

Turning Drop Spindles

This page shows some of the steps I use when turning a drop spindle. The pictures here are from turning the Priscilla drop spindle set. I usually turn the shafts first. I mill maple to the size 5/8x5/8x12. I mount the turning square in a homemade combination square/taper drive and turn the taper on the end of the shaft:



After the taper is turned I turn decorative beads and a cove on the end of the shaft:



Then I apply finish to the tapered end of the shaft and mount the taper end in the drive to turn the shaft:



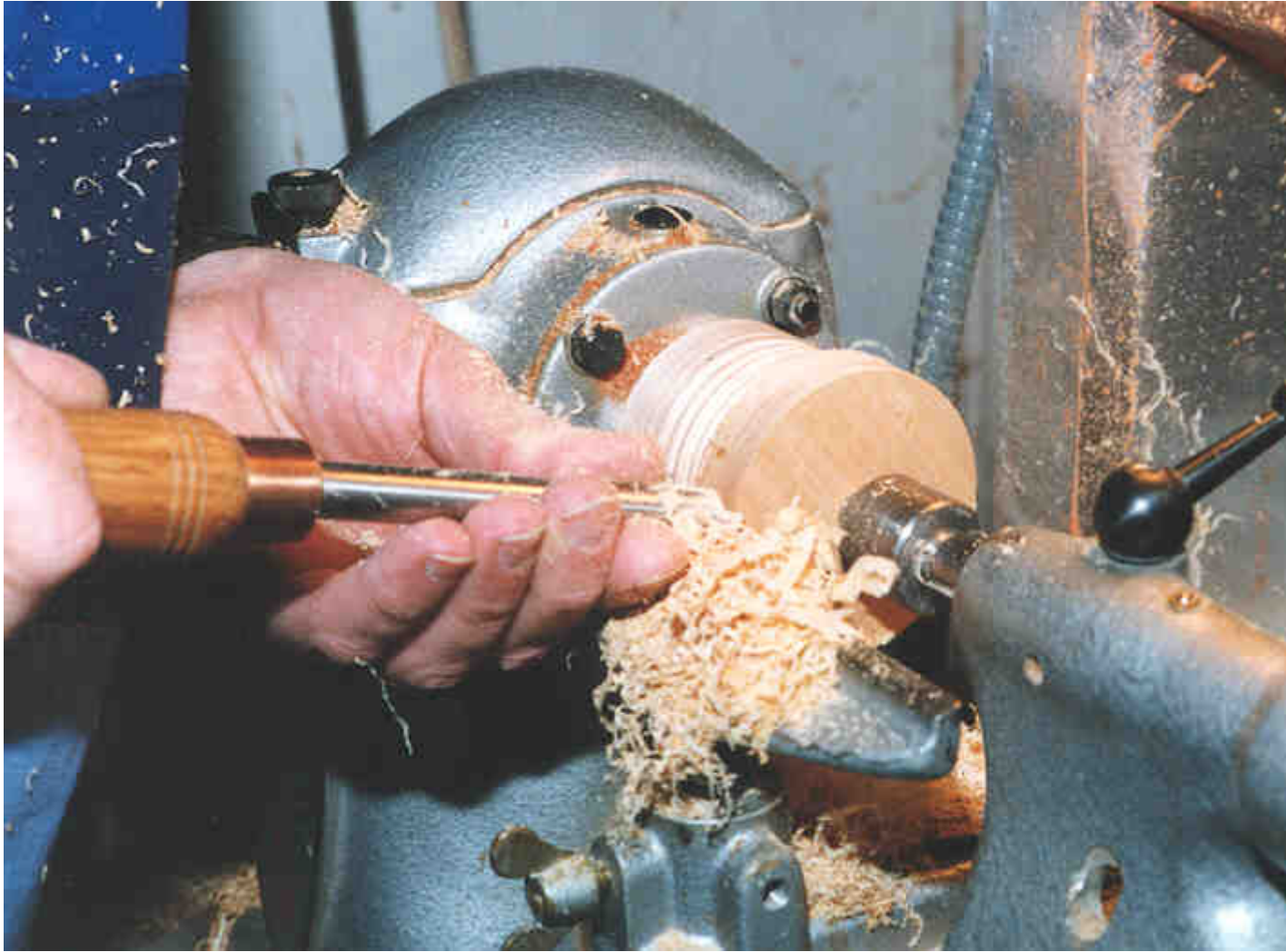
After turning the shaft is sanded smooth:



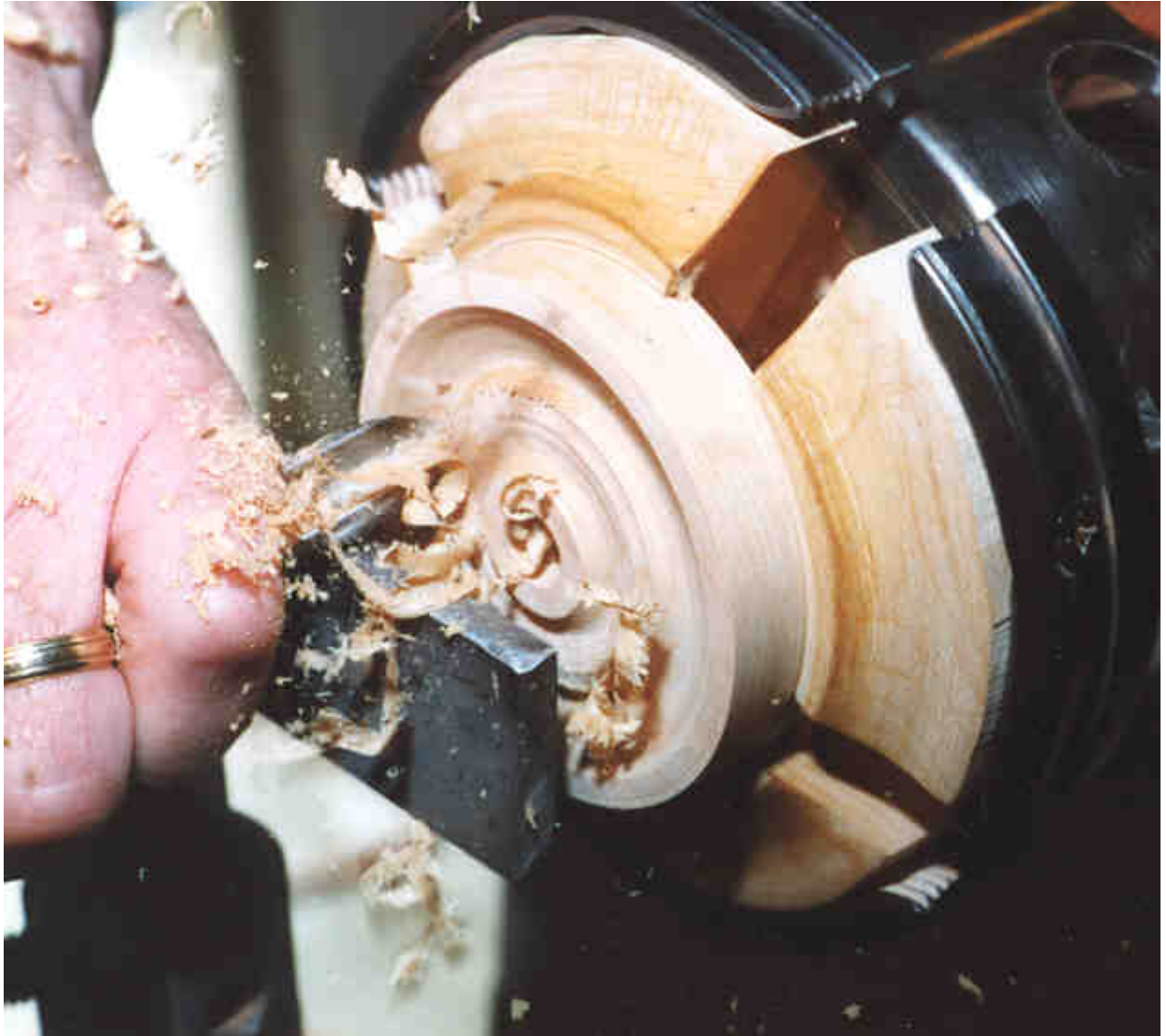
Once the shaft is sanded I apply finish to the shaft. You'll notice that in this picture the shaft is only supported at the taper end. This lets me finish the rest of the shaft in one step. Hopefully it might also add to your confidence concerning lack of wobble, as it's turning about 1800 rpm:



Now it's time to work on the whorl. First I mill cherry to 1/2 inch thickness, drill and taper the center hole, and cut it roughly to a circle on the bandsaw. Then I mount the whorl using the tail stock (which centers the hole) against a flat drive and true the whorl with a gouge and shear scraper:



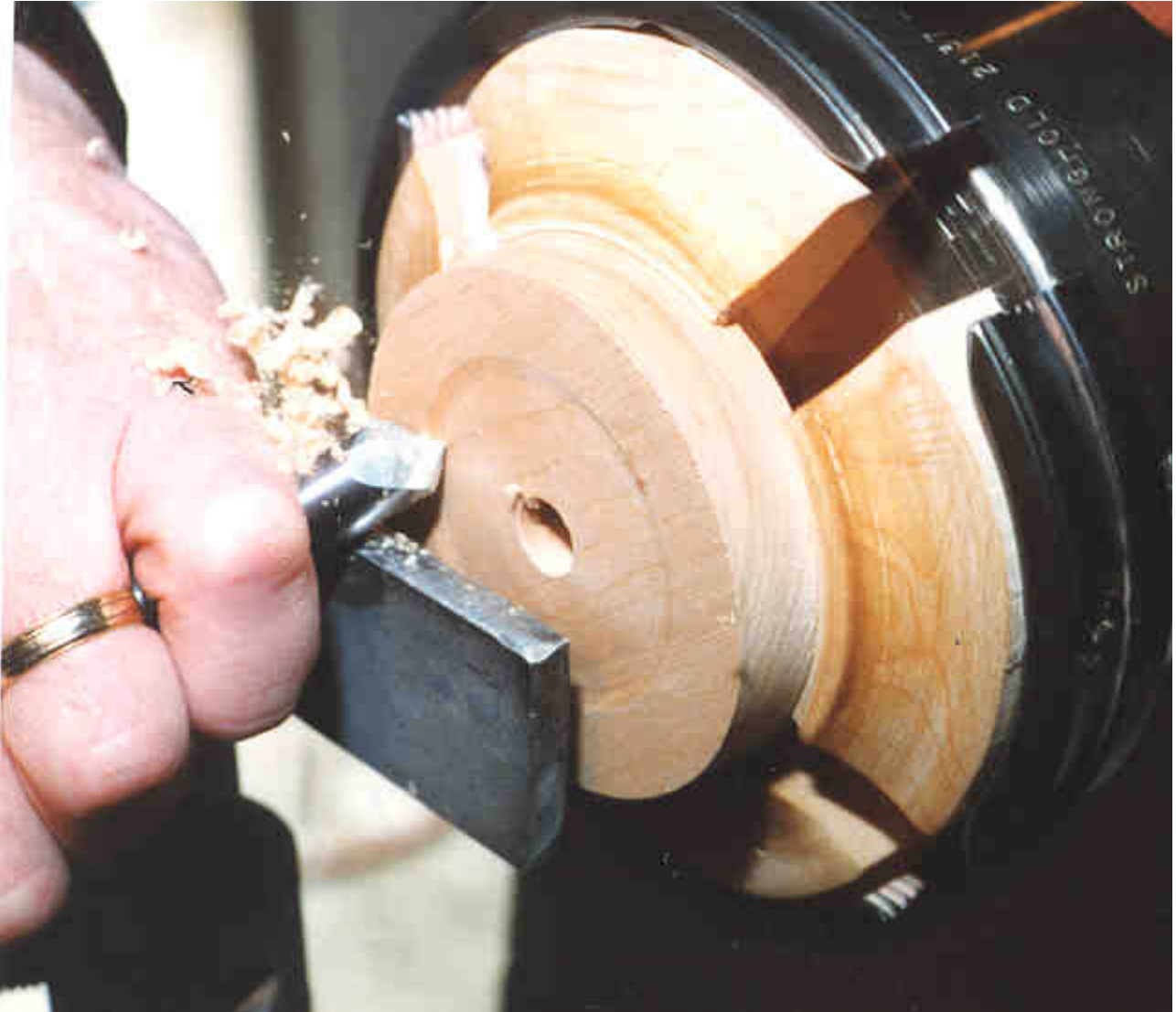
After truing I switch lathes and mount the whorl in my One-Way Stronghold Chuck with some wooden jaws to turn the bottom of the whorl:



After roughing out the recess with the gouge I smooth the whorl bottom with a shear scraper:



The bottom of the whorl is then sanded and finish applied. After the bottom is finished the whorl is turned over in the chuck to turn the top:



Once the top of the whorl is turned, sanded and finished, I cut notches for the yarn using the worlds ugliest jig. The jig is held in my workbench vise. I clamp the whorl by foot pressure on the bottom of the lever, much like a shaving horse. The jig has a mark to indicate how far to rotate the whorl between notches.



