



UNSSSEESING  
THE  
ALUMNI  
MAGAZINE  
FROM SSEES  
FEATURING  
RESEARCH,  
NEWS, EVENTS,  
STUDENTS,  
HISTORY...  
AND  
FOOTBALL!

SPRING 2011

## EDITORIAL – IN GOOD FAITH



**Welcome to the first SSEES Alumni newsletter**, aimed at fostering the broader SSEES community of current and former students and staff of the School. As part of our expansion of alumni activities, I have agreed to become President of SSEES Alumni. Some of you know me already, but to those who don't I should perhaps introduce myself. Formally Emeritus Professor of Russian Literature and Culture, I qualify for the role of President through my long association with the School. It is hard to admit it, but I first arrived at SSEES half a century ago.

Over the years I have watched SSEES grow and change, seeing many students pass through its doors. I hope my long experience and my interest (shared by colleagues) in hearing how you have fared after SSEES, will help bring the community closer together.

We are developing the website, which, as you will see if you log on at **[www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/alumni/index.htm](http://www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/alumni/index.htm)**, is partly informational, but also includes items about SSEES past and present from a student point of view. Some of that material is duplicated here, since you may not yet have discovered the webpage.

We plan two newsletters a year. Suggestions, comments and contributions are more than welcome. Please send them to **[alumni@ssees.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ssees.ucl.ac.uk)**.

*Faith Wigzell*

UNSSSEESING

## RESEARCH AT SSEES



Times change and one of the key challenges facing us is to secure large external grants and international awards.

Some recent highlights in terms of recognition for SSEES staff and their research include:

**Susan Morrissey**, Senior Lecturer in Modern Russian History, is in her second year of a prestigious British Academy Research Development Award of £101,350, 2008-11, in order to research "*Political Violence in Russia, 1901-1911*".

**Polly Jones**, Lecturer in Russian, has been awarded a Fellowship in 2011-12 at the Davis Center for Historical Studies, Princeton University, to research a book on "*Burying Stalin: The Soviet Union between Past and Future, 1953-91*".

**Svetlana Makarova**, Lecturer in Comparative Economics, secured joint funding with the Universities of Leicester and Lille-3 for a collaborative international project, "*A probabilistic approach to assessing macroeconomic uncertainties (PRAM)*". The amount awarded to SSEES was £200,000.

Never fear, we still produce books and the next newsletter will highlight some of these!

## A new direction for SSEES

Those of you who came to our first alumni event in 2010 may remember **Chris Gerry's** presentation on drinking habits in Eastern Europe. Chris, who is Senior Lecturer in Political Economy, has been leading the way in developing SSEES research on health, in collaboration with some of the big-hitters in biomedicine at UCL as well as with colleagues at other UK universities and internationally.

Chris has most recently been successful in a joint application to the Open Society Foundation (Soros) for establishing a 'Regional Seminar for Excellence in Teaching'. Chris will serve as Academic Director in a three-year project which seeks to promote the development of Health Economics with universities across the countries of Eastern Europe.



## SSEES EVENTS



### Latest Events

The next SSEES Alumni Association event will be on **Thursday 24 March 6.00-8.00pm in the Chadwick Lecture Theatre**, Chadwick Building, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT.

**Professor George Kolankiewicz**, Chair of Sociology at SSEES will give a talk on, "*From Polish Peasant in America to Polish Plumber in Britain*". This will be followed by a wine reception, accompanied by a photographic exhibition on the subject of the talk, in the Masaryk Senior Common Room on the fourth floor of the SSEES building at 16 Taviton Street, London WC1 0BW.

There is a charge of £5. If you wish to attend you will need to be registered on the SSEES Alumni database.

See: [www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/alumni/alumnievent.htm](http://www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/alumni/alumnievent.htm)

### Events Archive

In March, over 100 SSEES alumni converged on the School to meet old friends and hear **Dr Chris Gerry** give an entertaining, but perhaps literally sobering, talk on 'Drinking Practices in Eastern Europe'. Former SSEES students aged between 26 and 95 exchanged anecdotes, in many cases for the first time in the School's new building. Site Student President **Rebecca Gosling** also addressed the gathering with **Nick Gardiner** proposing the setting up of an alumni football team (for details see page 8).

In October, just before Hallowe'en, we held a smaller but still successful event when **Dr Rebecca Haynes** gave a talk about Bram Stoker and Transylvania, with postgraduate Claire Griffin contributing to the discussion that followed. It may surprise some alumni that SSEES has a range of people interested in vampires in history, folklore, popular culture and literature and offers a course to undergraduates called 'Vampires, Society and Culture: Transylvania and Beyond'.



