

Tex Selects Shirley Beers Beauty Queen

Beneke Frets; Brass Plays; Fiddlers Chat

Vocalist Used to Sing Light Opera; Calls Band 'Big Brothers'

By BILL McBRIDE

"A couple of jiggers of moonlight and add a star . . . Pour in the blue of a June night and there you are . . . And there's the theme song of Tex Beneke's orchestra. It's as sure a recipe of enjoyment as the one for mother's apple pie. Just mix well and serve. The serving we're sure of . . . but when we walked in on the mixing yesterday afternoon it was like this . . ."

Students wanted to get into the main lounge of the Union to hear the Beneke band rehearse for the radio show, but MBS officials wanted them out.

Tex sat on the stage studiously familiarizing himself with the radio script while his piano player read a magazine.

The string section ran through a soft number and the violist performed some tricky foot-work resembling the "Charleston."

The arranger, who seemed to be working the hardest, called directions to the 34-piece outfit and listened for sour spots. First he would call for the brass section alone and then the rhythm. Meanwhile, engineers for the radio network checked needles and spun dials.

Gary Stevens sang into a mike that was open only to the panel so that most of the listeners could see his lips moving but could not hear him. In fact, Gary held one ear closed so that he could hear himself.

During a brass section break, trumpet player Jack Steele wandered out to the soda fountain for a malt.

When the brass played again, the "fiddlers" gabbed among themselves and Bob Ridolfi, the violist with the happy feet, complained about two flat tires he had while driving from Lincoln, Neb., the night before.

The drive from Lincoln was a tiring but not unusual experience, according to several members of the band. They arrived in Iowa City at 9 a. m. yesterday, and slept until 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

The only female with the band was Claire Chatwin, vocalist, who lounged around between numbers with the "Moonlight Serenaders," dressed in a plaid sack suit, red loafers and a bandana to hide her pin curls, carefully "fixed" for the evening performance.

Being the only girl in the organization, Claire was the likely prospect to interview.

She comes from Lynbrook (Brooklyn spelled sort of backwards), N. Y. At one time she had hopes of being a "longhair contralto" but decided to enter the popular music field for the purpose of making money. She has been in the professional field seven years and did light opera and operetta singing before she started singing with bands.

According to Claire, the Beneke outfit is the "finest group of boys in the world" and they are all "like big brothers to me."

We didn't get to talk to Tex until the rehearsal was finished at 7 p. m.

When he went to dinner in the Union cafeteria, we tagged along. The interview was broken several times by the band's advance agent who wanted to settle problems concerning future bookings.