About all that's left to do is make hooks:



Then test and adjust the fit of the notch in the whorl and package them. This page shows some of the steps I use when turning a drop spindle. The pictures here are from turning the Priscilla drop spindle set. I usually turn the shafts first. I mill maple to the size $5/8 \times 5/8 \times 12$. I mount the turning square in a homemade combination square/taper drive and turn the taper on the end of the shaft:



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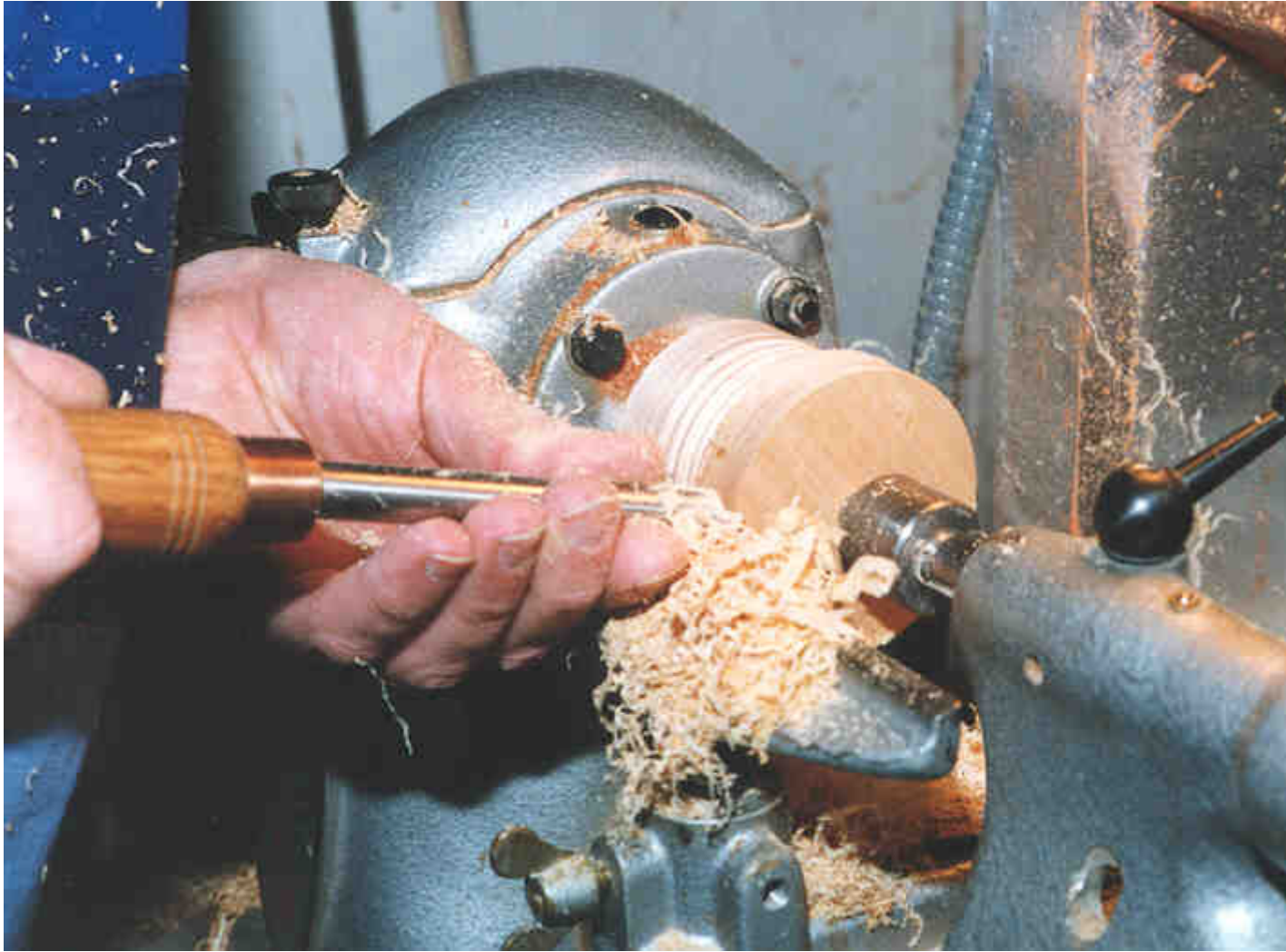
