



MOM

The keepsake collection

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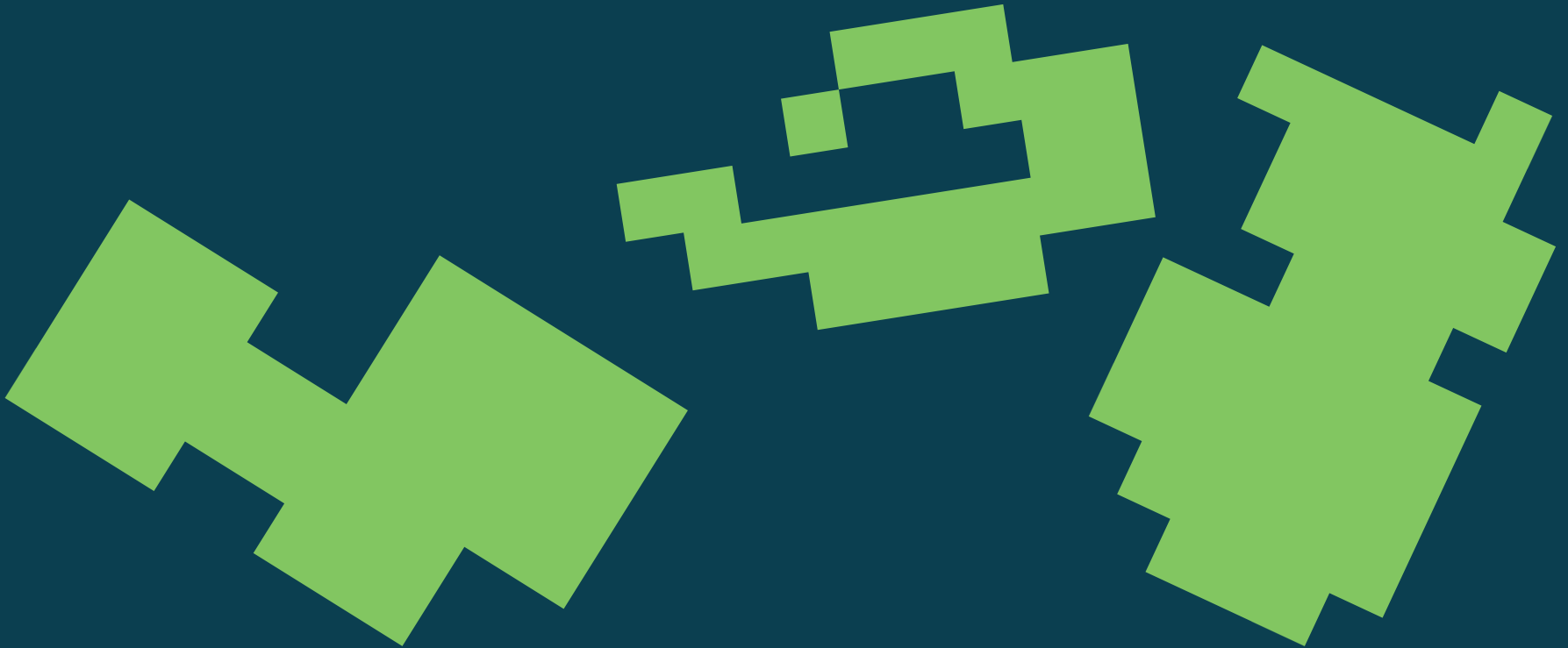
Murmur, the brand

Murmur is a brand about keepsakes and stories; but it's much more than that. Murmur builds human connection through shared emotions and experiences.

Now more than ever, the world feels divided. Everyone is expected to be unique, to stand out, and to be better than everyone else. Social media feeds this mentality, but so does society in general.

Murmur is a brand that pushes back against division. It brings people together. A user visits Murmur's site, reads a few stories, relates to some, and feels more empathy toward others. The end goal for Murmur is to help users gain empathy.

The word murmur, according to the dictionary, means "a low, continuous sound, as of a brook, the wind, or trees, or of low, indistinct voices." This name aligns with our brand message because our goal is to uncover the quiet stories hidden in everyday objects. A person cannot truly listen unless they are quiet. One has to actively want to pay attention to hear a murmur.





