At our recent *Footprints in the Sand Camp* for bereaved families, this puppet show was created by the children and young people who attended. This extraordinary team of young people worked together over the Saturday and created and presented a puppet show with puppets they conceived and made. With very little direction from Bear Cottage staff they recreated the “Magic of Bear Cottage”. It was a testament to their strength, resilience, care and love for their family and siblings and a willingness to work together. It was amazing. We were blown away! A special thank you to each of you.

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**Magic of Bear Cottage**

Sometimes life can take us on a very windy and uncertain road.

It can be difficult and painful and feel very lonely and we have no idea where we are going or who can help us.

It can also feel as though there are too many options but none seem quite right.

We need a compass to guide us.

That is when you discover there is in fact One Enchanted Place in the Kingdom – they call it Bear Cottage.

Which makes it sound tiny but when you get there it is in fact like a Magic Palace which expands, to hold all sorts of wonderful experiences and memories.

Most people only ever get to look in through the window but for some Precious Ones they are given the Key.

They get to the front gate. Open the lock. And step inside.

We’d like you to come with us as we share with you some of our precious stories of being at Bear Cottage with those we love.


One day, the unthinkable happened. The magic of Bear Cottage began to fade. Without the magic to guide people to Bear Cottage, the Cottage was soon lost.

No-one could find it. Where had the magic gone?

It had been sealed away, behind a huge gated fence around Bear Cottage.

The Cottage had been sealed away by the evil Baine.

Baine had often looked through the window into Bear Cottage but he had never been inside.

He was jealous of the magic inside.

The massive gate had only one key.

Baine hid the key inside where no-one could reach it.

No-one could share the magic of Bear Cottage.

Everyone was very sad. No-one could find the Cottage sealed away behind the fence and gate.

One day, Millie and Frankie, two clever dogs, were digging in the grass. They found a magic compass which they brought to their family Olivia, Emma, and Baby Alice. Millie the dog was a great digger.

They followed the compass all day, until they reached the huge gates.

They peered through and saw Baine inside.

They asked Baine “Why did you lock up Bear Cottage?” but Baine didn’t answer, he just climbed into his monster car and drove away.

With the gates sealed shut it seemed no-one would ever share in the magic of Bear Cottage again. The magic was trapped inside forever.

But the magic of the Cottage could do amazing things in the hands of amazing people.

Two magic balloons named “Patrick” and “Chaise” floated by. They saw the tall, dark fence, but balloons aren’t scared of gates.

The two balloons floated right over the fence with no trouble. They were inside. They floated into Baine’s room and stole the magic key.

Patrick and Chaise had to co-operate to be able to lift the key. They carried it to their friend “Chef” inside the Cottage.

Chef gave the key to “Phil” the nurse. “Phil” is super smart, and she knew just what to do.

“Phil” gave the key to Frankie the dog. Frankie the dog dug under the fence and gave the key to “Sue” the social worker.

When Sue saw the key she was so happy.
She opened the gates and all the magic came flooding out again for everyone to share and enjoy Bear Cottage.

Baine was furious. Sue asked Baine “why did you lock the Cottage away?”

Baine couldn’t refuse to answer Sue. He saw the kindness in her face.

Baine began to cry, “I was jealous, I was angry”.

Baine explained he had lost people he loved as well. He never went to the Cottage.

He was jealous of the magic at Bear Cottage.

Why didn’t he ever go to the Cottage? He never shared his feelings and never felt better.

Baine didn’t want to ever lose anything beautiful, or wonderful, or magic ever again.

Why couldn’t the magic fix everything?

But Sue explained:

“When our loved ones leave Bear Cottage they get to travel up into the sky, on balloons, with the birds and butterflies.”

People think that is the end but we know different.

It is all a matter of your perspective.

When we open our eyes we don’t see the empty space where they once were, we see them floating free and happy, still alive in our memories and dreams.

Bear Cottage people come and go, but never truly leave us. They will never be gone because we will never stop loving them.

The play ends with a big party with lots of music.

THE END

Cast & Crew

Puppets

- Frankie the dog
- Schnitzel van Krumme – companion
- Jefferson – shy / sad
- Baine – villain / complication
- Chef
- Millie the dog
- “Key”
- Padlock
- Patrick and Chaise – the Balloons
- Baby Alice
- Olivia
- Emma
- Richard
- Sue – the kind and wise social worker. Glasses.
- Philly – the super smart nurse who knew exactly what to do
- Corey and his Sausage Dog and car puppets

Performers

Ellie Eli Kalani
Tim Ollie Chloe
Jodie Jake Cory
Jordan Olivia Julia
Tiarne Makala Jessica
Emma Layton Nick

Part of Footprints in the Sand
Bear Cottage’s Bereavement Service