**YCL Yearly Activity Report 2015-2016**

**President’s Report** **(Joe Vittoria)**

Another year has passed and, although we are always keen to do more, for once I think we can all pat ourselves on the back that things ar moving in the right direction.  During the year Denise stepped down as Treasurer: we thank her for her fantastic help getting the Club on a strong footing, and equally we thank Marco for stepping in so efficiently and enthusiastically.  There are new SIGs (Finance, Art, etc) which bring life to specific activities, new initiatives which we have trialled (Family events, etc) and a host of long-standing activities to which members have brought new life (Country Walks, Day of Service, Singing Groups, etc.)   Very impressive and exciting indeed.  That said, as ever we need more help with our core activities; if we don’t get that organically we will have to get external help, which will impact the club’s fees since we will have to pay for this assistance.  With certain activities, like Singing Groups, we have had a number of Singing Group alums asking why we don’t host more events, but few stepping forward to lend a hand.  (Sorry to single you folk out, but it has been notable.)  With just a tiny amount of effort from just a few more people the Club could be organising even more exciting things than it is.  Service is in the Yale DNA.  Perhaps this is the year you think to yourself, I could probably do a little something…  Specifically, my hope (as it has been for 5 years) is that we can build some new activities, like mentoring.  Younger members are constantly asking for mentoring, while many “seasoned” members have kindly offered to mentor, so we need that final push to organise how to unify this supply and demand.  These and other ideas will be discussed at our AGM, and I urge anyone who wants to get involved, or is just curious, to come along.

**Treasurer’s Report** **(Marco Severi)**

Following a profit of £783 in the previous period, the Club reported a surplus of £3,245 for the year ending 30th June 2016.  Cash at the bank and in the paypal account totalled £15,341 as of 30th June 2016.

Membership fees have increased to £4,460 from £3,451 of the previous period, while events, fewer in number than last year, have produced a small surplus of £654, compared to a surplus of £1,500 of the last period.  Admin expenses have been reduced from last financial period, and the club finances have been positively impacted by member donations and refunds, for a total of £1,020.

**Art Circle and Art SIG (Beatrice Spengos, Nixi Cura)**

The Art Circle is growing. More people are joining our events and we had some successful visits this year, including a guided tour of the African Art Fair 1:54 and a visit to the Ione & Mann Art Rooms, where Marisa Futernick (SY '02) presented her work and discussed her new project *13 Presidents*. Keep an eye on the Art Circle page of the YCL website for future events. In the meantime feel free to contact Beatrice with requests or ideas.

**ASC** **(Richard Burston)**

The ASC had another excellent year in the UK.  Applications rose year on year and our members interviewed the vast majority of applicants once again from across the entire U.K.  Many thanks to all of you who diligently completed your interviews!  This year 30 UK-based students matriculated and will be just beginning their undergraduate life at Yale. I am happy to report that our acceptance rate in the U.K. remains above the Yale average, reflecting the exceptional quality of students applying to Yale from UK schools.

My daughter Alex Burston ’13 has retired from her ASC duties to pursue a PHD and my thanks go to her for her tireless work.  I am delighted to report that Victoria Stainsby and Megha Okhai have agreed to serve as Associate Directors and we will be working together this year as once again the application season gears up.  As always we are keen to attract Yale College graduates who are in the UK wishing to be involved in the ASC and in particular are willing to interview Yale College applicants.   Please contact asc@yale.org.uk.

**AYA** **(Yanni Legbelos)**

1. The AYA has some exciting news this year, since last year’s Assembly. The search for the new Executive Director after Mark Dollhopf stepped down last year was filled with J. Weili Cheng ’77.

2. The 2015 Assembly marked the 100 years since the founding of the Yale School of Public Health, and the assembly focused around that to underline Yale’s and the AYA’s commitment to public service. One of the most interesting new initiatives started by alumni that was discussed last year was ‘Careers, Life, and Yale (CLAY)’. CLAY is a new program through which Yale alumni share careers and life experiences with Yale students to help them develop career plans and life skills. The first CLAY events were help in New Haven in October 2015 with high demand from students and engagement from alumni. There is an opportunity for the YCL to attempt its own program among alums in London, and look out for the rollout of CLAY sometime in late 2016.

3. The 2016 Assembly will be held November 10-11 in New Haven (to be followed by the Yale-Princeton game at Yale) and this year's theme is 'Yale and the Arts’.

Among the top research universities in the United States today, Yale is the only one to have as many as four professional schools of the fine arts. And all four of them rank at or very near the top of their peer groups. What makes these schools distinctive? How do they teach? Why are they so special to Yale, and how they have been able to have such an outsized influence on the arts internationally? This year’s Assembly will offer Delegates and guests a behind-the-scenes look at a part of the university that many alumni know only by reputation.

