



# The Retro Express All Aboard!!!!

Painless history for Young Minds  
and the “Young at Heart”  
by Mr. Jack Joseph de Roco



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Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome aboard the Retro Express! My name is “Ramblin” I will be your guide on this trip, and if you have any questions along the way, feel free to ask. If I do not know the answer I will make something up. OK? ( I hope everybody laughs) Also I want to introduce you to our Master computer, “Reggie” Say hello to the people “Reggie”!

***Hello to all of you! and my name is “Reginald” not “Reggie” just for the record. I am prepared to answer all your questions correctly.***

Now if all of you will fasten your seat belts, we will be on our way. This particular trip will take about 10 seconds. I know that seems like a long time in this day and age, but if you stop to think about it our destination is not just around the corner. (come on people, smile!!)

Mr. Ramblin!!  
Yes!

Why is it your shoes do not touch the floor like everybody else’s ?

These are special shoes dear lady, they are magnetic. That is they have magnetic soles, and since the Retro Express is powered by positive magnetic power, and positive electric magnetic power is channeled all through the floor of the Retro Express, and my shoes are positively charged, they never touch the floor. Actually, it is very comfortable after you wear them for a while.

But Mr. Ramblin, that still does not explain why they.....?

I am sorry Ms. I failed to mention that positive and negative magnetic forces attract each other, and if two fields of magnetic force are both positive, or both negative, they will repel each other. Since my shoes are positive, like the floor, my shoes repel against the floor, and it looks like I am suspended in air. Which I am!

OK, Today all of you have requested that we go back only 100 years!! Since it is now the year 2008, 10 seconds from when we leave, all of you will be able to observe what it was like in 1908. I want to remind you not to get up from your seats until we arrive at our destination. Once we are there feel free to get up and look out the windows, and if you need to use the bathroom there is one on each end of the Retro Express cabin. Information about 1908 will automatically be piped into the listening device that you have in your ear, and as I said, any questions you have just ask. Each of you has an individual direct line into master computer, "Reginald". "Reggie" is programmed to answer what ever you ask. Your voice will activate "Reggie"....

***Really Ramblin, please!!!!.....***

Sorry "Reginald", ah!where was I? Oh yes, via the little lapel pin each of you were given when you entered the Retro Express. OK ! In a few moments the shields on the windows will close, and we will be in complete darkness for the 10 seconds it takes for us to arrive at our destination, the year 1908. You will feel a vibration beneath your seats, but do not be alarmed, it will only last for 10 seconds, and your seat belts will hold you in your seat until we get there.

Alright? OK "*Reginald*", close the shields!

While Reginald takes care of the shields which are closing slowly now, for many of you it will be the first time in your life you have a chance to experience what complete, total, darkness is like. When there is no light there are no shadows, and no points of reference.....

Ladies and gentleman this is how the world looks to a blind

person!..... For all of you it will only last for the 10 seconds it takes us to arrive at our destination..... 5 seconds more and we will be there.....

The shields are lifting now. Welcome to the year 1908!

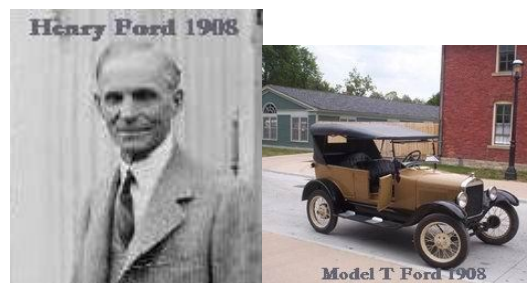
*Reginald speaking “Good People”, here is where I take over for Ramblin. The American flag this year 1908, has only 45 stars. Okalahoma was made a State in November of last year, but there is no star yet on the flag, and New Mexico, Arizona, Alaska and Hawaii were not States yet.*

*The population in 1908 is estimated to be a little less than 89 million people. Where you come from in 2008 the population of the USA is a little less than 274 million. One thing to take note of is that people at this time in history are not taxed, whereas in the year 2008 there are 40 different taxes right now. If you remember, the reason people left England and came to America in the early days was to escape taxes.*

*It is estimated that in 2008 there are 250 million cars on the road in the USA . Here in 1908 the figure for the entire country is 8000. As we move around the country you will notice that almost all the roads are still dirt, and people driving the cars are wearing what were called “dusters”, a kind of light weight overcoat with hats and goggles. Most of the cars are open without windows, as you can see, although some have what they called “Isinglass curtains” that you can roll down in case of rain, attached to the cloth tops that people would wax to keep out rain.*

*Note that in the entire country people boasted that there were now 144 miles of paved roads, paved with cobble stones, and they were worried because of the high speed limit, which was 10 miles per hour.*

See that thin man over there on your right? Is he Henry Ford senior??



