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**MY CITY**

# What's in a name? So, so much!

PLACE names can tell us a lot about history. "Mersey" is an Anglo-Saxon compound word made up of "mæres" (boundary) and "ea" (river). It reveals the River Mersey was probably a border marker between the kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria in the Anglo-Saxon period. Of course, it formed a boundary between Lancashire and Cheshire for centuries.

The origins of place names can be notoriously difficult to establish, and there is no better example than Liverpool.

One problem is the variety of historical spellings: Leerpole, Lerpoole, Leverpole and Leverpoole, as well as Lifer-pole, Lirpoole, Lither-pool, Litherpoole, Litherpul, Liverpole, Livrepol, Lyrpole, Ly'rpole, Lyrpul, Lyverpol, Lyverpool, and Lyverpoole.

But the real mystery lies with what the name originally meant. There were many explanations. In the 16th century, the earliest commentator satisfied himself, if no one else, that it derived from "water spreading itself in the manner of a pool", while in the late 18th century, Liverpool's first historian, William Enfield, listed three possibilities: the mythical Liver (or Lever) bird, a type of seaweed called "liver", or the Lever family.

As Liverpool grew in importance, the conjecture increased. Suggestions for the first element of the name included Anglo-Saxon "laefer" (gladiolus); Anglo-Saxon "lither" (bad, disagreeable); Old Norse "hlithar (slope); an Old English name, Leofhere; Middle English "livered" (coagulated, clotted). So was Liverpool the home of the Liver bird, a place where a type of seaweed or gladioli grew, or a place associated with Leofhere or the Lever family? Or was it a treacherous, clotted pool by a slope? We don't know, is the answer!



**TONY CROWLEY**  
AUTHOR OF THE LIVERPOOL-ENGLISH DICTIONARY



The queue to get in to the World Museum yesterday to see the Terracotta Warriors  
ANDREW TEEBAY

# FEAT of clay

**LOCALS AND TOURISTS WOWED BY 'AMAZING' ANCIENT CHINESE FIGURES**

By **KATE LALLY**

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**CROWDS** flocked to Liverpool's World Museum yesterday as the Terracotta Warrior exhibition finally opened to the public for the first time.

After years of planning, people are now able to step inside the specially designed space in the landmark building and gaze at part of the eighth wonder of the world.

Artefacts that are more than 2,200 years old complete the biggest collection of The First Emperor of China's Army for the afterlife outside China.

People travelled far and wide to see the display, as well as plenty of local people.

Laura Netherway, from Bootle, said: "I'm made up to have seen this, it's incredible."

Stephanie Pryce, from Woolton, came to see the Warriors with her little boy, Joshua. She said: "I've always wanted to go and see them in situ in China, but this is the next best thing."

"It's really something else. When you think of the work that went into this, the attention to detail. It's breathtaking, really."

Alan and Karen, from Nottingham, said they had already told friends and family they need to come and see this, while Andy and Julie, who travelled up from Norfolk, said that the exhibition was "just amazing".

And it's not just the Warriors that have got people buzzing.

Buildings around the city turned red on Thursday night to mark the official opening of the Terracotta Warriors exhibition and in honour of Chinese New Year.

The Town Hall, St George's Hall, and the Cunard Building are just some of the sites that will glow red throughout February as part of the China Dream season.

Thousands of red lanterns have also been put up all over the city as part of the celebrations marking 10 years since the European Capital of Culture 2008.

The China Dream season is an eight-month season of exhibits, performances and events to shine a light on modern Chinese culture.

China's First Emperor and the Terracotta Warriors will be on display at the World Museum until October 28. For tickets, go to [liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](http://liverpoolmuseums.org.uk).



**ECHO**

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