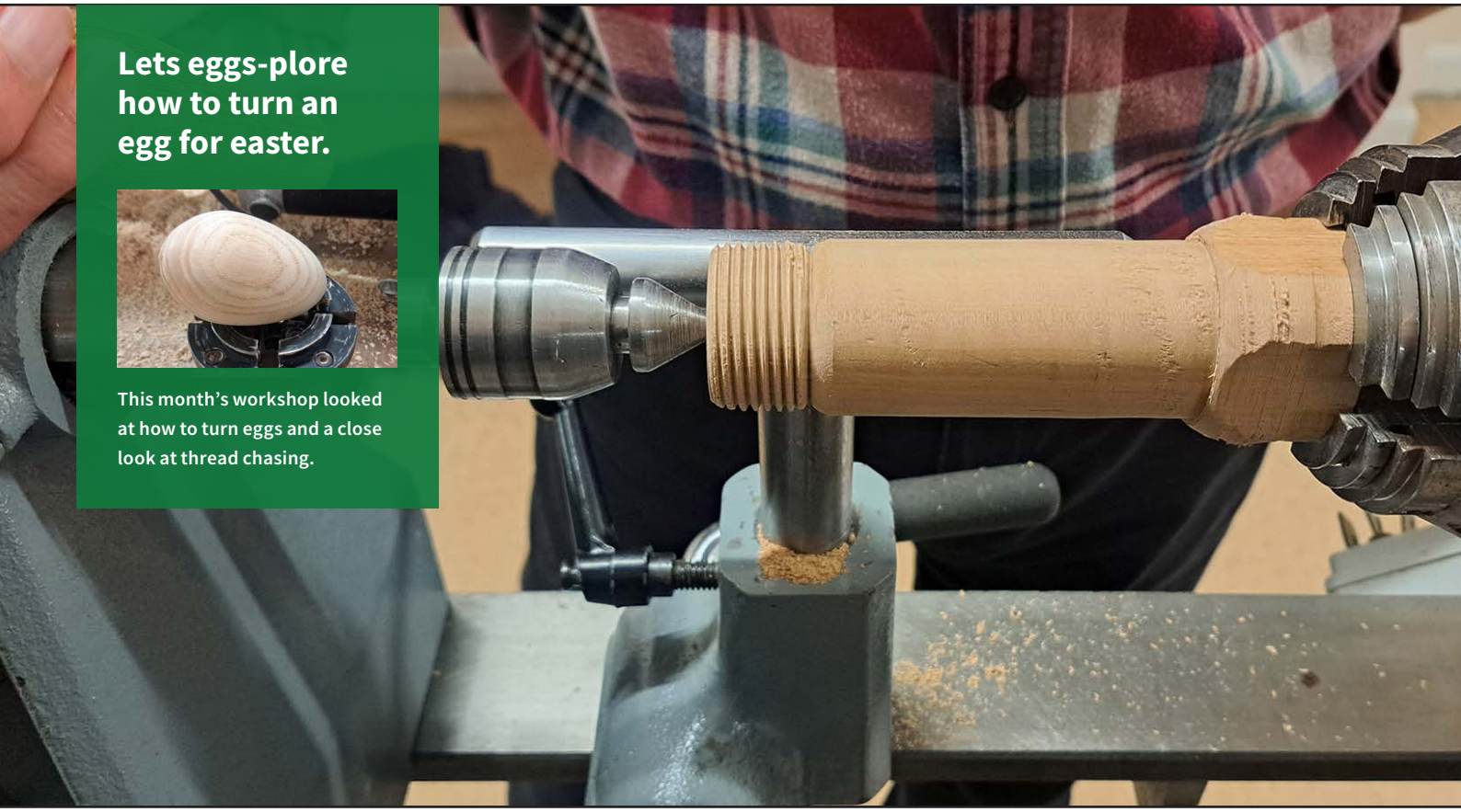
March 2023 - Issue 183
Middlesex Woodturners Association - Monthly Newsletter

TURNING TALK

Middlesex Woodturners Association



Lets eggs-plore how to turn an egg for easter.

This month's workshop looked at how to turn eggs and a close look at thread chasing.

Many thanks to Tony Champion for being our Webmaster for several years and who has now handed it over to Josh Pinto.

If you have any ideas about what extra things might be included or updating that needs to be done, please do let Josh or myself know.

