



A world-class storyteller and natural teacher, Wright was a frequent speaker at hundreds of boat shows and fishing seminars (above).

both the giant black marlin of the Great Barrier Reef and giant bluefin tuna in Bimini, and to many of his peers. Wright was always willing to find a spare bunk for me so that I could observe, photograph and document his preferred fisheries.

We became close, and many years later at a boat show, in a late-night moment that might have involved more than a little rum, I asked him a question that uncharacteristically caught him off guard: “What are you planning to do when you get too old to fish?” The seemingly ageless Peter Pan of big-game fishing was flummoxed by the concept but replied, “Like what?”

Knowing he was a world-class storyteller, I suggested writing, teaching, and appearances at fishing, boating, and outdoor shows. He initially proclaimed disinterest but soon took me up on an invitation to join me at an outdoor expo I was working in California, where he seemed to have an “aha!” moment. Soon after, Wright had pretty much replaced me on the pages of *Marlin*, and he became active on the show circuit, sharing his skills, expertise and stories with hundreds of thousands of fishermen.

Wright’s contributions to our industry are extensive, but perhaps his greatest legacy is manifested in the many mates and budding skippers he mentored into world-class captains—such as Laurie Wright, Kevin Nakamaru and Jason Holtz, among many others—skippers who build on his legacy wherever they fish.

It would take a book to share enough stories to provide a full measure of the man, but as I think of Wright

today, I recall being awestruck by his flawless delivery of “The Man from Snowy River,” Banjo Paterson’s epic poem about hard Australian stockmen and the horses they race:

And where around The Overflow the reed beds  
sweep and sway  
To the breezes, and the rolling plains are wide,  
The man from Snowy River is a household word  
today,  
And the stockmen tell the story of his ride.

And so it is, in the wake of his untimely passing, that we fishermen share stories of his long and memorable ride.

#### THE LEGACY WE LEAVE

Capt. Bark Garnsey has spent a lifetime with Wright, starting their fishing careers on the opposite sides of Hillsboro Inlet Bridge. “In those days, the bridge was opened and closed by hand,” Garnsey says. “Pete was on the inside, working for Capt. John Whitmer at the tender age of 13 or 14. I was on the outside, working for my father on the *Helen S* drift boats, and was about three years younger than he was.

“When he started writing for the various magazines, he never failed to entertain his readers and quite often managed to irritate them at the same time,” Garnsey continues. “Peter was never shy about engaging in a good argument if you didn’t share the same point of view. On more than one occasion, if you didn’t disagree with Peter, he would be happy to take up the other side just to have something to argue about! As all fishermen know, there is a fair amount of spare time when fishing, but rest-assured, that was never the case when Peter was on board.

“Peter would often join me and my crew and Stewart Campbell on our trips, often to write a magazine article, but mostly he just loved to fish, and we loved having him along. Stewart and Peter would always find something to bet on and argue about.

“Charles Perry asked me recently about the places that Peter fished with us. The most memorable were our times in Madeira, the Canary Islands, Cape Verde and the Ivory Coast. I had the privilege of fishing with Peter in Australia. I don’t have the time to list all the things I learned from Peter Wright through the years, and even if I did, I probably wouldn’t share them anyway. He was a great fisherman and boatman, but most importantly, he was one of the best friends I’ve ever had. He will be missed.”

The influence Wright has had on the sport-fishing industry is irreplaceable and nearly impossible to measure. We’re all in a good place having been brought along by him—of that there is no doubt.

The last few years were cruel to such a kind and thoughtful man. That most horrible of diseases, Alzheimer’s, wreaked havoc on him, ever so slowly eroding the brilliance, quick wit, wry humor, and scientific analytics that made him so valuable to so many. During our visits, it was hard to witness, but he fought it with the dogged diligence that served his career so well. With his

RICHARD GIBSON (4), PETER JENYNS(OPPOSITE)



loving wife, Erin, by his side, providing a care unrivaled in any institution, they turned to science for an experimental treatment that proved effective for a time.

For me personally, Wright was the most cerebral fisherman I had ever been around. I often commented that I learned more through osmosis, just hanging around him and listening. He introduced me to some of the best deckhands I’ve had the honor to work for and with me over the years, who have become great friends as well. He was a hardworking business partner in our various enterprises, and the finest kind of friend you could have.

We had so many adventures together working on projects, fishing, consulting, traveling, shooting, and doing trade and countless boat shows together. There were many layers to Wright. While tied up next to the mothership one evening, sitting at the dinette table of his boat, *Duyfken*, I remember looking around at everyone’s faces absolutely amused listening to him recite Rudyard Kipling word for word, which is no easy task. He was holding court, and he loved an audience.

It’s been a typhoon of memories flooding back putting all this together. As so many of us from around the world have connected to talk about Wright, the laughs and smiles have been abundant. As I said to one of our shared deckhands, Nigel “Basher” Semaine, when the urge strikes to have a rum at the end of the day, I can’t help but to hear Wright’s trademark laugh as he’s squeezing the lime and offering a hearty, “Cheers, mate!”

Here’s to you, Peter—thanks for everything. 🍸

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Capt. Karl Anderson’s work has appeared in the pages of *Marlin* for more than 20 years. He continues to captain the 42-foot Merritt Picaflor and the 56-foot Viking Clamaholic. Along with consulting for various companies in the marine industry, he enjoys sharing his wealth of knowledge with boat buyers, finding them the right vessel for their needs through the Merritt’s Boat & Engine Works brokerage in Pompano Beach, Florida.

Wright’s weapon of choice was *Duyfken*, a 40-foot Woodnutt. Built using a composite core, the boat was light, simple and easy to maintain, while also being highly maneuverable.