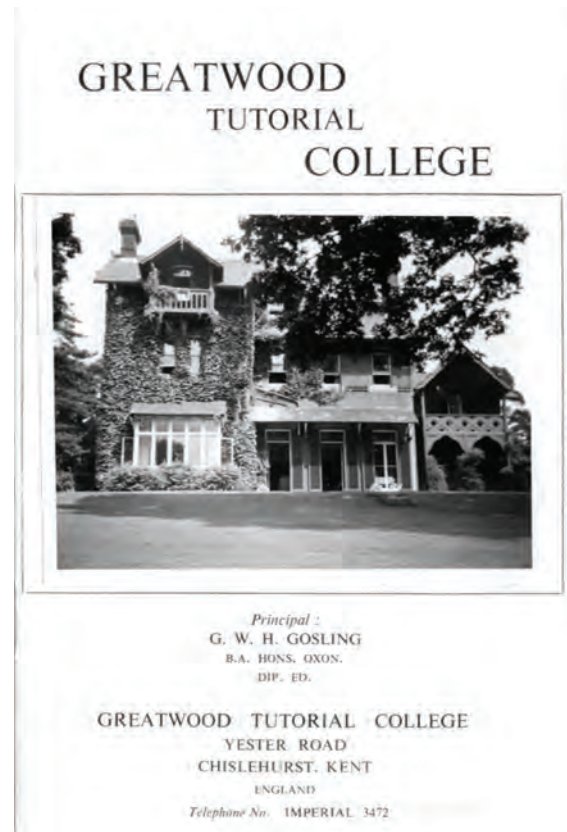
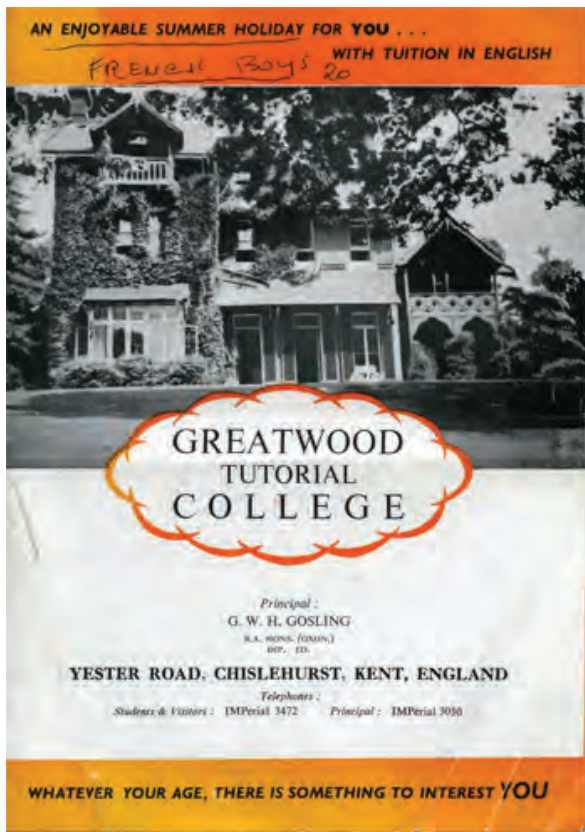


# Greatwood Yester Road, Chislehurst



In 1955 Mr George Gosling and his wife Edna opened a tutorial college at a large Victorian House on Yester Road. The house, called Greatwood, had been purchased for £5,000 jointly by Mr Gosling and his uncle, Jim Shaw. It was on the south side of Yester Road and not visible from the road.

The College catered for UK and overseas students who wished to study for entrance to UK Universities. For overseas students there were additional courses in English. It would appear that the majority of students were from overseas.

In 1959 the Gosling family emigrated to Australia, and the college was closed, with the house put up for sale, and later demolished. Only the lodge to the house now remains.

Yeside Linney had contacted The Chislehurst Society to ask if we were able to provide information about the College or the family. Yeside had been a boarder at the school between 1955 and 1959. After we had posted her enquiry on the Society website, it was seen by Corinne Brown (née Gosling), Edna's daughter. Corinne lives in Tasmania, and Edna (now 87) lives in Adelaide. Corinne was able to put Yeside and Edna in touch, and has written to us from Tasmania sending information and photographs of the house and some of its students. The captions on the photographs are from the back of the photographs.

A small piece of Chislehurst's history has been unearthed, with some intriguing unanswered questions.

Letter from Corrine Brown

*Dear Chislehurst Society*

*My parents, Edna and George Gosling, owned Greatwood College and I enclose the original prospectus (UK and overseas) and photos of same in the hope that your Society may find it of interest.*

*My mother ran the domestic side (with the help of 3 au pair girls) while my father looked after all academic aspects. It is a tribute to him that no student failed the UK entrance exam levels.*

*The students had a wonderful life – aside from the educational aspects they had tea dances in the ballroom, attended the theatre, cinema, and travelled to London. The boys (the school could accommodate 30) were all from wealthy backgrounds and my mother was the recipient of many lovely and unusual gifts.*

*The vegetable garden and orchard provided the school with year-round produce. My mother especially remembers the sweeping driveway (the school not being visible from the road) with grassy crocus-studded banks.*

*The property was bought in 1955 for £5,000 to which my parents contributed £500. They went into partnership with my father's uncle Jim Shaw, his wife, and their son Dudley. My father didn't draw a wage and my mother received three shillings per week!*

*The school closed in 1959 and my parents came to Australia. My mother kept in touch with some of the 'boys' and after my father's death in 2000, one of the former students, Guido Mertens, proposed to her. Unfortunately he died prior to their marriage.*

*I hope this may be of interest, and if you do write an article, I would love to receive a copy.*

*Kind Regards*

*Corrine Brown*

*20 Elizabeth Street*

*Burnie*

*Tasmania*

*Australia 7320*



*Greatwood front entrance 1954*



*Christmas 1957*

*Mother, me & Mr G with students who did not go home for holidays.*

Dear Mrs Gosling,

It has been a long time since I last wrote to you and many things happened in the meantime. But I hope that you and your husband are well. As you will have guessed I found a job and have been working since middle of July. I am the secretary to the director of the United German Metalwork here in Frankfurt and I must admit that I was really lucky to find this job.

