hovering over Newport in the early hours of the morning on Sunday, May 11 might have been lanterns fired off at the end of a party.

Helen Willison said her family threw a chinese themed party for her 40th birthday, and at the end lit a set of orange lanterns which hovered in the sky.

"We didn't quite expect this sort of reaction," she said, "we haven't stopped laughing about it."

The 50 lanterns were lit at midnight from her home in Christchurch, near Newport, and were each more than a meter tall.

They were carried off into the sky by nothing more alien than a small fire lighter, which took them as high as 1,500 feet.

"It's a chinese tradition," she said, "you'd put a little wish on the lantern and watch it

go off into the night.

"We also had a team of chinese lion dancers and a chinese buffet, while the house was dressed in an oriental style."

One Ringland man told the Argus he saw a series of glowing orange lights in the sky.

Mark Holmes, 48, of Stanford Road, described seeing eight flickering lights floating across the sky as he cut across a field to reach his girlfriend's home in Dowland Close.

Ian and Helen Willison's family home has become renowned for parties.

Last year for their daughter Scarlett's fourth birthday the couple wrapped their home in a bow made of crushed velvet and satin, and also hired two Barbie lookalikes.

In 2006 the family held a circus party for her with clowns and jugglers. Mrs Willison says she is planning a hawaiian party for Scarlett this year.

● See the footage of the chinese lanterns on southwalesargus.co.uk



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