Jordan

Age: 23

Occupation: Graduate student
in media studies

Location: Chicago, IL

Personality:

Curious, reflective, emotionally intense

Habits:

Scrolls Tumblr and TikTok late at night, collects mementos like ticket stubs and dried flowers, keeps a Notes app full of dreams and overheard conversations

Pain Points:

Feels overstimulated by social media, misses the feeling of "depth" in digital life, overwhelmed by the pace of news and self-improvement culture

Wants for Murmur:

Needs a quiet digital space to sit with memory and emotion—sort of like journaling with visuals.

Goals:

Wants to slow down and reflect, understand patterns in their own emotions, and explore the poetry in ordinary things.



Renee

Age: 40

Occupation: Middle school art teacher

Location: Minneapolis, MN

Personality:

Warm, intentional, a little nostalgic

Habits:

Morning coffee with a physical journal, limited screen time, has boxes of keepsakes in her closet she's "meaning to go through"

Pain Points:

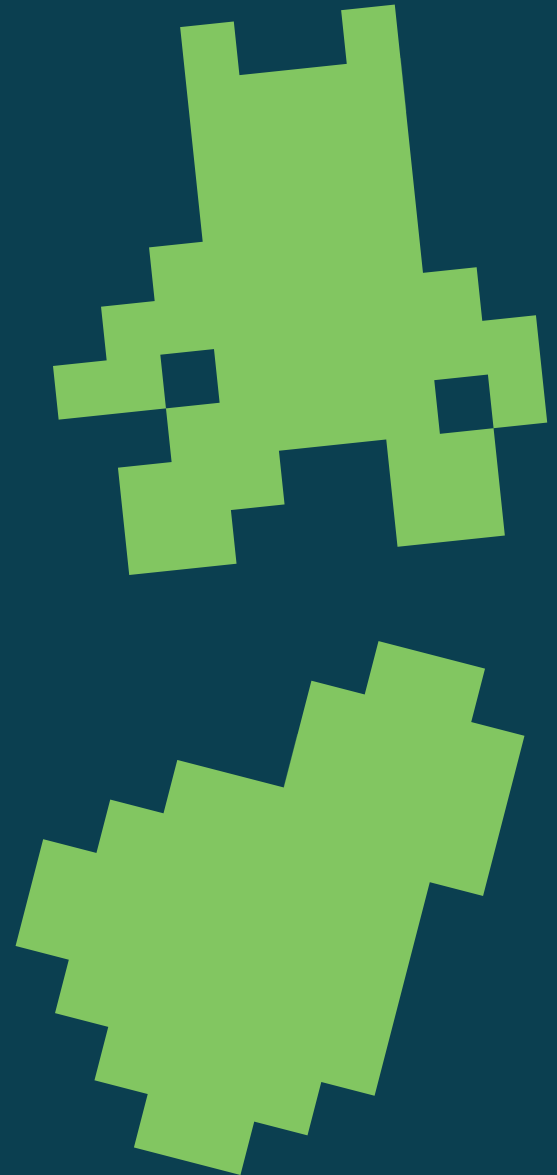
Feels guilty about hoarding, doesn't know what to keep or let go of, worries about losing meaningful family stories as older relatives pass away

Needs for Murmur:

Renee wants to document objects that hold memory before decluttering. she wants a memory box she can revisit or share with her kids.

Goals:

Preserve emotional value without physical clutter, share meaningful stories across generations, stay mindful about consumption.



Initial Ideas and Brainstorming

At the beginning of my research, Murmur was focused on targeting hyper-consumerism, posing the question: Why buy more when you already have these precious keepsakes in your possession? A quote from my early impact letter states, "Reduce waste and build relationships by providing a digital space for people to post their keepsakes instead of hoarding them." The idea was that the site would help users let go of the junk they were holding onto and discourage further unnecessary consumption.

In my original design challenge framing, I wrote: "change how we interact online, challenge hoarding lifestyles, and find new ways to keep memories alive." At that point, I was already thinking about empathy and creating new ways for people to connect online, but the Murmur brand itself was still taking shape.