We are pleased to welcome back Chris Bentley who will demonstrating something different on May 16 after his well appreciated demonstration earlier this year.

Gordon Cookson

Inside this issue

My Turning Journey By Peter Leach

Part Three of Peter's woodturning journey

Apples & Pears

The March table competition is having a right old knees up!

My Turning Journey

By Peter Leach

Part three

Or turning the years away

3. More interim years 2012 to 2014

There are advantages to buying pre-prepared turning blanks in that they rarely have defects and the grain can be wonderful. Two Olive Ash bowls ready for a show, both with a food safe finish and both sold at the show.

Hollow forms are great fun to turn and they do make you concentrate as catches can shake you up physically. Using exotic hardwoods for the finials makes a fairly plain body stand out a bit more. Three hollow forms of Sycamore with Anjan and Padauk finials and feet.

Inspiration was coming from all sides, these are miniature items turned by Stuart King and Ben Dick. Ben's segmented hollow form on the right is made from 274 pieces and Stuart's miniatures are a complete marvel to behold. If I remember correctly the lid does lift off the chalice and possibly there is a captive ring on the stem on the little one to right as well, but please ask Stuart to confirm this.

This Sycamore and Anjan hollow form with finial was the winner of the Graddage trophy at the summer Seminar 2013.

A series of Laburnum pots with Blackwood and Boxwood lids ranging in size from 50mm up to 125mm tall. There is decoration on the lids from using a chatter tool and the items are polished using buffing wheels. The Laburnum was branch wood no more than 75mm in diameter and came from an Arboriculturist clearing an overgrown garden.

A multi wood hollow form made from Spalted Apple, Padauk, Yew and Rosewood. A variation on the theme of hollow forms with finials, and if I remember correctly, a design modification had to be made after a mistake in hollowing the main part. Hence the Padauk rim for the lid to sit on.

Dumpy hollow forms were beginning to change into vases as my experience and confidence was growing. Tall deep items do take a lot of concentration as the cutting tool is a very long way over the tool rest and the forces involved are considerable. Catches can be jarring to the whole body not just the hands and arms. Approach with care and start with small items and work your way up. This Oak vase is 190mm tall and the colouration is due to fungal action within the living tree.

The alternative to hollowing out large lumps of wood is to make things up from smaller pieces. These two hollow forms with lids are made from Sycamore and Padauk on the left and on the right is Holy and Burbinga. The tropical hardwoods came from the off-cuts bins at Yandles in Somerset, sold at silly prices and great if you can find a use for the odd shapes that result from cutting turning blanks from boards. They are 190 and 220mm tall and are made up of six to eight pieces of wood.

Towards the end of 2014, turning took a back seat and life looked to be going down the Swanee river. The Royal Barge was launched during the year and the reason for the picture is that Stuart Mortimer, who had presented at our Seminar the year before, had turned the finials for the two thrones that were made for the barge but also I like the picture and I did start working life in a naval dockyard.

Part three of Peter's journey will continue in next months Newsletter.

TURNING AN EGG
CLUB WORKSHOP

A big thank you to David Wilks who stepped in at the last minute to demonstrate egg turning as Mike was indisposed due to illness.

One unique and challenging project for woodturners is turning an egg from wood. Creating a wooden egg requires precision, skill, and attention to detail to achieve a smooth and symmetrical shape that mimics the delicate curves of a real egg. In this article, we will explore the art of woodturning a wooden egg and the steps involved in creating this intricate piece.

Choosing the Wood:
Selecting the right wood for your egg is crucial as it determines the final appearance and quality of the finished product. Dense and tight-grained woods, such as maple, cherry, or boxwood, are ideal for woodturning eggs as they provide a smooth and refined finish. Avoid using softer woods that are prone to chipping or splitting during the turning process. It's also essential to choose wood that is free from knots, cracks, or other defects that may affect the integrity of the egg.

Preparing the Wood:
Once you have chosen your wood, it's time to prepare it for turning. Begin by cutting a block of wood that is slightly larger than the size of the egg you want to create. It's essential to have enough material to work with as woodturning involves removing excess wood to shape the object. Next, mark the center of the block on both ends and mount it securely on the lathe using a chuck or a faceplate.

Turning the Egg:
With the wood securely mounted on the lathe, you can now start the turning process. Begin by roughing out the shape of the egg using a roughing gouge or a spindle gouge. Start at one end of the block and work your way towards the other end, gradually shaping the wood into an oval shape. Keep the lathe speed at a moderate pace and use smooth and even cuts to remove excess wood, avoiding any catch or tear-out.

