

Air Conditioning History

Air conditioning was never intended to cool the air.

Let me explain just why it was invented.

One of the main printing processes is called Lithography. Back in the early twentieth century it was used far less frequently than today and was mostly used for colour reproduction. In printing colour illustrations each colour has to be printed by a separate process, usually by a separate pass of paper through the printing machine. It is normal for the lightest colour, usually yellow to be printed first and then the subsequent colours are printed exactly in the correct position afterwards. Direct lithography used a heavy greasy ink on a flat slab of special limestone and separates the colour area and the non-printed part by damping the non-printed part of the limestone with water (the water will not go onto the greasy image and the ink will not cover any part which is already moist). All paper will expand slightly if it gets damp. This means that after the first pass through the litho machine if the paper were to be printed immediately afterwards with the second colour, the image of the second colour would not fit exactly to the yellow print as the paper had changed size by contact with some dampness. The paper needed to be dried to return to its original size before the next colours could be printed accurately. Business owners in New York are very go-ahead and do not like to wait for results but to decrease this drying time was to lower the quality of the finished print. How to dry the paper quicker? A drying machine was developed and installed in 1902 which speeded up the drying process by removing moisture from the air in the printing works, thus drying the paper quicker.

It was noticed that the dried air was also cooler than the input damp air but that was merely incidental. This process was called Air CONDITIONING because that was what was happening.

This is why the AC is so brilliant at demisting, that is exactly what it was designed for.