



ON A SEARCH—Women look through some of books at the genealogical jamboree. Times photos by William S. Murphy

GENEALOGY JAMBOREE

Climbing the Family Tree in Glendale

BY CATHLEEN DECKER
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Hundreds of people in search of an elusive clue to the past or simply, as one said, "hooked on families," browsed through yellowed books and milled around historical displays Sunday at the ninth annual Southern California Genealogical Society Jamboree.

An occasional cry like "There's Uncle Charlie!" Rang out as familiar names were spotted on census lists.

With attractions as varied as scores of genealogical records and books to charcoal images of famous gravestones, the daylong jamboree at Glendale Civic Auditorium was geared toward those researching their family tree, a hobby that society President Berni Campbell said ranks third nationally in popularity, trailing only coin and stamp collecting.

The jamboree drew young and old—those with a lifelong curiosity about their past and those for whom it is a new hobby.

Janet Walters of Harbor City said her interest began last year when she tried to track down an oft-repeated family tale. Since then, she has managed to trace her ancestors back to the 1620s, when they landed at Jamestown, Va.

"There's a lot to learn about the past that they don't teach in school," she said.

Although the television program "Roots" touched off a national upsurge in genealogical interest, most visitors to the jamboree seemed somewhat disdainful of those late-comers.

"I was doing it before 'Roots,'" said Linda Bailey, who has traced her family back to England in the early 1400s. "I'm not one of those 'Roots' people."

Besides searching for clues to her family, Ms.



"THERE IT IS"—Seth Lover, right, helps John Strider locate data on his ancestors.

Bailey had another reason for attending the jamboree.

"I came here to meet people," she said. "Why, I just met a lady over there who has the same bloodline as me."

Barbara McKinlay, who worked at a table filled with West Virginia genealogical information, said most people get involved with their past because "they want to know if they're related to someone famous. They want to know who their families were and where they went. Mostly, they are just hooked on families."