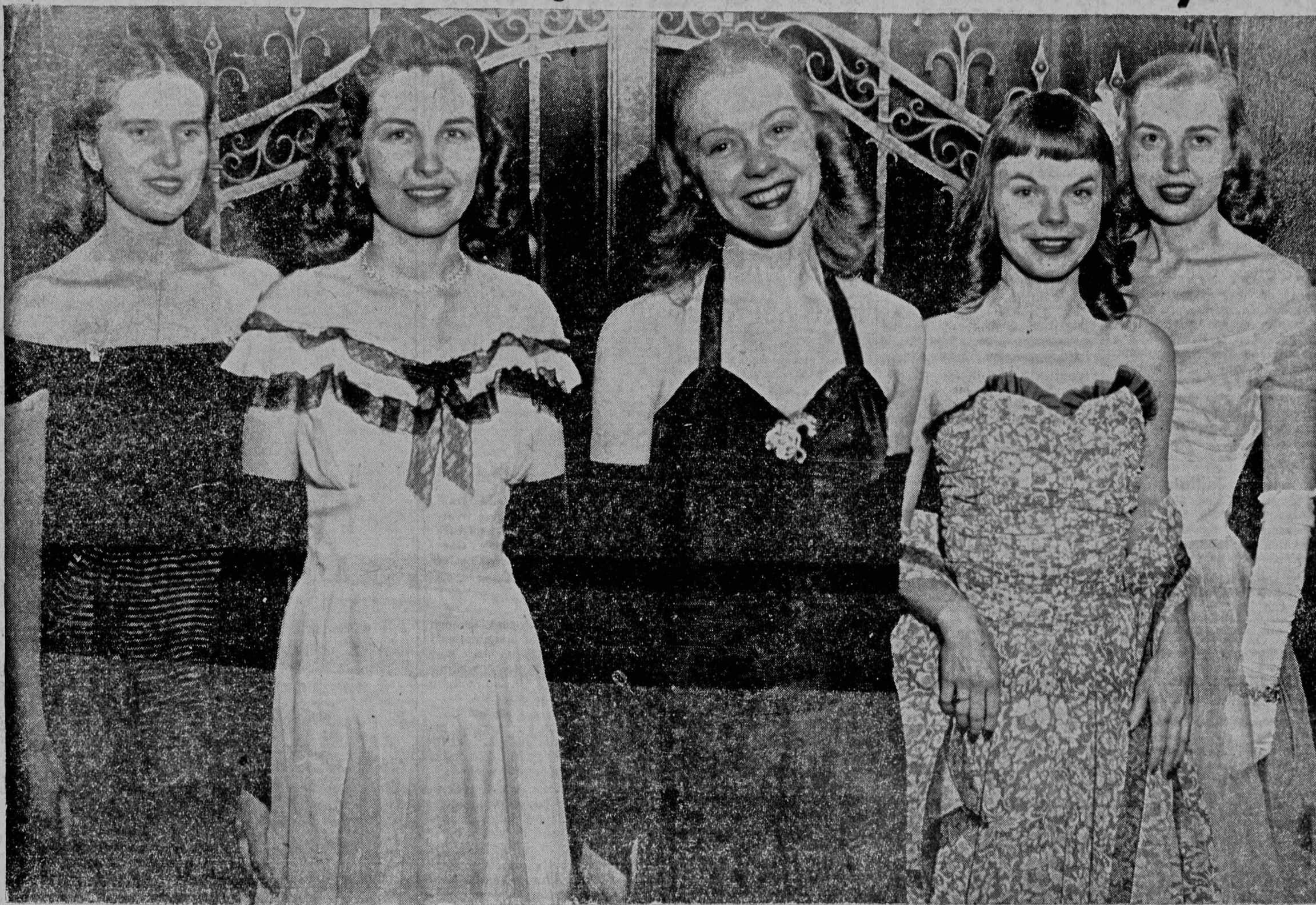
Tex was none too happy about having to pick the Hawkeye queen. He said it was too difficult to choose a winner from so many lovely entrants.

While he was talking about queens, Gary Stevens, featured vocalist, reminded him of the "University of Alabama incident."

"That was awful," Tex complained. "They lined up 40 pretty girls on the stage and asked me to pick the prettiest."

Gary said male students danced up to the stage after Tex had picked the winner and accused the leader of having "poor taste" in feminine pulchritude.

Although she was just a little nervous (and who wouldn't be), Irene Davis, 17-year-old City high student, struck Tex as having a "very good quality in her voice." The master of smooth music said she ranked in comparison with the other four "high school sweethearts of the week" featured on his coast-to-coast airforce show.



HAWKEYE BEAUTY QUEEN Shirley Beers, A2, Waterloo, (third from left) reigned over the All-University prom in the main lounge of the Iowa Union last night. A Currier hall entry, Miss Beers was chosen by Bandleader Tex Beneke from pictures of 48 contestants.