### Organising a local Alumni event?

Please let us know. To advertise a SSEES alumni event, please e-mail: [alumni@ssees.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ssees.ucl.ac.uk).

# SSEES NEWS

Professor Robert Pynsent



## Art Installation – ‘Colouring the Invisible’

In October-December last year the glass atrium of the SSEES building was turned into an art installation, ‘Colouring the Invisible’, which celebrated the diversity of languages of the SSEES community.

You can read and see images of the installation on the SSEES website: [www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/colouringtheinvisible1.htm](http://www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/colouringtheinvisible1.htm)

## SSEES is one department

In UCL, SSEES is in fact just one department, and we have decided from the start of this year to move on from the structure of four ‘internal’ departments which all of you will have known: this avoids a mass of duplication and makes us better fitted to enhance our success across the board in what are challenging and competitive times. It also frees up time, for research and for students – this year, for example, we have introduced a more hands-on personal tutoring system that gives all students closer one-to-one support to add to the help they get from individual tutors. Students are still gathered around their chosen discipline, and the departmental or programme administrators are still the vital hub of a student’s time at SSEES.

SSEES life after retirement – and in respect of alumni, a special mention of course to **Professor Faith Wigzell** who, as you know, is the President of the SSEES Alumni Association.



Professor Dennis Deletant (right)

## Retirements

It is always a landmark when our most distinguished and long-serving colleagues retire. In 2009 it was **Professor Robert Pynsent** who retired, this year it will be **Professor Dennis Deletant** and **Professor George Kolankiewicz**.

George joined the School in 1999 and was Director from 2001-06. Dennis has been teaching at SSEES for 41 years. Landmark it may be, but it’s not an end.

It is a boon for all of us that our Emeritus professors continue to play an active part in



Professor George Kolankiewicz.



# SSEES IS THRIVING!



All in all we have 642 undergraduate students and 221 Master's students, which for Master's students is some three times the number of four years ago.

This year our student intake at both BA and MA levels was the highest ever – not just UK and EU students but also very many international students from across the world. Our students come from no less than 68 countries and SSEES is in fact the most international department in the whole of UCL.



confidence that SSEES will be well placed to maintain our premier position nationally and internationally.

As you may know, there is major concern in the government and business about the shortfall of language skills in the UK, so we're delighted to say that demand for our Russian degrees is very healthy – indeed it's on the up, while the number of Master's students taking the opportunity to develop language skills in courses across all our languages is also higher than ever.

This is one of SSEES's unique strengths and a great success story.

Last but not least, this year we doubled the intake of PhD students – this is a major challenge for all universities and that is why support for PhD students is a top priority when we write to our alumni asking for donations.

Student numbers are strong across the board – in Economics, Politics, History and Languages. All in all we have 642 undergraduate students and 221 Master's students, which for Master's students is some three times the number of four years ago. The government's new student fees arrangements will of course take us into uncharted territory, but we think we can have



# SSEES IMESS

The International Masters in Economy, State and Society (IMESS) is an established two-year Master's programme, offered by a consortium of leading universities in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Poland and Russia and headed by UCL SSEES.



The programme offers three study tracks in 'Politics and Security', 'Economics and Business' and 'Nation, History and Society', each comprising specialist courses in the social and historical sciences, research methods training, language tuition and an advanced research dissertation. All students spend the first year at UCL SSEES and the second at one of the partner universities. We recently expanded the consortium to include a prestigious Russian university (the Higher School of Economics in Moscow) and are currently in talks to include the University of Belgrade.

The central objective of the programme is to enhance global awareness and understanding of the wider European region. As well as developing cultural and linguistic knowledge of both Eastern and Western Europe, participants acquire the skills to identify and critically analyse key factors shaping the economies, states and societies of the expanding European region. IMESS is creating a pool of expertise for conducting advanced research

for public or private sector organisations and is fast becoming the international programme of choice for students with a serious interest in the economies, states and societies of the wider European region. In 2007 IMESS was recognised for its excellence by the European Union's Erasmus Mundus Programme.

The internships that alumni have helped to support serve to enhance IMESS students' career prospects.

This year's students worked, inter alia, in Vienna at the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty Organisation, in the leading Russian international strategic communications firm specialising in the CIS countries and the Baltic States and at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. One, **Katya Peremanova**, writes:

I interned with Urban Green Energy, a company in London which produces and sells small wind turbines. This was a great experience because I had never worked in a (for-profit) company setting before. It really helped that the office was small enough and I got to see and participate in the office activity without feeling left out.

She even participated in the installation of a turbine in Ellesmere Port (see image).



