

# The Round Radio Styles

*based on notes provided by Bart Lee (de K6VK)*

An interesting tidbit about an unusual radio design that has reoccurred over time is the basis for this article. Bart Lee's observations have been paraphrased and added to, in expanding the scope of his notes.

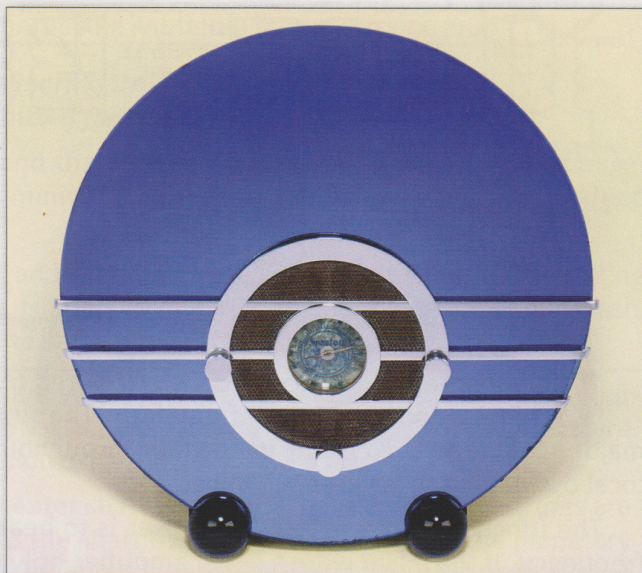
**A**nyone who has seen a completely round radio can't help but be struck by the design. To say that it is an unusual approach is a rather obvious understatement. What makes it doubly interesting is that the concept has been used on numerous occasions.

We began our explorations on the back cover of this issue by featuring the model 1186 "Nocturne." It is by far the largest of the cobalt blue mirrored radios to fit the round radio design motif.

*"The Nocturne stands 46" tall X 43.5" wide and approximately 16" deep. The mirror is 42" in diameter. While it appears to be a large round mirror it is actually 4 separate mirrors, the 2 sides, above the speaker and below the speaker are held together by the cabinet and the chrome frame. The Cobalt Blue glass is what makes it nearly impossible to replicate these mirrors today."*<sup>1</sup>

A smaller cousin to the Nocturne is the model 566 Sparton "Bluebird" which also carries the instantly recognizable cobalt blue oval glass front. The dimensions on this radio are a more modest 14.75" x 14.625" x 6." Regardless of its reduced size, it is also a very impressive radio.

*"Designed by Walter Dorwin Teague, it has become a highly prized item among both Art Deco and antique radio collectors. Like other Teague designs, its primary allure was the design rather than the performance. Performance was average at best with a compact 5 tube transformerless design and small speaker. Tuning covers AM Broadcast and shortwave on two bands. Band switching is accomplished using a push/pull switch on the back of the radio. Three control knobs on the front are On-Off/Volume, Tone, and Tuning. It was originally offered with an optional mirror to act as a platform or 'Plateau'."*<sup>2</sup>



*The Sparton Model 566 "Bluebird"*



*The Ekco A22 - from the collection of Jim Ryan*