Two early goals were: "From people struggling to connect online to finding community through storytelling. And from friends unable to share stories to open access to keepsakes online" While these goals were achieved, they eventually became secondary. The primary goal evolved into cultivating empathy.

Overall, my brainstorming process led me to develop the brand in new and unexpected ways. Those early thoughts pushed me toward new ideas and changes. Alongside the conceptual development, exploring the visual design also helped shape my understanding of the brand. Over the past few months, Murmur has changed a lot but, I'm very happy with where it landed, both as a brand and as a project.

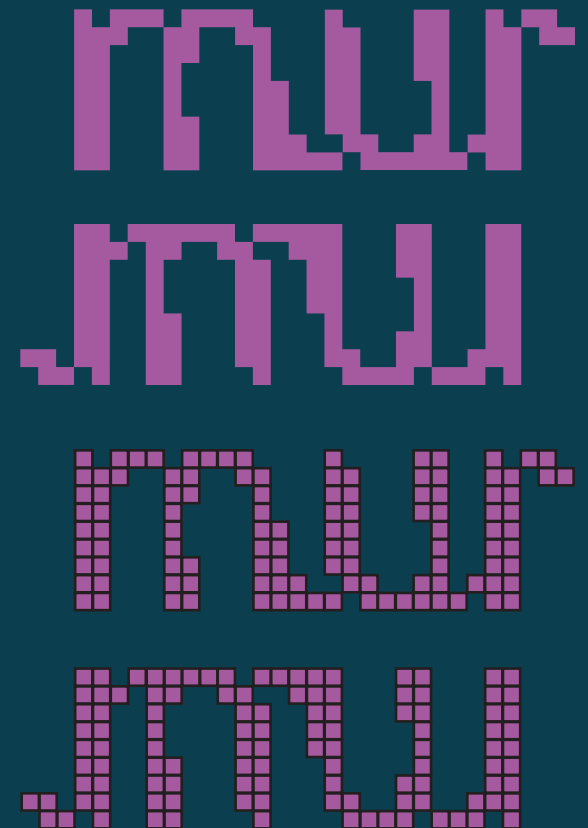
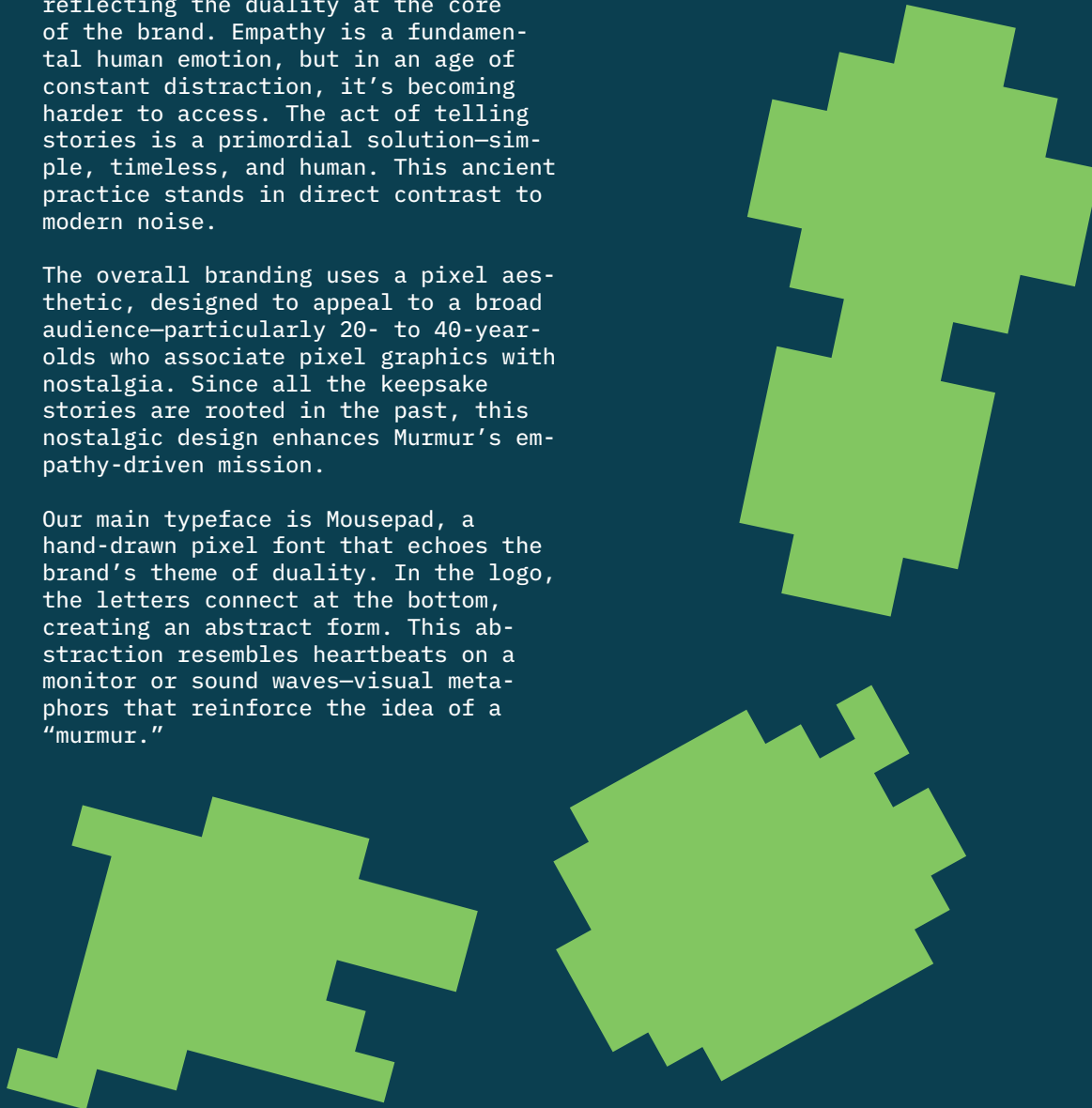