# STIRRINGS IN SPORT 1966

**As everyone knows 1966 was a glorious year in the annals of English football; few, however, realize it was also the year when the SSEES football team burst onto the stage.**

I seem to remember it all began over a quiet game of darts in the Junior Common Room on the ground floor of 21/22 Russell Square one Wednesday afternoon, then designated as a "sports half-day". Quiet because in the same room one of the interminable bridge sessions was in progress and its members would soon turn snootily towards us if anything disturbed their concentration, or even threatened their prowess as SSEES' Number One sport.

*We were discussing football when my opponent asked me in my capacity of Sports Secretary (rather an honorific title), if we could get up a team. Putting up a piece of paper eventually resulted in the names of fifteen volunteers.*

We fixed a date for a trial and secured some money off the Student Union for kit and a ball. SSEES colours were sky blue, gold and black, but the cheapest kit we could get was royal blue with gold sleeves, a bit like Chelsea with a dash of Wolverhampton Wanderers. One of the incipient team's WAGS undertook to stitch numbers on the back of eleven shirts, and so a team was born. We enlisted the playing/coaching expertise of one of the Polish lecturers, Mr Mazur, and since it was too late to register for one of the leagues we had a succession of friendlies.

The first was against SOAS, nothing like starting with a derby. I sometimes wonder just what Babel of languages we had out there that day. On a day when the pitch was like a gluepot in the penalty areas and one wing like a paddy field we outclassed a lacklustre SOAS six- nil. There followed losses to Slough Technical College, on Slough Town's ground, the first and only time we played in a real stadium, and Hatfield Polytechnic, on their notorious 45 degree sloping pitch, as well as a four-one thrashing from UCL's fourth string. We managed a few more draws before the season came to a close.

Unfortunately the next year a number of our best players were involved in examinations and job interviews, or gripped by apathy, so that we gently faded away. However, it had been a burst of sporting activity unknown for many years and incomprehensible to some of

our esteemed lecturers. We even had a slight following: the college mascot at the time, the head of a bull representing the pagan Slav god Velesh, was dragged to the SOAS match and after several stuttering attempts, hoisted high in triumph. Thereafter, although some students played for ULU teams, football remained the only sport which had brought the school to a wider world. Peace once more returned to Wednesday afternoons, with just the thump of darts disturbing the calls of the bridge devotees.

**Chris Feetam**

(A fuller version of this article may be found on the website)

.....  
 Apart from Chris, who was in the team? If you know, or were one of the glorious few, or even better have a team photo, please help us to reconstitute the sporting history of SSEES. Send your information please to [alumni@ssees.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ssees.ucl.ac.uk)  
 .....



## SSEES AFC 2005-2010

When I joined SSEES in 2005, SSEES AFC was in the University of London Division 4 and on the brink of disaffiliation...



All except one of the generation that had re-formed the club in 2003 had graduated. I remember the captain's lukewarm response when I approached him at the Fresher's Fayre, proudly declaring that it would be an honour to represent SSEES. My debut came courtesy of a chance meeting with the team's new goal-keeper outside an 'Introduction to Politics' lecture. The club at this point had changed its colours to red and black and its badge to a white star with a hammer and sickle inside a black shield after winning an essay competition sponsored by KPMG.

Unsurprisingly it also picked up the new nickname, the "Red Army". Despite some wins the season finished with the team in danger of being forcibly disbanded by UCL Union.

Things turned around the next season when I proudly led the club to the final of the University of London shield. Disappointment was to follow though, as our arch rivals SOAS 2nds won 4-1 in the final at Fulham's New Malden training ground, and also went on to take the league title, with SSEES missing promotion to Division 3 by just 1 point.

In 2007-8, though, the club was not to be denied. Led by Thomas Woolley, SSEES AFC lost only one game the entire season, managing a draw against LSE, who needed a win to take top spot from the Red Army.

### Back Row, Left to Right:

Alexi Ozioro (Year 2 SSEES History); Tom Huxter (Year 2 Politics and EES); James Noel (Year 2 SSEES History); Ben Rutledge (MA Russian Studies); Nick Gardner (Year 2 Politics & EES); Naveed Kiyani (Year 2 SSEES History); Malcolm Lesley (MA Translation, BA Hungarian & EES); Tom Woolley (MA History, BA SSEES History); Michael Fadel (Year 1 SSEES History); Patrick Hinman (Year 1 Politics & EES); **Front Row, Left to Right:** Matt Thompson (Year 2 Archaeology); George Baggaley (Year 3 SSEES History); John Lowes (Year 3 SSEES History); Dave Edwards (IMESS, BA Politics & EES)

The following year, led by Gabriel Erturk, SSEES AFC celebrated back-to-back promotions, finally gaining revenge over SOAS, dumping them out of the cup and completing the double over them in the league.