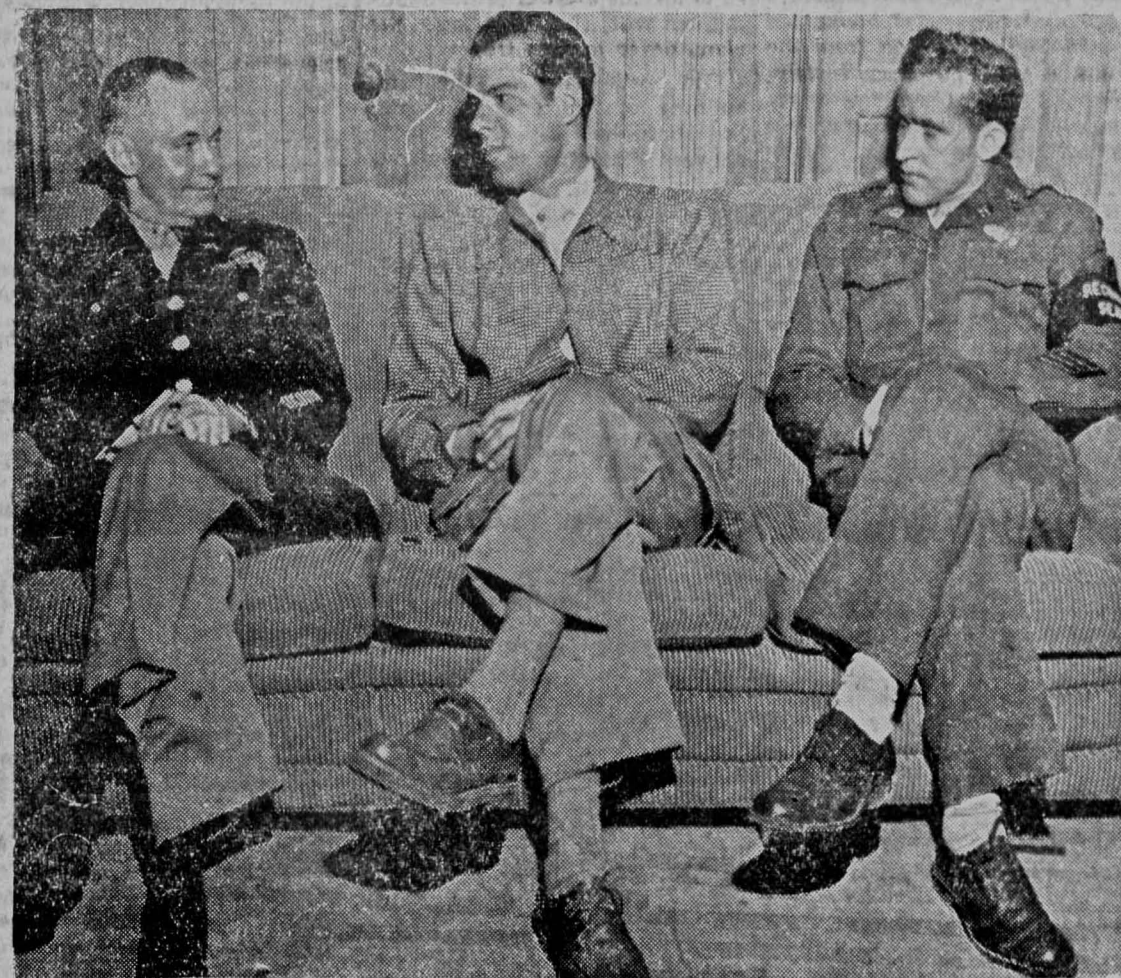
Her attendants also were presented at the dance. The five are (left to right) Mario O'Leary, A1, Mason City, McChesney house; Agnes Pierick, C4, Des Moines, Currier hall; Miss Beers; Camilla Smith, A3, St. Louis, Mo.; Gamma Phi Beta sorority, and Norma Lou Haegg, A3, Cedar Rapids, Delta Delta Delta sorority, Murray Wier, Muscatine, presented bouquets to the Queen and attendants as they appeared on the balcony overlooking the main lounge.

A3, Cedar Rapids, Delta Delta Delta sorority, Murray Wier, Muscatine, presented bouquets to the Queen and attendants as they appeared on the balcony overlooking the main lounge.

