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# Weekly

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ARGUS



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS: Left, Helen Willison, of Christchurch, Newport, and above, at the party which sparked the alert

## The Twilight Zone?

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](http://southwalesargus.co.uk)

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