



Born in 1945, Gérard Gary grew up in Périgueux, France, and graduated from the École polytechnique (1966) before defending his doctoral thesis at the École nationale des ponts et chaussées (1969). In 1973, he became CNRS research director at the Laboratoire de Mécanique des Solides (LMS), a joint research unit affiliated to the CNRS and the École Polytechnique-Institut Polytechnique de Paris. For more than 20 years, Gérard Gary has trained several generations of students in the science of experimental mechanics.

Throughout his career at the LMS, Gérard developed his expertise in the design of dynamic experiments, in particular with Hopkinson bars (SHPB), and in the interpretation of measurements using simple and robust mathematical models based on the analysis of wave propagation. Gérard was known for his brilliant analysis of the sources of uncertainty likely to affect the fidelity of SHPB experiments.

He designed and improved several sets of Hopkinson bars for studying the behaviour of materials when deformed at high speed, in compression or in tension. He has also been involved in a number of industrial partnerships on the dynamic response of structures under compression, and has worked on a wide range of materials (metals, wood, composites, concrete, cork, metallic glass, rocks, foams).

Less than a month after receiving the John Rinehart Award in Zurich, Gérard died in Saint-Chéron, France, on 9 October 2024.