

2016 The Year in Review

Friday, December 30, 2016

This year is pretty much summed up with “[same-old same-old](#)”. But in the interest of continuity and keeping with the pattern of previous yearly reviews I’ll write something down.

We’ve entered our eighth year in Switzerland. We’re getting pretty comfortable now, which can be considered either a good or a bad sign. It’s good because we spend less time in the WTF? state, but it’s bad when one starts to take things for granted – like I go to another country now and expect the buses to run on time. Although we think about it a lot, we still have no plans to return to Canada. We’ve done the majority of the twelve years (plus time served) needed to become a Swiss citizen – but there’s still that nasty business with the language requirements. Jacqueline says she wants to learn French now – since she knows German.

Our company, 9code GmbH, is doing well. We are concentrating solely now in the area of cluster computing in the electrical power industry. There are a number of profound transformations (no pun intended) happening in electrical networks around the world, for example inexpensive photo-voltaic installations (< 0.5€ per peak Watt) and [energy storage products](#), and our company hopes to respond to a demand for the intelligent analysis and control needed to handle these changes.

For continuing education this year it’s been two MOOC courses on [Scala](#) and one on [cryptography](#), and attending the CIM Users Group conference in Amsterdam and Foss4g in Bonn.

We are still traveling around Switzerland using the General Abonnement – on average every second weekend – with our favorite excursions being autumn visits to one of the many wine regions nearby. We meet up for lunch with Sam or Alex occasionally, in Lausanne or Zürich respectively.

We went to Valencia for a vacation, and Derrick went to Edinburgh to meet up with some Ottawa buddies and drink some single malts – not a vacation. In the new year we plan to go to Portugal, which has been on our bucket list for several years.

This year I’ll be turning sixty, so I can officially be a grumpy old man, although to be truthful, that excuse is wearing a little thin after so many years. There will definitely be a big party somewhere somewhen – everyone is invited.

I didn’t finish my *More Stainless Steel Rat* short story, but I did spend considerable time on it and have enjoyed the effort. At the moment it’s a 6000 word ePub that just lacks an ending. I guess the takeaway from that is to have the ending in mind before you start writing.

Looking at my new year’s resolutions list from last year, I obviously fell off a truck, hitting not one of the four goals. So here’s a new list...

- always be taking some MOOC course as Fortbildung
- eliminate desserts, second helpings and breakfasts where possible
- make a list of fifty old friends you’ve reconnected with in 2017
- make a list of fifty new friends you’ve made in 2017