Murmur Logo

The logo displays the word Murmur split in half and flipped upside down, reflecting the duality at the core of the brand. Empathy is a fundamental human emotion, but in an age of constant distraction, it's becoming harder to access. The act of telling stories is a primordial solution—simple, timeless, and human. This ancient practice stands in direct contrast to modern noise.

The overall branding uses a pixel aesthetic, designed to appeal to a broad audience—particularly 20- to 40-year-olds who associate pixel graphics with nostalgia. Since all the keepsake stories are rooted in the past, this nostalgic design enhances Murmur's empathy-driven mission.

Our main typeface is Mousepad, a hand-drawn pixel font that echoes the brand's theme of duality. In the logo, the letters connect at the bottom, creating an abstract form. This abstraction resembles heartbeats on a monitor or sound waves—visual metaphors that reinforce the idea of a "murmur."



Our fonts

MousePad, our primary typeface, is a handwritten pixel font exclusive to Murmur and central to its visual identity. IBM Plex is our secondary font. It complements the pixel aesthetic of MousePad while offering greater readability for longer texts. Together, both fonts support the brand's nostalgic, pixel-inspired tone.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz

The quick brown
fox jumped over
the lazy dog

MousePad

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz

The quick brown
fox jumped over
the lazy dog

IBM Plex Mono (Text)



Our colors

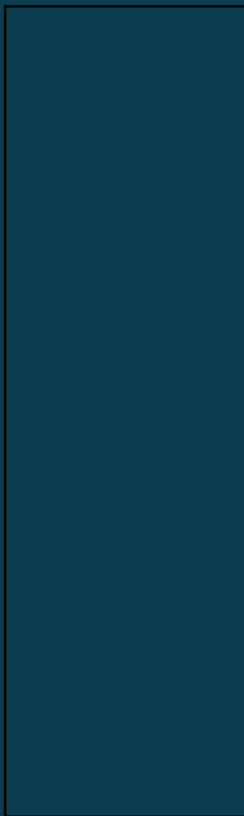
Here are our colors. The pink and green are our primary colors that we use in the branding. Alongside those 2 is a darker green that is used exclusively as a background color. The 2 blues are our secondary colors, used for callout areas. We use the secondary blues more on our website in the header and footer area mainly.



