

Shirley Bassey, bubble baths ... and a brief history of time

It may be dark and damp outside, but **DICK LUMSDEN** finds many reasons to celebrate today

Well, here we are, knee deep in the post-Christmas and New Year depression, contemplating low bank balances and high credit card statements, feeling unhealthy, unfit, and a very long way away from the hazy days of summer.

But fear not, for our dear friends across the Atlantic have come up with some golden nuggets of inspiration to raise our flagging spirits.

Today, Wednesday, January 8, has not one, not two, but four separate reasons to celebrate – well five actually if you count the fact that is also my birthday!

In no particular order, today is deemed to be National Bubble Bath Day; Argyle Day; Show and Tell at Work Day... and the faintly sinister Joy Germ Day.

I have decided to fully embrace all of these national celebrations as a way of marking my own personal day.

So as you read this, you can picture me sitting at my desk in Covent Garden wearing a lurid green and navy blue Argyle golf sweater, typing with two fingers and totally impervious to the barbed comments of my co-workers.

What they don't know of course, is that later in the morning, as they gather round the coffee machine, I will be treating them to my Show and Tell.

Entering into the spirit of the day by revealing something about myself they may not know, I plan to captivate them with some entertaining memoirs from 35 years of supporting Ipswich Town, using tickets, programmes, signed memorabilia, and even a bottle of Spanish Rioja with a hand painted club crest which I picked up at a market in Torre Vieja. They'll love it.

At lunchtime, I'm going to go out into the street and smile and say hello to as many people as I can. I am going to be a "joy germ" spreading much happiness and encouraging people to



■ It's going to be a heck of a party over at Lumsden Towers as invited guests, including Shirley Bassey, join Dick in the tub on National Bubble Bath Day.

most looking forward to. I have decided to finish the day with a bubble bath party – and I thought it would be a great idea to invite along a few

interesting people who also happen to have birthdays today.

As yet, I haven't heard if

any or all of them will be able to make it. I suspect Kim Jong-Un, the North Korean leader (pictured below left) might find it hard to get away. He seems to have his hands full at the moment – but I know he will have appreciated the invite and I'm sure he will be sitting there now in his Argyle jumper spreading joy germs among his immediate family members.

I am really hopeful that Stephen



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Hawking will make it though. I've left my gazebo up in the back garden so we can sit outside and look for black holes in the night sky and he can tell me what it was like to make a guest appearance on *The Simpsons*.

To get the party going, I've also invited fellow birthday celebrants David Bowie (pictured below right) and Shirley Bassey. And I'm hoping Shirley will give us a rendition of *Hey Big Spender* as Spanish footballer David Silva arrives.

Sadly, one person who definitely won't be there is Elvis Presley, but I plan to include him in our birthday fun by changing out of Argyle and into a white rhinestone suit and a black wig to welcome everyone to Lumsden Towers.

It will probably be a bit of a squeeze in my bath if everyone turns up, but I've warned Mrs Lumsden to expect a bit of a mess.

If it all goes according to plan it will certainly be a great way to banish the winter blues. In fact, I think my idea could be the next big thing – celebrate your birthday by tying it into whatever random quirky days are being celebrated around the world.

I'm already looking forward to Mrs Lumsden's birthday in July – she shares it with National Cow Appreciation Day, and Tapioca

Pudding Day. I can just see David Milliband, Forest Whittaker and Linda Ronstadt sitting around my barbecue swapping stories.

So, no matter how low you feel today, get on to Google and start planning your own birthday bash, it will give you a giggle if nothing else.

Happy New Year!

■ Dick Lumsden is managing director of Owl Marketing Solutions, a specialist in marketing and advertising to older consumers. If you have any views on this article, or are over 50 and would like to take