I was so much looking forward to seeing you this summer, but I am afraid you didn't come. Well, perhaps you can manage to come to Germany next year. I would be so happy seeing you again and I am sure that there would be an awful lot to talk about.

I wonder if Yeside\* and Laure are still living at your house. They would have grown quite a bit. I just recollect that it was precisely one year ago when I left England for home. I can only repeat again and again that it was a very happy time I had in your house.

By the way, I am sure you'll be interested in learn that I am still in contact with Mohamed. Guess what? He is sending me a sari for Christmas!!! You will probably be busy preparing for Christmas and have no time for writing letters, but if you have a minute to spare I would very much appreciate a few lines from you. I hope you will like this German Xmas story. Wishing you a Marry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

I am yours sincerely, Barbara.



Anne and friend



Winter.  
Mr G with students.



Students  
& helper  
Daky



No caption

\* Yeside was a Nigerian girl who was sent to Greatwood when she was 5 years old, and stayed there until the school was closed. See her correspondence on page 5.



*Mr Morgan painting TV Room windows. He was gardener/handyman.  
[Also] Jamie, student, looking on 3 double doors into dining room [and  
unidentified girl in deck-chair]*



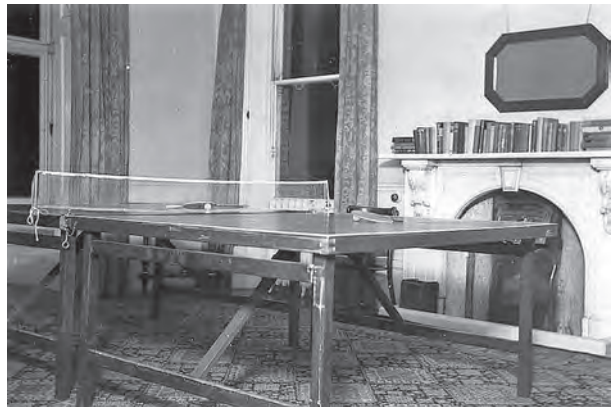
*View from lounge hall upstairs*



*Bedroom 5. Yoasive's room*



*Dining Room. Yeside sat on this highchair*



*Games Room*

Request first received from Yeside Linney.

*I now live in Surrey. and am trying to fill in gaps from my past. In 1955 I was sent as a young four year old Nigerian girl to a couple called the Goslings (the wife's Christian name was Edna, I think) who ran a foreign language school at Greatwood College. I am sure it was called that and I think it was on Yester Road. In the 70's when my husband and I tried to find it and wandered aimlessly around, a passerby told me that the area had been redeveloped in the 60's. The Goslings were my guardians for a few years before I was sent to board at Farringtons Junior School. They disappeared mysteriously off to Australia. As far as I knew, they had no children, just students from all over the world who were much older than I was. Unfortunately I have no details as relations with my parents have been estranged for many years. All correspondence I used to have that might have helped is no longer in my possession. If you can fill in any tiny detail, I would be grateful.*

*Regards Yeside Linney*

This email, posted on our website, was seen by Edna's daughter. We were able to put them in touch, and this led to telephone conversations and correspondence between Edna and Yeside. Yeside then sent us the following note (edited here), in August 2010:

*A quick update from putting me in contact with my foster parents.*

*Edna Gosling (now 87) lives in Adelaide, Australia. Adelaide is a very conservative part of the country so it probably suits her personality. Edna still misses England and conserves all things British as much as possible in her lifestyle. She still insists in leaving the house with hat and gloves and despairs of today's casual dress code. She is very feisty, orally and mentally sharp, recalling much detail about past locations and students, many of whom she has kept in contact. I find it interesting because she would have been very close in age to some of the students.*

*Apparently, it cost 8 guineas a month to send a young student to Greatwood College. The charge covered tuition and board and lodging, and contributed much to repaying the mortgage the Goslings had taken out to buy the property. They had bought the property jointly with George's uncle, who was more wealthy and had no problems financially, but George apparently found financing his contribution a challenge. As students always came from well off families, Edna was concerned her husband, George, constantly referred to as Mr G, never charged enough to the parents.*

*My father contacted the College from Nigeria requesting information about where he could send me to be tutored prior to starting school. I was four then!! The Goslings seized the opportunity to take me as a boarder, even though their other students were older.*

*It has been interesting talking to Edna. She has kindly sent me photographs of me when I arrived, and others. All this has been greatly received as I have only one or two from this period. They have included one of me which was sent to Edna to help identify me at London Airport which I find amusing as there could not have been many Nigerian four year olds disembarking on their own in 1955! What I am grateful to Edna is that she sent a photograph of my mother at that time. It is the only decent picture I have of my mother from my youth. Sadly, my parents disowned me when I married an Englishman so I never saw them for years, and thereby hangs another thread of intrigue which I won't go into.*

*The Gosling's move to Australia in 1959 was rather sudden. I tried to find out why I had been suddenly taken out of Farringtons as a Day girl and sent to Bodiam Manor school in Kent when the Gosling left for Australia, but Edna seemed uncertain. It is all rather delicate, and probably best not to speculate.*

*I hope this may interest your readers. Edna plans to come to London probably next year to take me out to tea at Fortnum's and Masons or Harrods where she said all my clothing was bought!!*

*Kind Regards*

*Yeside Linney*