As the shape of the egg starts to take form, switch to smaller gouges or scrapers to refine the curves and contours. Pay close attention to the symmetry of the egg, making sure that both ends are rounded evenly, and the sides are smooth and free from any irregularities. Use calipers or your hands to check for consistency and adjust as needed. Take your time and be patient during this process, as achieving a perfectly symmetrical shape can be challenging.

Once you are satisfied with the overall shape of the egg, move on to sanding. Sand the wood using progressively finer grits of sandpaper, starting from coarse grits and working your way to finer grits to achieve a smooth and polished surface. Sand with the grain of the wood, and be sure to remove any scratches or tool marks left from the turning process.

Finishing Touches:
After sanding, you can apply a finish to your wooden egg to protect the wood and enhance its natural beauty. There are various finishing options available, such as wax, oil, or lacquer. Choose a finish that suits your preference and the type of wood you used. Apply the finish using a brush or a cloth, following the manufacturer's instructions, and allow it to dry completely.

Once the finish is dry, you can further polish the egg using a soft cloth or a buffing wheel to achieve a lustrous sheen. Pay attention to the details, such as the ends and the curves, to ensure a uniform finish. Finally, sign and date your creation to add a personal touch and mark it as a handmade work of art.

CLUB COMPETITIONS

There are two competitions each month. One is for you to make that month's challenge, there are two sections, Beginners and More experienced. The winner gets a £5 voucher, which can be used to pay their next month's Meeting Fee or for the shop or books.

The other competition is for any piece of your turning that hasn't been entered in this competition.

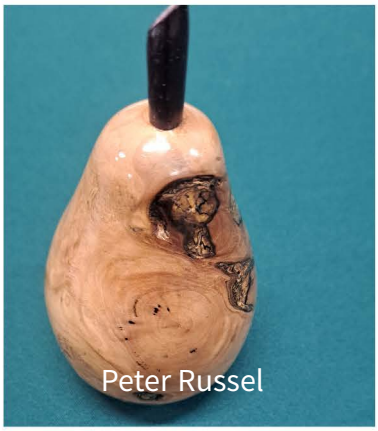
March - Apples & Pears

9 entries this month, Its great to see the competition table with so many examples of your work. Looking forward to seeing lots of Easter eggs at the next meeting.

Mike Bonnici

Giancarlo Ciuffardi

Ken Horn


Peter Russel

David Wilks

Derek Pollecutt

Lee Simpson

Stuart King

David Wilks

April Meeting

Unfortunately, Robert Sorby are not able to be at this month's meeting, we will look to reschedule when possible. Peter Leach is stepping in with more on Thread Chasing.

CLUB COMPETITIONS

The items are judged in various ways and the points added up for the best 10 month's entries. The winner is awarded the Turner of the Year trophy, The Alan Spargo Shield, which is named after one of the founders of the Club. The idea is to encourage members to bring in a piece each month.

There is also the Graddage Trophy awarded at the Annual Seminar Day. This is for a piece made in the previous year.

So whatever your skill, no matter what you have made, please bring it to the club meetings. The Table competition pieces are listed below.

April's Competition - Eggs

A basic guide to get you started.

- Skewed Egg - You Owe Me One - https://youtu.be/i214b685jvg

A good video about refining your skew technique with useful hints that can be used with other tools .

March - Apples & Pears Table Competition winner - Ken Horn
Looks good enough to eat!

TABLE MONTHLY COMPETITIONS 2023	
April 18th	Easter egg
May 16th	Platter - 8 to 10 inches
June 25th [Sunday]	Candlestick
July 18th	Natural edge bowl 4 to 8 inches

DEMONSTRATIONS, IRDs,YOU TUBE VIDEOS AND TV PROGRAMMES

Views by Gordon Cookson

For a variety of reasons recently I have been considering how woodturning has changed, including Risk Assessments, Public Liability Insurance and how knowledge/awareness of the dangers and safety aspects has increased or has it really?

The reasons include writing and proofreading articles for the MWA and Cheam Club and the AWGB Revolutions, the visit by 8 1/2 to 10 year old Cub scouts to us with the important exchange of Risk Assessments and recent Demos, IRDs and TV programmes seen .