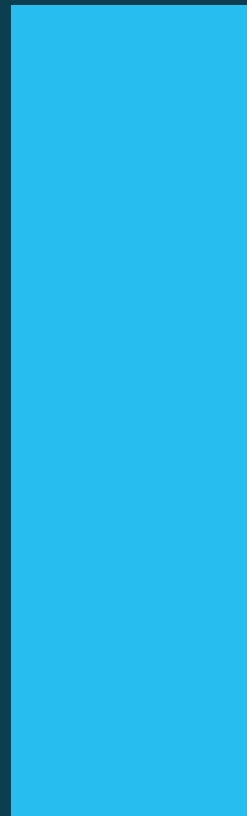
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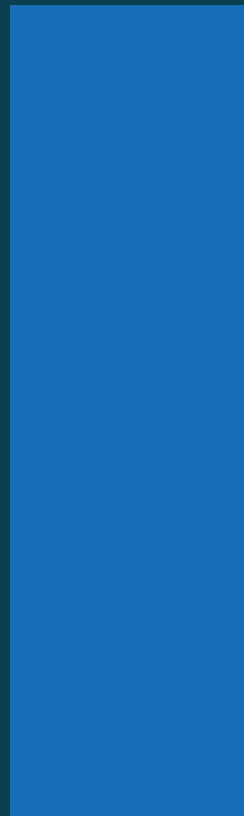
#024051



#84c661



#1e6eb7



#1bbcef



Early Logos

Here are some early logo iterations. I explored different fonts and approaches to representing the word Murmur. I arrived at the flipped concept fairly early on, but finding the right typeface took more time and experimentation. In the end, I created MousePad myself to have full control over the pixel letterforms and ensure the type aligned perfectly with the brand's tone and aesthetic.



Orgional Moodboard

This is my first moodboard. It changed over time, the original direction leaned more heavily into the technology aspect. Early on, I was exploring a computer vision aesthetic—something more digital and analytical, almost intentionally disconnecting the story from the image through the visual style. As the project developed, I shifted the focus toward nostalgia, softening the tone and aligning the aesthetic more closely with emotion and memory.

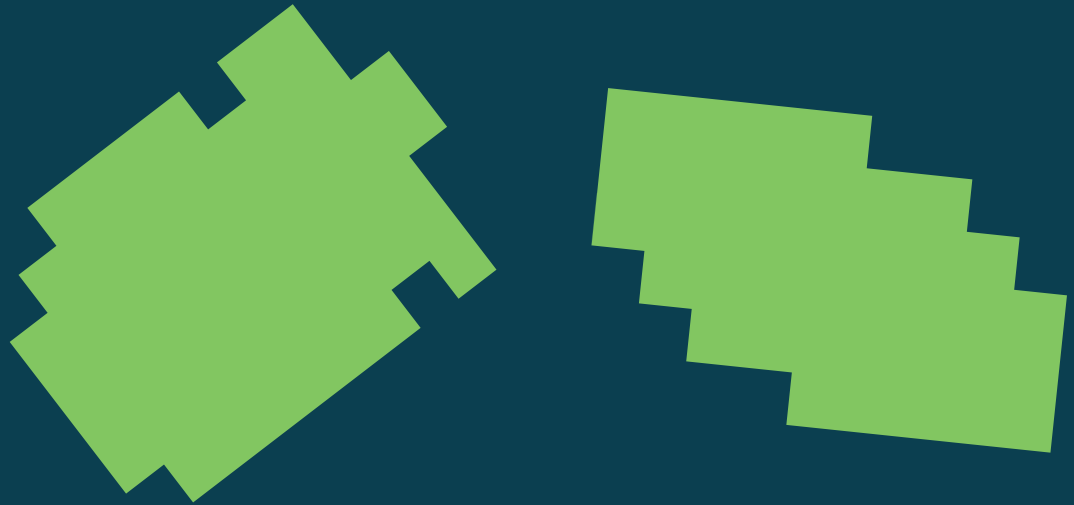


Jali Latin
Necto Mono

The Keepsake Collection

Murmur's tagline is "The Keepsake Collection." It reinforces the brand's goal of telling stories through personal objects, helping users immediately understand what Murmur is about. Because the name Murmur is abstract, the tagline provides balance by being more direct and descriptive.