Yanni Legbelos ’13 is our current delegate but is currently unable to attend this year’s assembly. If any other member would like to attend this year, especially if they are interested in the Arts, please contact yanni.legbelos@aya.yale.edu

4. AYA Board of Governors Excellence Awards: Every year, all over the world, Yale clubs, classes, SIGs, and G&P associations are doing amazing things—and the AYA Board of Governors recognizes and celebrates these successes. These awards honor and celebrate the outreach, innovation, reinvention and impact of Yale alumni groups. Winners will be publicly recognized at the AYA Assembly this November 10-12. We encourage you to nominate an alumni organization that has thought outside the box, has hosted an exceptional event, or has otherwise taken itself to the next level. The deadline to send nominations is September 7, 2016 (5 pm Eastern).

**Bulldogs (interns) (Nixi Cura)**

 Awaiting report. Please contact Nixi for more information.

**Cambridge (Amy Klohr)**

Markus Gehring (Fellow) and I (Senior) are Members of Hughes Hall College, Cambridge. It has a fine small lecture and reception facility and we would be most interested in holding the occasional early evening talk aimed to attract Yale Alumni. Markus has gathered a list of some 60 Alumni Connections in our area of East Anglia, and we could use this as a starting point. I hope we will have a specific event to highlight by the time of the next London meeting. If you are interested in participating, please contact: Amy.

**Christmas (Erik Gustafson)**

 We look forward to celebrating our Christmas dinner with the membership this year again at Ogniskie Polskie in SW7. Dates and further details will be provided by email. . Please contact Erik for more information.

**Country Walks (Nixi Cura, Victoria Stainsby)**

Nixi and Victoria took over the organisation of this activity in the Spring. We had a walk in the Chilterns in April and then a walk along the Thames at Henley during the Regatta with the British Bulldogs (Summer interns). Walks are a free activity, they are on the weekends and appeal to grad students, and are a wonderful, informal way to meet other Yalies. We usually get a good turn out and mix of ages. We are always looking for members to lead walks in new areas. Anica and Anant also hope to organise a walk in the Oxford area in the Autumn. If you are interested in participating, please contact: Victoria, Nixi, Anica or Anant.

**Day of Service (Margaret Glover)**

Day of Service 2016 provided an opportunity for recent refugees and Yale alums, as well as long-standing YCL members and asylum-seekers to share their stories on an incredibly warm and sunny Saturday in May. Twelve young women from the Children’s Section of the British Refugee Council took a boat ride from London Bridge to Greenwich, where they joined over 20 alums and families for games and a picnic in the park. Meanwhile, north of the river, a group of alums were preparing lunch for adults from the Council’s Destitution Service, and others were gardening with migrants in King Henry’s Walk Community Garden. Our plan is for this partnership to develop beyond the single Day of Service. Please contact Margaret for more information, to help with DoS 2017, or generally to become more involved.

**Families with Young Children**

With the help of Denise, David Rollier successfully organised, at very short notice, a day out at the Unicorn Theatre. A very good time was had by all and it was generally felt there was scope for more family events. Please get in touch if you would like to organise something: we can help make it fairly painless: secretary.

**Finance SIG (Marco Severi, Ryan Mathias)**

After hosting a panel discussion on Social Entrepreneurship and a lecture by Professor William Goetzmann, the Finance SIG is actively seeking speakers for lectures or seminars on topics related to finance and economics. We work in concert with similar SIGs of other alumni associations in London.  Anyone who would like to contribute with ideas and voluntary work is very welcome. Please contact Marco or Ryan.

**Grad School Outreach (Anna Grotberg)**

Grad Schools cannot claim the hard work but were excited to support other great events organised by the Club featuring graduate school professors (Will Goetzmann) and panels (SOM / HEC Exceptional Women Entrepreneurs). There has also been a smattering of non-Club organised young alum drinks amongst grad school populations. We would be keen to hear from any other Yale Graduate School alumni who would be interested in helping to plan a Grad School pub night for this winter; please contact Anna.

**In Conversation (Anica Alvarez Nishio, Margaret Glover, Justine Kolata)**

 ‘In Conversation…’ is a new YCL initiative which has grown out of the very successful Speaker Series at the request of members to have greater direct engagement with the lecturers. IC takes place three times a year.  Each event is a stand-alone evening concentrating on an issue of contemporary relevance. Taken overall they form a series of intellectual enquiry concentrating on some of the major themes of our time: aesthetics, identity, ethics, etc. Two experts from different but complementary disciplines come together with a moderator for a curated conversation lasting about half an hour, with the conversation then being opened out to include the audience.  For the inaugural event on Tuesday, 11th October, Paul Mellon Centre hosts Dr Alice Prochaska, Principal, Somerville College, Oxford, and from 2001-10 University Librarian at Yale, and Jason File, artist, lecturer in fine art, war crimes prosecutor, and graduate of Yale College ‘98 and Yale Law School ’04, in conversation with YCL members and guests. We are honoured to engage with two people who between them were in residence at Yale for 17 years and whose careers as archivist and artist connect so clearly with the identity and endeavour of the Paul Mellon Centre. Invitations will be emailed soon, so keep an eye on your inboxes, or for more inforation, or to participate, please contact: Anica, Margaret or Justine.