*That is right Ramblin. This year he turned out his first assembly line car, the model T Ford. You could buy one for \$850.00. Finally the middle class people could afford a car. He also paid his workers \$5.00 a day for a 12 hour day, which was a good wage. Most jobs paid 22 cents an hour or \$2.64*

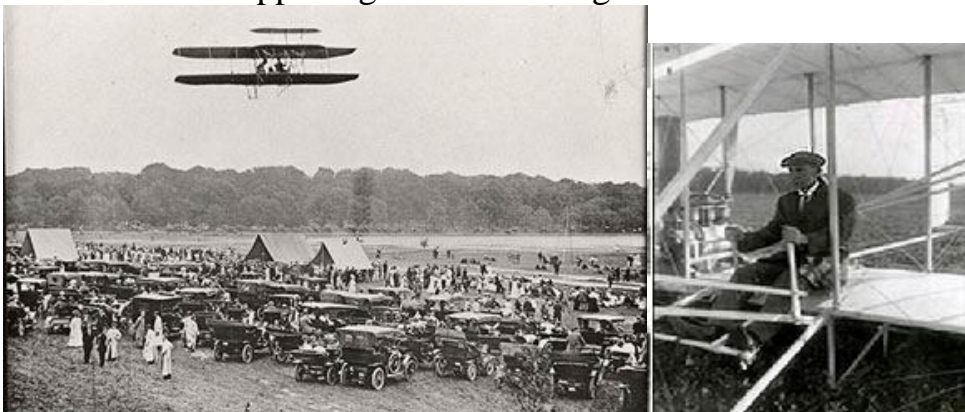
*for 12 hours work.*

What was the average life span in 1908 Reginald?

*The average life span in this year is 47 years. Where all of you are from it is now 77.2 years.*

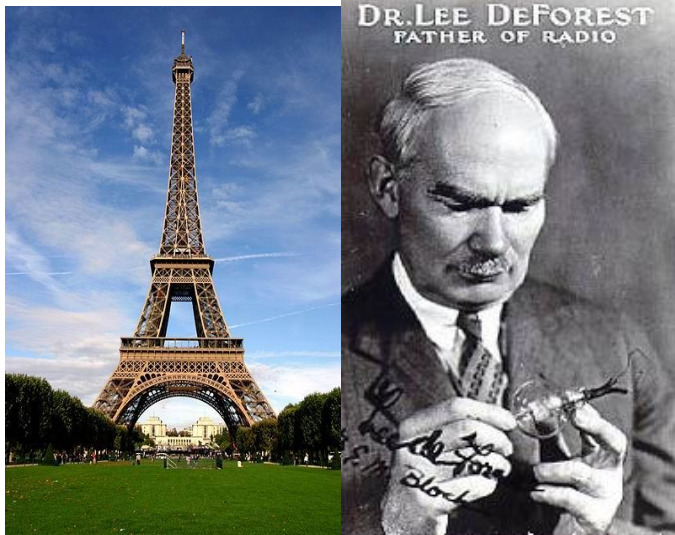
*You might be interested to know that here in 1908, only 14% of the population have bathtubs! A new innovation is the telephone, and only 8% of the population have telephones. All you ladies might be interested to know that most women washed their hair once a month with rain water that they had accumulated in a barrel when it rained, and used Borax or egg yolks for shampoo, and they wore their hair long, and brushed it every night before going to bed. Sugar cost four cents a pound, eggs were 14 cents a dozen, coffee was 15 cents a pound. There was no Mother's day or Father's day, and ice tea, canned beer, along with cross word puzzles had not been invented.*

What is happening on our left Reginald?



*You mean that crowd of people on our left, and what appears to be a big kite flying above them? We are now in the State of Virginia and that "kite" is being flown by a man called Wilber Wright to demonstrate to the Army how an Airplane could be used. Yes, that is what was known as an Airplane in this year.*

*This is also the year that a man called DeForrest was able to transmit voice and music over 500 miles from the Eiffel Tower in Paris France for the first time. The result of which caused Amateur interest in radio, and many magazines were being published such as Modern Electronics, Electrician and Mechanic, explaining about radio waves. It was predicted that “RADIO” was the wave of the future.*



*Folks! we are not going there this trip, but in Messina Italy you should know that there was a major earthquake in December of this year, killing from 70 to 100 people.*

