



LEFT: The machine shop

BELOW: The timber store



PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER SEFTON

# Diary

**Peter Sefton** tells us about what's going on at the Furniture School this month and shares a few important tips on timber selection

**F**ebruary is an exciting time of year for us in the Furniture School; the professional long course students bought their timber for their major projects before Christmas and now it's time to start cutting it up and making their ideas on paper come to reality.

## Beauty of timber

The main design work on their masterpieces has been done and now everything is beginning to come to

fruition. Cutting the timber up for the first time after having it stored for several months is an interesting time. The timber has been in stick in our controlled timber store for two or three months, drying down to around 10% moisture content. It's only now that the true beauty of the timber and what we bought on a cold November day can be seen.

## Timber range

The students selected a range of timbers including English brown oak (*Quercus robur*), ripple sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), birdseye maple (*Acer saccharum*), American cherry (*Prunus serotina*) and American black walnut (*Juglans nigra*). I also bought some cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) for short courses and stock for the coming year's work. We have a good relationship with a few timber yards and by and large the timber selected has been great – with only two exceptions. This year, the cedar of Lebanon, which I bought blind and



## Peter Sefton

Peter Sefton is a well-known furniture maker who has 30 years' experience and he is the 'hands-on' principal of Peter Sefton Furniture School in Worcestershire, where he runs long and short courses in fine woodworking, teaching and mentoring students. He also owns Wood Workers Workshop, and he is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers.

**Web:** [www.peterseftonfurnitureschool.com](http://www.peterseftonfurnitureschool.com)



Cedar surface checks and cedar drawer bottom

one student's 75mm oak, both proved to be wetter than expected – and promised! These two timbers have suffered surface checks and have now been replaced, so we are ready for the off! The saw bench and planers have come to life, shavings and sawdust are in abundance and are already bagged up, awaiting next year's winter months ready to be used in the burner that heats the hand tool workshop. ■