The word keepsake highlights the emotional value of everyday items and the memories attached to them. Collection signals that users are part of a larger shared experience—contributing their stories alongside others to create something collective and meaningful. Overall, the tagline introduces Murmur's core ideas in a clear and approachable way.



MURMUR

The keepsake collection

The Ecosystem

Beyond the website murmur also does prints. Murmur's print section is a place for memorys you can hold. We create posters that spotlight your personal keepsakes, full of meaning, often quiet but deeply felt. Every two months, we also release a zine that gathers our favorite submissions, each issue shaped by a theme.

Our first, The Animal Issue, celebrates the creatures we've loved and lost, from worn-out toys to whiskered companions. The second, The Family Issue, turns to the people who've shaped us, told through heirlooms, habits, and the objects that linger long after a moment has passed.

These prints are deeply personal. Alongside the zines, Murmur also offers personalized posters. Each begins as a folded zine showcasing your story; when unfolded, it reveals the keepsake at the heart of it.

The visual treatment of Murmur's keepsakes is a careful process. First, the backgrounds of the images are removed. Then, each image is placed within a 10x10 box to create a simplified, pixel-based shape. Finally, a grainy filter is applied—evoking the texture of old TV static and enhancing the nostalgic feel.

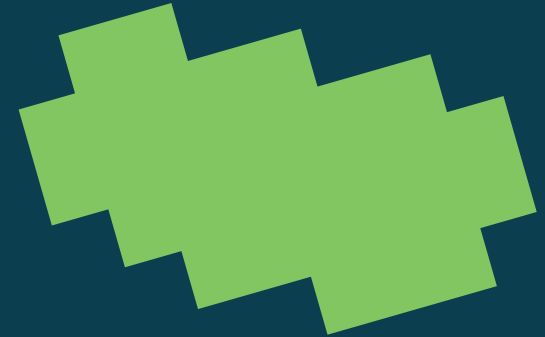
These pixel shapes are central to Murmur's visual identity. They serve as backdrops for keepsakes on the website and in the zines. Beyond that, they're a key element in Murmur's broader branding—appearing as patterns that bring an organized chaos to the visual language. Sometimes they appear in a tight grid, as in the zine layouts; other times, they float more freely, as seen on zine covers.



The Ecosystem

Here are some of the final spreads for the magazines. The type is merged with the images, emphasizing that both the story and the keepsake are equally important. The keepsakes help us remember the stories, and the stories give meaning to the objects.

Murmur is a disruptor brand—our mission is to bring empathy into a world that often prioritizes competition and consumption. This message is contradictory to typical consumer narratives. The layouts of these magazines reflect this disruptive ideology.



9.

Birthstone Pin

Our paternal grandmother, Mrs. Margaret Godar, received this grandmother's birthstone pin for Mother's Day one year. The pin is shaped as the tree of life and has on it the birthstones of herself (October), as well as the birthstones of her three sons (1 February and 2 March), and her seven grandchildren: 1 March, 1 April, 1 July, 1 August, and 3 November.



I recall how much this pin meant to Grandma. She wore it only for special occasions, yet took it out frequently to gaze on it with love. As her oldest grandchild, I am honored to have it as a keepsake.

This story is about something very special to me that I managed to get from my Grandma Godar. Her name was Margaret A. Godar (née Banghart) who was born on October 30th, 1896, and died on July 21st, 1976. She was 79 years old when she died. She was my dad's, Russell Godar's, mother. Her husband Raymond Godar Sr. died on September 17th, 1942. Grandma Godar was a widow for many years as her husband died with cancer. They lived on Rocky Hill in Hardin, Illinois all their lives. My dad Russell bought a farm ½ mile away around the corner from them. So, when we were growing up - we walked over to Grandma's house probably almost every day. She lived with my Uncle Raymond (Uncle Ramie) as he never married and took care of her.