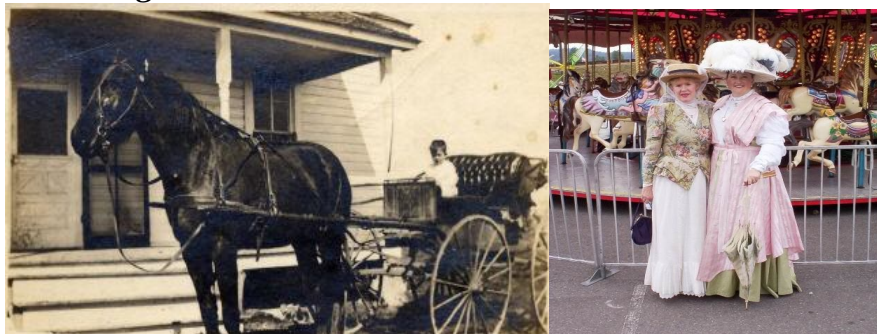


How about education Reginald?



*Two out of every ten people could not read or write. It was estimated that only six percent of all Americans managed to graduate from High School, and ninety percent of all of the doctors had no College Education. The lack of education and general knowledge was a problem for sure. Can you imagine you could buy Marijuana, heroin, and Morphine over the counter at any drug store? In fact many pharmacists believed that Heroin would clear your complexion, help your mind, and regulate your stomach and bowels. Because doctors did not know how to treat many illnesses in 1908, many people died of Pneumonia, influenza, and diarrhea.*

*Ladies and Gentlemen as we travel around you will notice that for the most part you see many horses and buggies, and the clothing that people are wearing is a little different. Both men and women for the most part wear hats for one thing.*





*As we go through the rural areas you will notice that you do not see tractors to do the work in the fields. They will not appear for a couple of years from now. What you see is men plowing the fields with horses, and women for the most part, are taking care of the rustic houses and the children. Life was not so easy for many in 1908. However you could buy a home from Sears Homes for \$782 like this one.*



*President Theodore Roosevelt, is trying to get a bill through the congress and the senate to help the rural areas.*

Well folks, it is time to think about what you have seen, and about time to fasten your seat belts once more for our return to the year 2008.

*One more thing before we leave Ramblin, this is the year that a big meteorite, or what was thought to be a meteorite, landed in Russia in a remote part of Siberia, northwest of Lake Baikal on the 30th June 1908. The*



*event released as much energy as fifteen one-megaton atomic bombs,,as well as blasting an enormous amount of dust into the atmosphere, felling 60 million trees over an area of more than 2000 square kilometres.(120,000 square miles). Shaidurov, a Russian scientist, suggests that this explosion would have caused "considerable stirring of the high layers of atmosphere and change its structure." Such a meteoric disruption was the trigger for the subsequent rise in global temperatures, not what man is doing in 2008. I thought that might be interesting for all of you.*



Thanks Reginald. OK folks, get into your seat, and fasten your seat belts please..... Everybody ready?..... The shields are closing, and in a few moments we will return to 2008. Total blackness once more, and here we go !.....

As the shields open, I hope all of you have found this short trip informative. Reginald and myself wish you good day, and would like to remind you how much we in 2008 have progressed. For example; We now have air pollution somewhat due to the many cars we now have, somewhere near 251 million. We have a problem with noise pollution in our cities. Many more people die in car accidents now than in the past. The cost of living is now many times greater than in 1908 in general, and we have problems with pesticides contaminating our food now, where with horses that was not a problem. We have telephones that many feel are contaminating our air and causing cancer, and very loud music to blast our ears. We no longer need to worry about our memory, because we have a thing called a “computer”, and we have a thing they did not have in 1908 called “Alzheimer’s”, which at that time was simply an older person losing their memory because of age, and something they did not worry about then, called “stress”.

For sure, we have improved a lot in 100 years. (smile)

## Chapter 2

Good Morning Reginald!

**Good Morning, Ramblin.**

Are you all set for today? Are all your data banks loaded and ready for the Nineteen Twenties?

**I am way ahead of you Ramblin. I noted also we only have nine passengers today instead of ten.**

That's true, so we have one less than our normal group.

**We have a few minutes Ramblin, and I would like to know if you like poetry?**

Poetry??? Don't tell me you like poetry Reginald?

**The fact is, I enjoy the cadence and rhythm of verse. If a verse flows well, my data banks seem to enjoy it. Why do you feel I could not enjoy verse? I have been programmed to evaluate??**

Well, that is true! I just had not thought of you *enjoying* something.

**Really Ramblin!!**

We will have to talk more about poetry Reginald. But right now, the people are beginning to arrive.....

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