(Daily Iowan Photos by Phyl White)



"I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU" . . . a touching duet the microphone missed but the camera caught between Hawkeye Queen Shirley Beers and orchestra leader Tex Beneke. Encumbered by a saxophone, Beneke manages to treat royalty with the dignity which is its due, but the mutual smiles indicate (1) everyone concerned is happy, (2) there was a camera in the vicinity. Beneke's saxophone is an old and trusted thing. He wouldn't trade it for a new model in platinum (it's been tried). Queen Shirley is neither old nor platinum and she's strictly this year's model . . . next year someone new will stand on the bandstand . . . but she presents a difficult precedent . . . harder to beat than the band. (ouch).



"OFF WE GO INTO THE WILD blue yonder . . . Col. W. W. Jenna of the university military department, Tex, in the sport coat, and Sgt. O. A. McClung of the army recruiting service, discuss model airplanes. The colonel and the sergeant were the official army reception committee.



LET THE DRUMS ROLL OUT . . . let the trumpets blare . . . Well, maybe not at the moment (somebody's looking for a tuning fork). That's the way the Gershwins announced "Strike up the Band," and if it's good enough for the Gershwins . . . Comes the drums and trumpets, the shouts are inevitable . . . as long as Tex Beneke and the populace is composed largely of hepcats etc., and at \$3.50 a du-

Choice Made From Field of 48 Beauties

By KATHERINE McNAMARA

Loveliness ruled last night at the all-university prom in Iowa Union as collegians whirled to Tex Beneke's music.

Most radiant of them all was Hawkeye Beauty Queen Shirley Beers, A2, Waterloo, who reigned over the dance. Chosen by Beneke from pictures of the 48 contest entries, Miss Beers was a Currier hall candidate.

Basketball star Murray Wier, Muscatine, presented Miss Beers with 18 red roses as she appeared on the balcony overlooking Iowa Union's main lounge.

"It's wonderful! Just wonderful," the queen exclaimed. "I saw one person I knew in the crowd and felt right at home."

Attendants to the Hawkeye beauty were Agnes Pierick, C4, Des Moines, also from Currier hall; Norma Lou Haegg, A3, Cedar Rapids, Delta Delta Delta sorority; Camilla Smith, A3, St. Louis, Mo., Gamma Phi Beta sorority, and Mario O'Leary, A1, Mason City, McChesney house.

Wier presented bouquets of yellow jonquils, lavender baby iris, and fern to the attendants as they appeared before the crowd.

Blond Miss Beers wore a black faille formal with a halter neck. Long black gloves and a rhinestone clip at the neckline accentuated the ensemble.

Miss Pierick was garbed in a white off-the-shoulder formal, complimented by black lace ruffles at the shoulders. The trim bodice was emphasized by a full, gathered skirt.

A pink net gown featuring an off-the-shoulder neckline, fitted bodice and full skirt was chosen by Miss Haegg.

Miss Smith was attired in a strapless formal with a black lace pattern on a pink background. She wore a matching shawl.

The ballerina style was preferred by Miss O'Leary, who was garbed in black. The bodice was of black satin with a round neckline and cap sleeves, black satin strips circled her full net skirt.

In addition to the five ranking beauties, each of the 795 other university women attending the dance was queen for a night.

Prevalent was the short ballerina formal. Carol Urice, Wilmette, Ill., chose a sea-green faille with a bustle back, and Pat Van Liew, Des Moines, was dressed in an ice-blue moire taffeta featuring a long bodice and semi-bustle hip detail.

Many women, however, preferred the traditional long formal. Her skirt billowing as she danced, Irene Seifert, Amama, wore a two-piece moire gown with an ice-blue bodice and white full skirt.

Nadine Hammer, Sioux City, was garbed in a silver-rose gown of satin, while Miriam Showalter, Kokomo, Ind., chose a Juliet-styled dress of ice blue with lacing at the waist and silver braided trim on the round neck and small puffed sleeves.

And, so, on and on they danced—gliding to the smooth rhythms of the music master.

"Could we hear 'I'll Dance at Your Wedding,' Mr. Beneke, please?"