I say this having learnt woodturning at school when I was 14 and fortunate enough to have my own lathe at 16 when belt guards were sometimes at an extra cost, been on a Train the Trainers course at work before running auditing courses in the UK and Jamaica, watched an incredible number of demos over nearly 30 years, doing one turning demo for us when Stuart King kindly gave me some notes on how to improve and a number of public demos at our Exhibitions.

To help me with this article I have referred to the Register of Professional Turners (RPT) Demonstration Feedback Form that used to be given out regularly when they were successfully improving the general quality of demonstrations. Also the AWGB Train the Demonstrator Course helps competent Club turners to have the confidence to demonstrate. The AWGB website Safety Advice pages and in America the AAW's Safety Tips are also helpful.

https://www.registerofprofessionalturners.co.uk/demonstration-feedback

https://www.awgb.co.uk/training/demonstrator-training/

https://www.awgb.co.uk/woodturning-safety/dust-protection-policy

https://www.awgb.co.uk/woodturning-safety/

https://www.woodturner.org/common/Uploaded%20files/Safety/WFSafetyWallace04-05-2015.pdf AAW Safety Tips

I think the demonstrators on the UK circuit are now good to excellent, depending on which style of presentation you prefer. Some demonstrators really like banter or exchange of views via questions and others who aren't so comfortable with that but do give answers to questions asked. We have moved well away from the days when there were good demonstrators but not so good at turning compared to excellent turners who weren't very good at demonstrating.

IRDs, You Tube and TV programmes are new methods of learning or getting inspiration and a reflection of changing technology. However people should be made aware of the dangerous practices shown or Safety Advice left out, which particularly beginners or self taught turners may not realise.

Friends have said there are lots of dangerous things on YouTubes and it is much better to watch the Demos and websites of respected turning instructors. As I prefer live demos, I looked at only a small sample of You Tubes and very quickly found out how right my friends were.

So my problems are to an extent to do with IRDs and lots concerning You Tube and TV programmes

DIFFERING LEVELS OF TURNING EXPERIENCE IN THE AUDIENCE

Not taken account of, particularly applies to You Tubes.

Using techniques that are "safe" for professional turners, but not for amateurs and not pointing this out.

Not giving explanations suitable for less experienced turners until a question is asked. The question might not have been asked!

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

Sometimes at the end of a Demo rather than as they occur, which is much better.

No ability to ask questions on You Tube or in non-stop demos..

Sometimes Q&A in live IRD are left out of the recording made available for a few days after the IRD.

SAFETY ADVICE and DANGEROUS PRACTICE

I have recently come across an online Course on Finishing, which you can't take until you have done the Safety section first. This one is a speedy run through but does make you aware of the issues. This is a great innovation and I do wish it becomes standard practice for all turning courses.

Very often not given. This applies to some respectable sites, You Tubes with commentary and of course those with no commentary.

Not shown by example by not wearing PPE including fume protection or full face visor, ear defenders and possibly custom made ear plugs, full shoes or better still steel toe cap footwear when turning, sanding, finishing and tidying up the shavings and dust.

Not asking before coming to the venue what equipment the Demonstrator would like provided, including Camera, Dust Collector and possibly a Safety Screen.

Last year I was demonstrating at the Love Food event at Great

Missenden with a very interested family with three youngsters aged about 7 to 11. After a while the youngest, a little girl was looking very uneasy. I stopped the lathe and asked her Dad what was the reason. He said that she didn't know what it was called but I hadn't pulled down the yellow thing. It was my face visor! I joked with her Dad that maybe she would work in H&S when she grows up. Yes, I was wearing steel toe cap shoes in case you were wondering!

Showing Dust swirling about with no apparent extraction system in You Tubes and no comment about ideally needing one.

Most of the longer standing members have heard of the breathing or nasal problems amongst professional demonstrators. A dog that was usually in the workshop, while turning was happening, died of nose cancer. The connection was never proved but highly circumstantial, I reckon.

As Chris Eagles RPT once said at our Day Seminar in answer to the question " Which wood dusts cause you the most harm? " said " I don't know any dusts that do you any good ". He also advised me to raise my mandrel height by 4 inches above the normal elbow height to stop my back ache as I was making a lot of hollows at the time. Thank you Chris, it worked.

Conversely Dr Tim Lawson, a Cheam member for many years, said wearing a full dust filter hemet changed his life when he was beginning to be a professional turner rather than a GP. This comment led to my Dad insisting on me buying one, but he did pay half as a Christmas and birthday present!

