

**Symposium: The Evolution of Data Needs for Policy/Research in Ireland**  
**[Marking the Donation of Roy Geary's Papers to the UCD Geary Institute]**

**Family Remarks on Roy Geary**

Jill Dooney

*[Granddaughter of Roy Geary]*

(read before the Society, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026)

Thank you for asking me to say a few words about Dr Geary, our much loved grandfather. My name is Jill Dooney. With me today are Emma Dooney, my sister; Kevin Dooney, my nephew (my brother Roy's son - Roy is on holiday and is sorry to miss this event); and, Sean McGovern, Emma's son and my nephew.

Our mother is Clodagh Dooney. She was brought up in Leeson Park, along with her older brother Colm. In my childhood, from 1965 we lived in Ticknock – very close to the Three Rock Forest. Our grandparents came to visit every Sunday; in the early years from Leeson Park and in the 1970s from the apartment that they moved to near Baggot Street by the canal.

I have a few anecdotes to tell to try to convey my grandfather's personality; we called him Goggi, so excuse me if I revert to that! As I said, our grandparents visited every Sunday. Goggi would collect up all his small change during the week so he could drive us crazy with “scrabble”, a game he had invented for us. (At this stage Roy and I would have been about 8 and 9 and Laura, our other sister, about 3). He threw the money and we would wildly scrabble around to gather as much of the money as we could. Once he had created total chaos, Mum or Dad had to calm us down and stop us squabbling. Goggi then reverted to his cryptic crosswords, and when a great thought came to him, he would write out mathematical formulae around the border of the newspaper.

Another story relates to Christmas dinner, when Roy and I were about 15 and 16. Mum would buy a solitary bottle of red wine for Goggi to enjoy. (My parents didn't drink). Roy and I asked for a glass and at the end of the meal, Goggi said to Mum “Clodagh, I think you should get two bottles next year”.

And finally, when I was living in rooms at Trinity, I used to go to my grandfather's every Wednesday evening to cook dinner and eat with him. (It was his housekeeper's day off). This meant that, when I left college and went to Liverpool to take up a graduate engineer post in a factory making telephone exchanges, we kept up a lively correspondence of old-fashioned letters. (I found these when I was preparing the documents for your archive, and I have a copy here). I have a few extracts from a letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> February 1982. (See on next page.) So, thank you for taking his personal papers into the UCD archive and for hosting this event in his honour.

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[Letter from Roy Geary to Jill [Dooney], 27 February 1982]

[Front Page Below]

Telephone : 761436

No. 12 Court Flats,  
Wilton Place,  
Dublin 2.

Hi, my dear, 27 February 1982

Very many thanks for  
your so interesting letter, I  
am delighted that you are  
finding your work interesting.

That's the great thing: far  
more important than pay—  
provided you can live on that.

And the night life good too.  
I was very glad to hear that  
the parents are visiting you.

I am glad your relation  
with the computer are friendly.  
It is certainly a great advance  
that the computer is learning  
to debug itself. I have never  
heard of a new programme

[Reverse Page Below]

that didn't founder first go  
through.

I am very well—touching  
wood! A few new jobs in  
hand, including a paper  
in the Stat. Soc. on 11 March.  
The only time I ever feel  
tired or out-of-sorts is  
when I haven't enough work.

I look forward to seeing  
you at the beginning of Apr.

Much love from

Goggi