Cash Bowl

He and my other Uncle Ralph owned Godar Brothers Bulldozing. We would go over after school and during the summer and wait anxiously for Uncle Ramie to come home from work. He would always be very dirty and greasy - but we would carry his lunchbox into the house for him. They loved us very much - but back then times were hard. Nothing like today. Grandma Godar made the best sugar cookies in the world and would make what seemed to us, tons of them at a time. We always had duties to do, rake the yard, wash windows, always busy.



My mom and dad worked - so Grandma had a system for picking us up if we were at her house. She would have a pole and put a white rag on it, so you could see it from the road. If we were there Mom and Dad could pick us up on their way home from work.

14.

Grandma had this little (what I would call) sugar bowl in her cupboard in the kitchen - if she had any extra cash, like \$1.00 or \$5.00 mostly - she would put it in that sugar bowl to save up for the very few times we would make a trip to Alton to shop. We didn't shop much at all - I had a twin sister Carolyn, and one brother Mike, and two sisters Cathy, and Linda. We wore hand-me-downs and it was few and far between to get new clothes. We would go to the old Venture store in Alton to get an occasional pair of jeans, or there was a store in Hardin, Marguerite Baker's store. When we got like in high school, us girls would go and get a pair of hip huggers, or jeans and charge it. Mom would pay the bill. The only problem was that everyone in town had the same pair!

The Ecosystem

Here are some of the personal posters. These would be made for each person, due to the individualistic nature of showcasing the single keepsake. Each poster starts folded up in a three-fold style. The folds follow the bright blue lines. This would allow the person to get a personal experience when receiving a poster. The fold allows the story to still be incorporated while still emphasizing the keepsake.

For this project, I received keepsakes from family and friends. So I added notes inside posters to thank each person for submitting their keepsake to me. This allowed me to reflect on some of my thoughts and memories while also reflecting on shared memories with the person who submitted the keepsake.



Those months that we used to embrace her granddaughters so often. Those hands that in the eyes of a little girl could take away any hurts and allow her to sleep over. When she was scared, I would hold her in my arms, tell her no call her sweetest. In an instant, her so much. Little did I realize that she was visiting me as she was lifted to heaven. Her march was left behind in a pile of unbroken broken jewelry, but the broken crown never bothered me. I wear it often despite this. I stroke the smooth band with my fingers and as I do so, I remember her and feel her unique love all over again.



Gran's Watch

Part of her love language was holding hands, my grandmother. She had a sixth sense for knowing when you needed a little extra affection. I'd spent hours sitting by her chair just holding her hand. I'd watch her hand twitch and squirm in the light, and watch her eyes. I always felt a wonder at how the stretchy metal band, so small when unworn — could stretch to seemingly any size just as the gold shined. It looked just right adorned on her capable hands. Those hands that made many pies, chilies, cookies, dumplings and holiday dinners — cooking being yet another one of her love languages.