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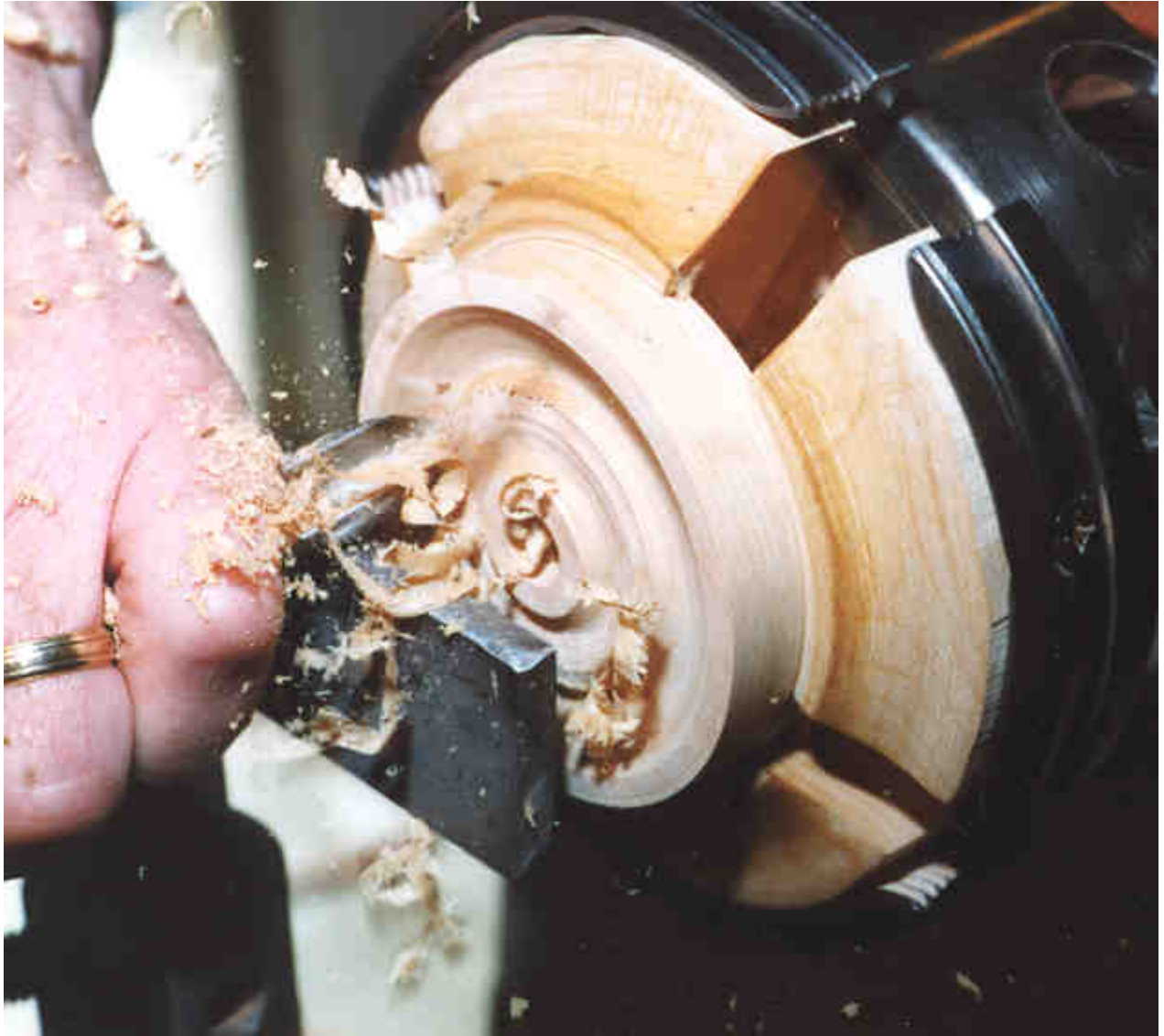
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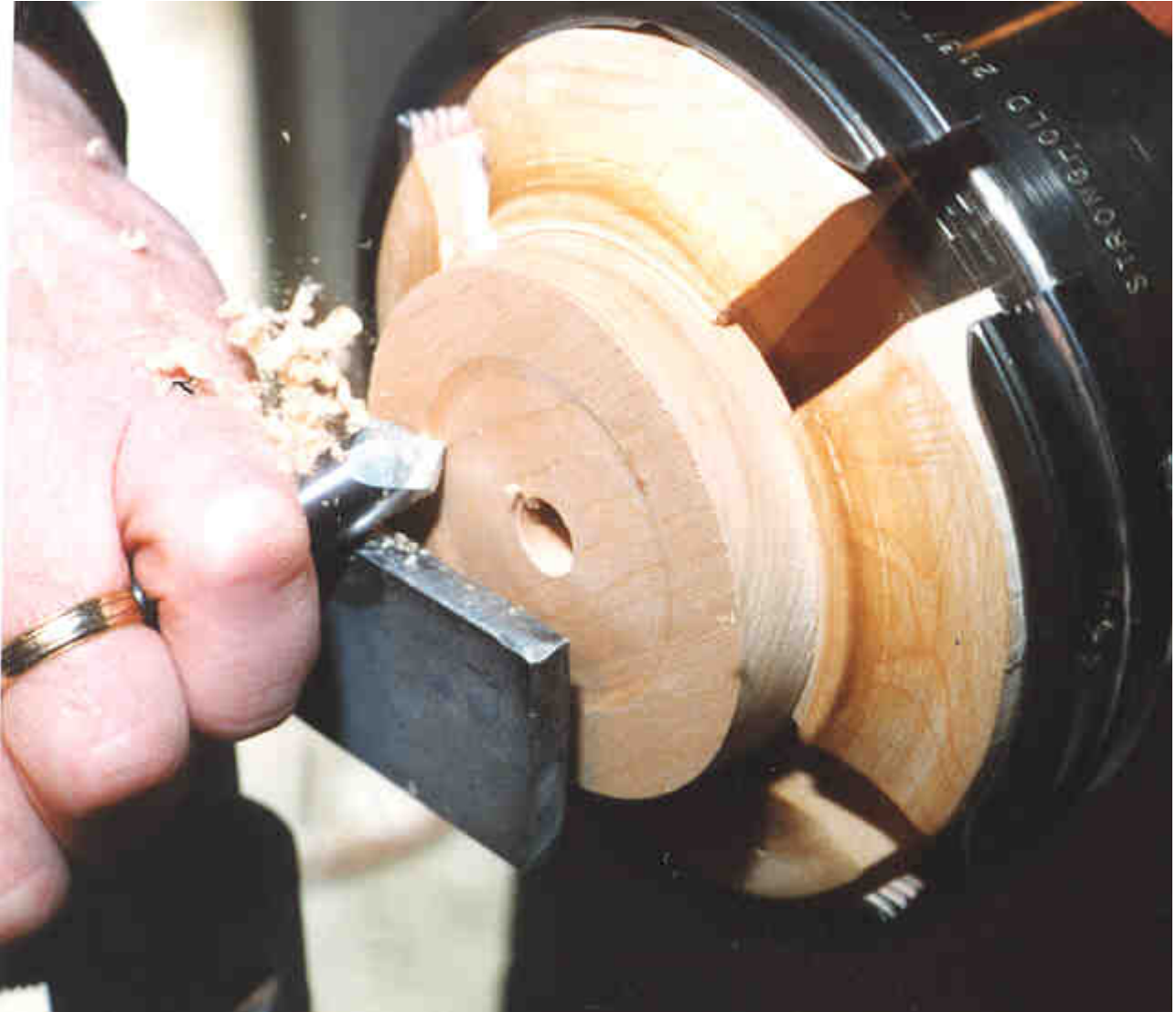
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