**Membership (Samar Abbas)**

Since September 2015, 89 new members have joined the club. Of these, 47 are junior members and 42 are senior members or other Yale affiliates. An additional 155 existing members have renewed their memberships during this period. This puts the estimated current number of active members at somewhere a little under 250 and represents people who have been engaged with the club in the last 12 months. This figure does not include the hundreds of other members who have previously been registered on our website but have not renewed their membership in the last 12 months. Their memberships are currently listed as lapsed but can be renewed when they wish to do so (e.g., upon return from travels abroad)

**Mentoring (Preston Lewis, Yanni Legbelos)**

The goal between this AGM and the next AGM is to coordinate a tight task force team to launch a meaningful mentoring program for Yale In London. We believe the organisation and the greater Yale Community would benefit from leveraging the significant experiences of Yalies in London to provide career and life building opportunities for more recent alums. We encourage anyone interested in joining the task force to express interest to Yanni or Preston -- both will be available after the AGM.

**Music/Singing Groups (James Ford, Amy Klohr)**

At the outset of the year, we set out a clear goal to arrange for an a cappella group to perform to the YCL. In March, New Blue became the first singing group to sing to the YCL for more than 5 years. Set in the wonderful acoustic setting of St. Gabriel's Church, Pimlico, New Blue performed a lively set to an intimate audience. Lessons were learned about the challenge of securing a suitable venue (perhaps more central next time) and of publicising the performance. With a little more forward planning and publicity we could have harnessed a much wider audience, though the group was warmly received by the more intimate gathering on this cold night. Despite the challenges, holding the concert itself was a sign of tangible progress. Amy, in her capacity as Executive Member and Trustee of Cambridge Summer Music Festival, is also interested in bringing a male close harmony group to participate in the programme of concerts for 2018. A couple of years ago, The Collegium came to St. John's College, where they participated in Evensong, then with the Julliard Ensemble gave a concert to a full chapel. We might take this precedent to explore with other Yale groups the inclusion of Cambridge (and with James' help, perhaps London) in a UK tour). If you are interested in participating, please contact: Amy or James.

**Oxford (Anant Jani)**

We are keen to build our outreach to the Oxford area, and keen to be put in touch with any members of the Yale community (College and Graduate school alums, former staff, etc.) who might not already be in communication with the YCL. We hope to organise a walk in the Autumn (see country walks). To participate in this, if you have ideas for other events, or simply want to be in touch, please contact Anant.

**Quiz Night (Kevin Irwin)**

For the quiz night last November we had a great turnout of around 60 people. Unfortunately Harvard took the title from Yale this time. A donation of £250 was raised for Save the Children. A repeat event should take place this November.

**Tastes and Tipples (Victoria Stainsby)**

Our Annual Wines tasting Event continue to prove popular with Jamison Suter leading us through a wonderful tour of Sparkling Wines in January. We started this event during the Ebola crisis in West Africa and continue to make a small contribution to the EFA (Environmental Fund for Africa) which helps to support and educate people in this part of Africa in the aftermath. For the future, we have discussed putting together a Team Challenge Tasting event as a possible addition. This would probably start out with Yalies and then we might invite other Clubs to a challenge. Please contact: Victoria to get involved.

**US/UK Alumni (Victoria Stainsby)**

US/UK Alumni is an umbrella organisation supporting all the US Alumni organisations, and a great resource for getting in touch with US alumni. They host their own events and talks as well as listing those hosted by other Alumni groups. Some universities such as Yale have large alumni organisations in the UK and are largely self sufficient, other smaller groups really benefit from joining together to host games etc. For more information, please contact: Victoria.

**Website (Jez Marston)**

Jez has taken over the production of the newsletters and management of the website from Bonaire. Please contact him if you would like to make any additions to upcoming newsletters or any edits to the website.

**YIA (Yale International Alliance (Renata Cesar, Anant Jani)**

 Awaiting report. Please contact Renata or Anant for more information.

**YaleTech (Alice Shyy)**

 Awaiting report. Please contact Alice for more information.

**YaleWomen (Karen Go, Devika Thapar)**

YaleWomen had a successful year with a panel on female entrepreneurship held in conjunction with HEC early this year and spearheaded by Devika Thapar. YaleWomen is looking for volunteers who would like to help organise the next social. Please email Karen.

**Young Alums (James Ford, Yanni Legbelos, Alice Shyy)**

There have been a variety of young alumni events this year. The ever-popular Feb Club Emeritus was accompanied with a great "Yale-oke" set up for the second year running. As in past years, Young Alumni drinks (including collaborations with other US/UK universities) have been well-attended. The annual Yale-Harvard football match brought a good crowd of enthusiastic Bulldog support, but sadly ended in penalty heartache for the third time in 5 years! After the match, there was lots of enthusiasm for a rematch in the autumn perhaps 7-a-side): this is one new target for the coming year. A number of Young Alumni also expressed some great ideas for new events (e.g. Escape Game, other sports, pub quiz nights): Young Alumni members are encouraged to take the initiative to put these into practice and will be well-supported by past event organisers! ). If you are interested in participating, please contact: James, Yanni or Alice.

**Possible 2016-2017 initiatives:**

- 7-a-side football Yale-Harvard rematch

- Family events

- Mentoring

- Singing group concert