Dr Bettina Renz (1999-2006)

I studied and worked at CREES from 1999 until 2006, first as a PhD student and then as an ESRC postdoctoral fellow. Following a year as a lecturer with King's College London at the Royal Air Force College I am now a lecturer in International Security at the University of Nottingham's School of Politics & International Relations.

My PhD dealt with Russian civil-military relations and my main area of research today is the transformation of the Russian military and security sector. I am still in contact and friends with many former and current CREES staff and students and I love attending the annual conference in Windsor whenever possible.

The memories and anecdotes I associate with my time at CREES are numerous and some are possibly not suitable for elaboration in this context. They involve epic and often very funny lunch sessions in the 'Sheremetovo airport lounge' in the old Pritchatts Road building, similarly epic evenings in the Staff House bar, dusty piles of Russian newspapers in the old Baykov library, lamb shanks and 'latinisation'.

I also remember with great fondness the weekly Current Affairs Seminars (the intellectual rigour of which we were able to gauge by the depth of sleep of a much-loved member of staff). Thank you, CREES, for some fantastic years and great memories! I wish I was still there.

© University of Birmingham 2015