Demonstrators not wearing face masks when sanding. Indeed most demonstrators hardly do any sanding now. Mind you their turning skill is so high that the work hardly needs sanding!

Moving the tool rest while the wood is moving.

No warnings about the dangers of Sparks from Grinders and Charring wood and clearing off excess causing a smouldering fire if there are shavings and dust underneath.

Not saying that Spindle Roughing Gouges should not be used on faceplate/bowl work as the tang is thin and may break if there is a catch.

Using a Spindle Roughing Gouge on a Stool Top on a TV programme, despite having Technicians to oversee safety.

Using a Table Saw without a guard and riving knife.

Cutting logs on a bandsaw without a cradle to stop it trapping your fingers when the wood rolls.

Not using Safety Trousers when using a chain saw, although using a safety visor with ear defenders on a TV programme.

DEMONSTRATION STYLE that could be improved

Not repeating a quietly spoken question before answering it.

Being over absorbed in what you are doing without explaining what you are doing and why.

Repetitive sounds, phrases, mannerisms or actions can be rather distracting or annoying, although fortunately a lot of them seemed to have been removed from one video of an IRD. When I was on a train the trainer course, we were advised to try and stop actions and phrases that we were unaware of until we saw videos of ourselves. An embarrassing experience!

It's like when someone keeps saying "OK", or "To tell you the truth" or "Know what I mean" in conversation or on TV.

HOW CAN IMPROVEMENTS BE MADE

I wonder if the RPT and AWGB in the UK could issue warnings about the dangers and maybe get at least some of the You Tubers to be a lot more aware of the problems and change their presentations.

The AAW in America provides its members with a list of reviewed woodturning videos with comments on the safety issues,if any, in the video.

http://www.aawvideosource.org/

WHAT COULD AUDIENCES DO TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE PRESENTATION ?

Ask questions when they occur, other Members might be shy to ask. Speak up so everybody can hear.

Engage as appropriate with the Demonstrator/Presenter/Speaker/You Tuber. Hopefully it makes the session more enjoyable for all.

Talk quietly if necessary and not move about so as not to disturb the Demonstrator/Presenter or others in the audience. Over the years I would have loved to shout SHUT UP on many occasions but refrained out of courtesy to the Speaker!

Review the Demonstrator/Presenter and then the Committee politely and helpfully tell the Speaker. Perhaps bring back the RPT's Feedback Form.

Leave Comments or Warnings where necessary on You Tubes and online videos. I have left Comments or Warnings when I thought they were needed as they were not made by others. However it could become a very time consuming occupation! Perhaps readers of this article could also leave comments when appropriate.

Safely try out the technique or project soon after seeing it. I wish I had and I would be a lot better turner now!

Write up the Presentation occasionally for your Newsletter, it helps you to get more out of it. It also spreads the workload of the Newsletter Editor! Any Volunteers?!

If you have any Safety Tips, please send them to Josh, our wonderful Newsletter Editor

HAND CHASING THREADS
CLUB WORKSHOP

In today's world of woodturning, the art of hand-chasing threads may seem like a forgotten skill. However, before the era of inexpensive glues, woodworkers relied on mechanical methods to join wood parts, such as hand-cut dovetails, mortise-and-tenon joints, and hand-chased threads. The use of screw threads in wood as a design feature can add an air of mystery and intrigue to your work.

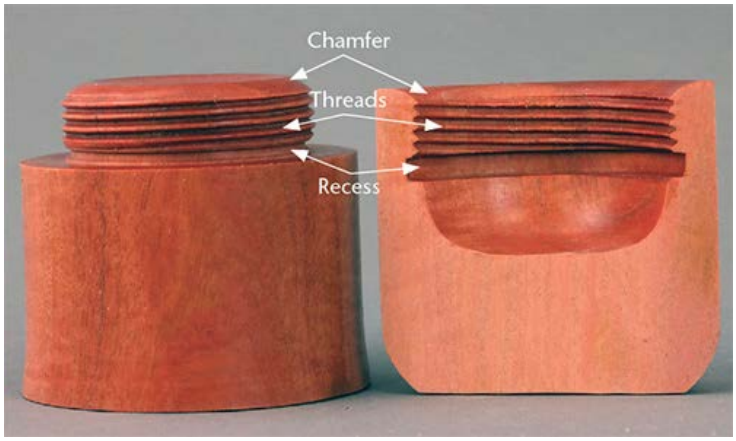
Hand-chasing threads using traditional tools at the lathe is a complex topic that requires a clear understanding to achieve success. In March's workshop, Peter Leach delved into the world of Thread chasing, covering the tools needed, wood selection, and the necessary techniques. He also explored how to create mating female threads to male threads in a simple turned box made of boxwood, with special attention to design.

