

## Tom Swift Junior's Influence on Baby Boomers

**Event:** Tom Swift 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention  
**When:** Exhibit June 1-July 31, 2010; Radio Shows: June 14 and July 16, 2010  
**Where:** UCSD Arts Library  
**Website:** <http://www.tomswiftenterprises.com/exhibit>  
**Contact:** James Keeline, <james@keeline.com>, 619-229-8387

Young inventor and adventurer Tom Swift, hero of juvenile literature, has been a popular read since 1910. Many scientists and inventors credit Tom Swift with inspiring them to study hard and dream big. Of particular influence was the second series of Tom Swift books, Tom Swift Junior (1954-1971).

Tom Junior is typical of the TV shows and movies at the time, which showed a great interest in space, science, and atomic power. Tom, even though he is just a teenager, is immediately doing great things, including building a Flying Lab that goes into outer space, which is then quickly followed by other ambitious projects including various rockets, space stations, atomic earth blasters, and underwater vehicles. Unlike the first series which focused on electricity as a form of power and featured inventions like airships, biplanes, and tanks, Tom Junior was flying to the moon and talking to his "space friends."

This series was hugely popular. People famous and otherwise have cited one of the Tom Swift series as an inspiration which led them to their chosen career. This includes science fiction authors like Robert Heinlein and Ray Bradbury; novelists such as Clive Cussler, Joseph Heller and Harper Lee; technology innovators like Steve Wozniak and Bill Gates; and many others. Many of these people, including Gates and Wozniak, were influenced by Tom Swift, Junior and his space inventions. Wozniak, in fact, is a registered guest at the Tom Swift 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention in July.

We are celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tom Swift (since the first series began in 1910) and the influence that all 5 series of Tom Swift books had on generations of young people. "The books contained an optimism about science and technology. Young people were shown that they could solve the world's problems with some ingenuity and invention. Even one person could have an impact and make a difference in these books," says James Keeline, host of the Tom Swift 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention and noted author on series books. "This optimism is too often missing today. Tom's influence was a profound one, both for the first series which started in 1910, and for the series which was perfectly timed for the Baby Boomers to read in their childhood, Tom Swift, Junior."

Radio Show Live Performance of <i>Tom Swift and his Airship</i>	Monday, June 14 Noon	Free UCSD Geisel Library
Tom Swift Centennial Exhibit	June 1-July 31, 2010	Free UCSD Geisel Library
Tour: In the Footsteps of Edward Stratemeyer	Friday, July 16, 2010 8am-5:30pm	Register in Advance
Radio Show Live Performance of <i>Tom Swift and the Visitor from Planet X</i>	Friday, July 16, 2010 4pm	Free UCSD Geisel Library
Convention at Sheraton Mission Valley	July 17-18, 2010 9am-4pm	Register in Advance or at Door
Convention Dinner	July 17	Register in Advance
Encore Performance of <i>Tom Swift and his Airship</i> Live Radio Show	July 17	Donation Sheraton Mission Valley