

**Chet Rexford Interview**  
**By Talon Schneider**  
**January 9, 2008**

**So what's your full name?**

Chester Marian Rexford.

**And when was the time you were born?**

February 17, 1917.

**Who was the President was at that time?**

It was probably Wilson, I think it was Wilson. The first war was still going on.

**Did you participate in any of the wars?**

The only thing I did was a flight instructor.

**What did you study in school?**

Only what was required.

**Did you play sports? What were your favorite sports?**

I played basketball, football, and a little bit of track. I wasn't very good at it, I couldn't run very far.

**Did you have a favorite number?**

I wore twenty-four for football and basketball.

**What did you and your friends do for fun when you were going to school?**

Mostly sports.

**Did you play baseball or anything?**

No baseball.

**Can you tell me anything about the dustbowl?**

I know it lasted about three or four years, very little rain, a lot of dirt blowin'.

**How did it affect your life? Did you have to change anything you did?**

We were farming, and didn't raise many crops. Raised enough for the seed wheat.

**Do you know anything about the Jackrabbit drives?**

Yes.

**What are they?**

They get a big group of people and spread them out and take a couple of sections of ground, and then start driving towards the center. We'd have a pin up there and drive the rabbits in there and kill them.

**Too many?**

Yeah, they got a lot of them. The rabbits was thick.

**Where were you when Pearl Harbor was attacked?**

I was living a mile west of here.

**How did it make a difference in your life?**

I was farming and got out of that and went to get an instructor grading for flying and I flew to Albuquerque, got a job there at Cutter Car Flying Service. They were instructing primary, secondary and I was a secondary instructor doing acrobatics. They also had cross country, but I wasn't involved in it. There were about eight instructors there. It was a pretty big school. It had quite a lot of airplanes. We flew open pit Wacos, fine plane is what it was.

**Do you still have a plane?**

No, I got too old.

**What were some funny things that happened to you in your life? Like the coyote hunting?**

Oh yeah, we hunted the coyotes out of airplanes. One winter we got about 62 or 63 coyotes. That we shot out of an airplane. There was a bounty on them at the time for about four or five dollars. We got enough out of the coyotes to pay for the gasoline.

**I bet it was tough to hit them out of the plane.**

It's not that tough when you are coming up behind them. They were going only a little bit faster than you were and you could pretty well put it on them and get them. We was out one day and got five in probably a couple hours time.

**Who's the "we" you're talking about?**

Harold Kennedy was pretty well involved in that. We was using his plane at that time, then later on I had an airplane that we used.

**Speaking of planes, what was parachuting like, err, uh, skydiving.**

Skydiving, we went to Lyons, Kansas. They had a deal there that you could go skydiving. I think it cost \$30 or \$40. Give you a parachute, instructions, the whole course of instructions ahead of time. Probably take you 45 minutes. They told you what to do, how to do, and what not to do. Take you up, we had an instructor on the field, with two paddles in their arms, and on the parachute you had two cords hanging down, one for each hand and you could drive that thing wear you wanted to go and you drive it back to the field. That instructor on the field would tell you when to turn and land.

**Like directions?**

Yeah. Scott [Schneider] could tell you about that.

**That's how I found out you went skydiving. I noticed that you have several arrowheads, Do you have a favorite one?**

I've got a lot of favorites. Most of the arrowheads were found in Meade County. We went to New Mexico several times and made a trip to California once. Seen some people out hunting for some arrowheads and found several. One fellow from Pritchett, Colorado, he could make arrowheads. I went arrowhead hunting with him and before I left I had him make me some big arrowheads, spear-points, fish hooks.

**That's pretty cool.**

I had several spear points. I gave him fifty dollars. I've got them in display in the other room. It's a different bunch than this. Do you want to go in and see them?

**Sure. So what are the other ones made out of?**

The smaller arrowheads are made out of flint. You can make big spears out of flint too if you want to. This fellow from Pritchett, Colorado was real good at making them and he could make just about anything out of a rock that you wanted.

**Did you pay him fifty dollars for all of those?**

Yeah, for the whole works. He made all of them for fifty dollars. Is that enough?

**Yeah, thank you, I appreciate it.**

I hope that gives you a "Z" minus.

## Release Form

*To be completed by the person interviewed:*

I, (print name here) Chester Beyford, give permission for the video/audio tape of my interview to be donated to the Cimarron City Library, to be kept on file, and used for purposes of research at a later date.

I agree that persons doing research may use my name and my statements without further approval on my part.

By giving my permission for this, I also understand that I am not giving up any copyright or performance rights that I may hold.

*Accepted and agreed:*

Signature: Chester Beyford Date: 12-28-07  
month/day/year  
Address: 2206 9th  
City: Montezuma Ks State Ks Zip 67861