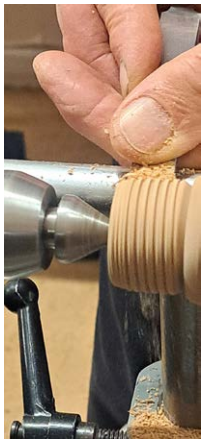
One of the first considerations when embarking on a thread-chasing project is selecting the right tools. Thread chasing tools typically consist of a chaser and a follower. The chaser is a cutting tool that is used to create the threads on the work piece, while the follower is used to guide the chaser and maintain the correct depth and spacing of the threads. It's important to choose high-quality tools that are sharp and well-maintained for optimal results.

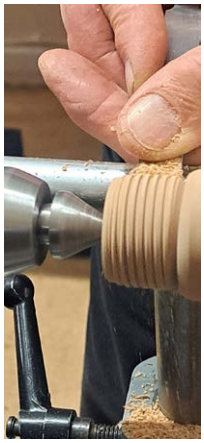
Wood selection is another crucial aspect of thread chasing. Ideally, the wood should be hard and dense, with a fine and straight grain. Boxwood, for example, is a popular choice for thread chasing due to its hardness and stability. Other suitable wood species include maple, and cherry. It's important to avoid woods that are prone to splitting or splintering, as this can compromise the integrity of the threads.

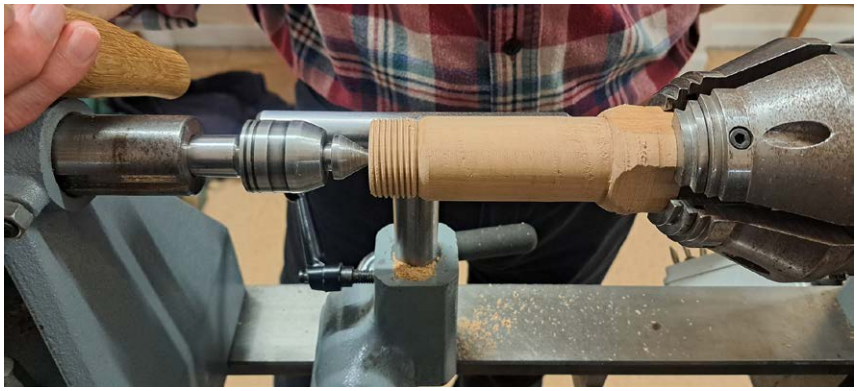
The techniques involved in hand-chasing threads require precision and practice. It's essential to have a clear plan and layout before starting the thread chasing process. This includes determining the pitch and depth of the threads, as well as marking the starting and ending points of the threads on the work piece.

Once the layout is complete, the chaser is used to cut the threads into the work piece. This requires skillful manipulation of the chaser, with careful attention to maintaining a consistent depth and spacing of the threads. The follower is used to guide the chaser and ensure that the threads are cut accurately.









Creating mating female threads to male threads requires careful consideration of design. The threads should fit snugly together, allowing for smooth and precise movement without any wobbling or looseness. It's important to test the fit of the threads as you progress, making any necessary adjustments to ensure a tight fit.

In conclusion, while hand-chasing threads may be considered a forgotten art in today's woodturning world, it's a skill that can elevate your work to a new level of intricacy and allure. Understanding the tools, wood selection, and techniques involved in thread chasing is crucial for achieving success. By taking the time to master this traditional woodworking technique, you can create stunning threaded designs that are sure to captivate and inspire.

Additional information thanks to - www.woodworkersjournal.com/hand-chasing-threads-in-wood/

MIDDLESEX TURNERS - PROGRAMME 2023	
April 18th	Peter Leach - Threading
May 16th	Chris Bentley
June 20th	No meeting
June 25th	Seminar - Margaret Garrard
July 18th	TBA
August 15th	Kevin Hutson
September 19th	Workshop
October 17th	Ben Dick
November 21st	AGM
December 19th	Christmas Party

Middlesex Woodturners Association

Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

Middlesex Woodturners Association

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