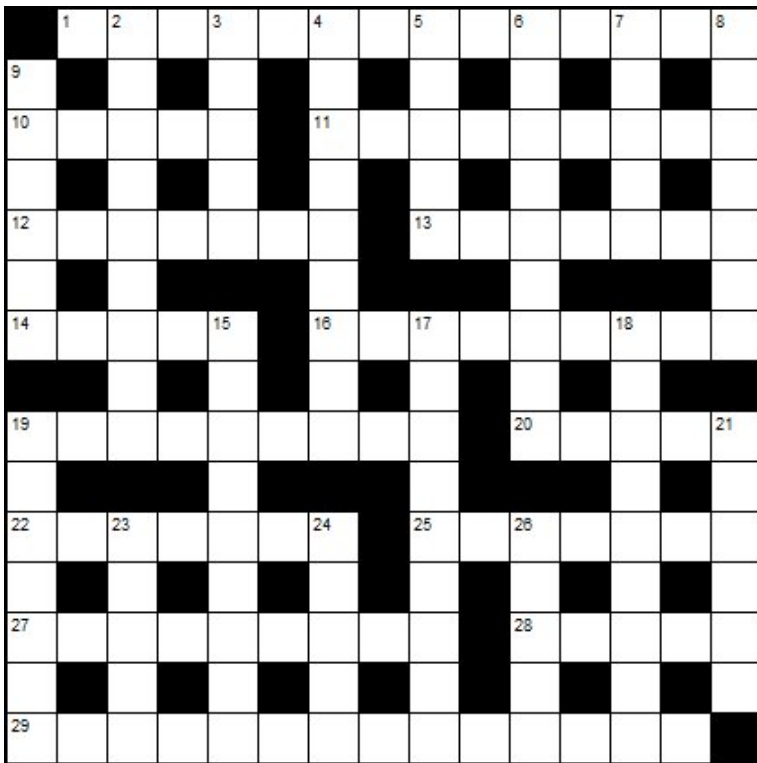


Puzzle by Bombadil

You've got to be very brave to name yourself after the one LOTR character that even aficionados find annoying and pointless! Fortunately Bombadil's puzzle is neither annoying nor pointless – on the contrary, it is a masterclass in clueing technique. Bombadil, who hails from India, has produced a puzzle which, while not especially difficult, shows that care and attention pay off when writing clues. The excellent 1 across gets the puzzle off to a flying start, and particularly noteworthy are 14 across and 29 across. It makes all that “hey dol, merry dol” stuff worth it!



ACROSS

- 1 Eden Hazard? (9,5)
 10 Nets cast near edge of sea (5)
 11 Tungsten, Gold, Potassium, Sulphur, Phosphorus, Actinium: elements primarily found in a laboratory perhaps (9)
 12 Graceful, say, dressed in style with a touch of taste? (7)
 13 Ask to consume entrée before, with no beef essentially (7)
 14 Leader of darkness and wickedness (5)
 16 Schedule a meeting and take a dame out (4,1,4)
 19 Cooking tip of sirloin in roasts, they start fires (9)
 20 Bow (noun): Part of a ship, on the outer side (5)
 22 Send parcel to Jersey? (7)
 25 Put into office at home, say (7)
 27 Segregate nuts for chocolate offering? (6,3)
 28 Forms of communication in ancient part of Persia (5)
 29 Harry Potter's scar starts to pain, throwing off a game of Quidditch? (9,5)

DOWN

- 2 We can be souls, ever evolving (9)
 3 Arabs at sea in Iraq's port (5)
 4 Mon-Wed: it's alternate days when machines are not used (9)
 5 Chilling with partner diving in a lake (5)
 6 Shortcut to success? Go without food and song (4,5)
 7 Mamluk, a servant keeping order (5)
 8 Where we might see stars in the dark? (7)
 9 A story on death (6)
 15 Most miserable in school, one lies tormented (10)

- 17** American diplomat snogging British Queen (9)
- 18** Extraordinary leader overwhelmed by Asian borders? (9)
- 19** Topless... benign... like Venus de Milo? (7)
- 21** Take a leak up in rest room (6)
- 23** One's appeal for conflict (5)
- 24** Newspaper fraud? (5)
- 26** Add review (3,2)