The 09/10 season was in many ways the zenith of the club's recent history. Playing in the University of London Division 2, SSEES AFC won promotion for the third consecutive season, meaning that within 3 years we had climbed to the top of the ULU football ladder. In finishing second in the league we left old rivals, SOAS and Goldsmiths, far behind. Moreover, interest in the club was so high that we were shortlisted for UCL Union's "Most Improved Club" and affiliated a second team, who competed well in the ULU division 4.

SSEES AFC meant a lot to me during my time at SSEES. Whether it was standing in the driving rain watching our midfielder talk to an opposition player in fluent Albanian, battling at Regent's Park against SOAS or going in to the Junior Common Room on a Monday morning and updating the results board, for me the club was the backbone of the SSEES student community over the past 5 years and long may it continue to be. Its progress is detailed on its website [www.sseesafc.com](http://www.sseesafc.com).

In view of the team's reputation for unshakeable team spirit, the logical conclusion to this was the creation of an alumni team. SSEES Academicals Football Club will compete in 2010 in the Camden Sunday League, playing our home games at Regents Park. We are on the lookout for more players. If you are interested, even if you didn't play for the SSEES team while you were at UCL, see <http://sseesacademicals.weebly.com>, or contact [secretary.sseesacademicals@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.sseesacademicals@gmail.com) or ring David on 07787 884862.

### The Red Army Marches on!!!

David Edwards

.....  
A longer version of this article is available on the website)



# THE SSEES BUILDING

Many of you are already familiar with the SSEES building either because you are a relatively recent alumnus/a, or because you have been to the Taviton Street home of SSEES.

There are others of you who may not have been here or know much about what is an innovative and interesting building, so we have asked **Lesley Pitman**, Librarian at SSEES to explain some of its features.



HRH The Princess Royal and HE Václav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic at the opening of the new UCL SSEES Building

Echoes of the Baltic and of German expressionism, accompanied by just a touch of Gaudi, have all been identified in the School's new premises in Taviton Street, designed by the **architect Alan Short** and open now for just over five years. Visitors ranging from presidents to prospective students and their parents have stopped to admire the views through the lightwell, the striking brick façade and the cathedral-like vaulting stairwells. The building has won a number of awards from professional organisations for its library design, brickwork, and environmental strategy, and although there have been some teething problems its use of brick and glass means that it is showing few signs of wear.

In June 2006, The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) awarded the new UCL SSEES building an award for architectural excellence. The SSEES headquarters is one of 62 buildings to have been given an award for high architectural standards and contribution to the local environment. Designed by Short & Associates and located on Taviton Street, the building is a model for environmentally friendly architecture.



The beauty of the building is a pleasing reward for all the hard work that went into designing new premises with enough space

to incorporate the School and the Library. Initially the problem seemed insuperable. The space identified after a considerable search was very limited, was surrounded on three sides by other buildings, and was serving as the delivery yard for the Chemistry building behind, so part of the project had to incorporate new arrangements for the delivery of large quantities of chemicals; hence the roadway around the ground floor. There were also inevitably constraints of funding, timing, and planning permission. On the other hand UCL was generous and imaginative in finding additional space in adjacent buildings, creating the complex of buildings behind a single entrance that brings all SSEES activities together for the first time in many years.

The result was an innovative building which was in many ways the reverse of the School's



old premises in Senate House and Russell Square. Instead of the grand corridors, closed doors and great distances of Senate House here there is light and visibility. Students working in the Library on the lower ground floor can look up and see the sky above them through the light well, or wave at their friends working on other floors. Occupancy of the Library has gone up threefold, which is perhaps the clearest and most pleasing indication that the building is meeting the needs of new generations of SSEES students in a way which has never been possible before.



# UCL SCHOOL OF SLAVONIC AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

## HOW YOU CAN **CONTRIBUTE TO SSEES**

The SSEES Alumni Association is part of the overall UCL alumni network. Consequently, from time to time you will be contacted by mail or phone with a plea for donations. These are handled centrally from UCL. However, if you make it clear that any contribution is specifically for SSEES, the School receives the money.

**We want to say a big thank you to all those SSEES alumni who have contributed so generously to the SSEES endeavour. Money received goes to two vital areas of our work: small bursaries to support PhD students, and help with the cost of internships for both postgraduates and undergraduates.**

In an increasingly competitive world, we have found that internships offer graduates the kind of work experience that employers seek and which often lead to full time employment.

The internship scheme is still in its infancy. In 2010 funds were allocated on a competitive basis to students on our International Master's programme (IMESS) who had found an internship and needed help with travel and accommodation . We are now looking to expand this area of work. If you are an employer, or you work for an organisation that would be interested in offering internship opportunities for SSEES students, we would like to hear from you.

**[www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/alumni)  
[alumni@ssees.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ssees.ucl.ac.uk)**