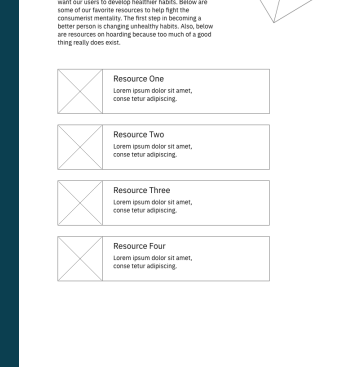
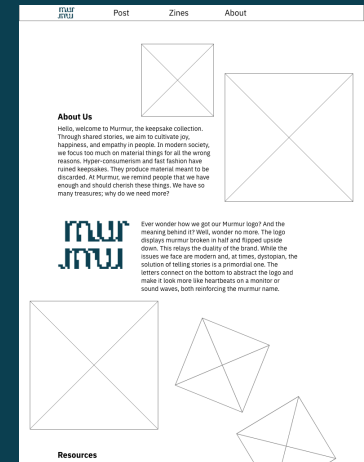
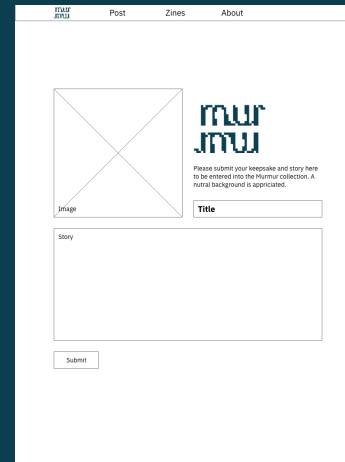
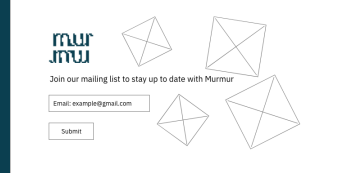
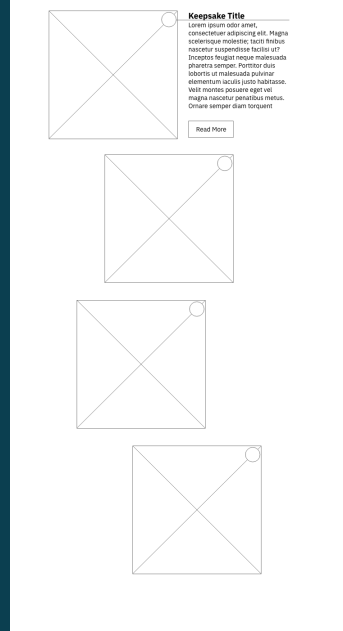
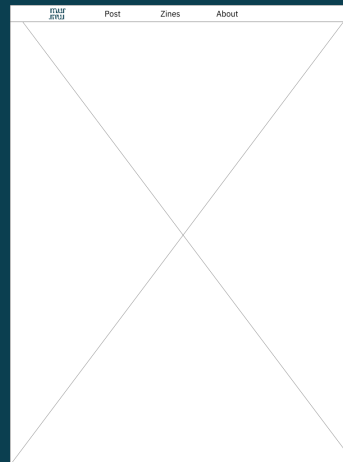
Early Posters

Below are some of my starting posters. The issue I had with them was that they focused too much on the brand and less on the brand message.



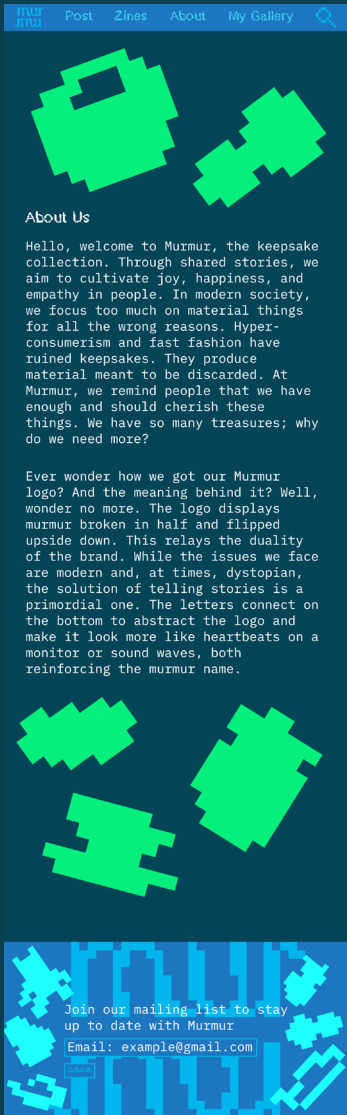
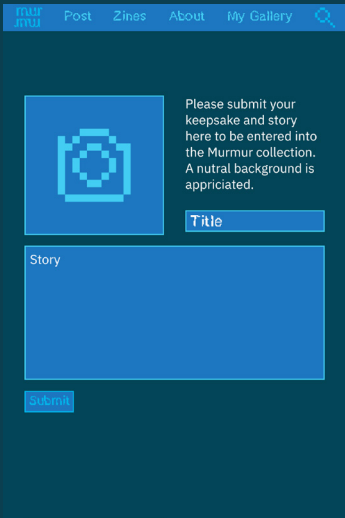
Website Mockups

These are the initial roughs of the website. It began with the homepage, shown on the left. The main idea is to display only the keepsake at first, and then reveal the story when clicked. Alongside the homepage, I planned a submission page and an about page to support the main content. The zine page was less developed at this stage, as I was waiting for the visual style of the posters to inform its design direction.



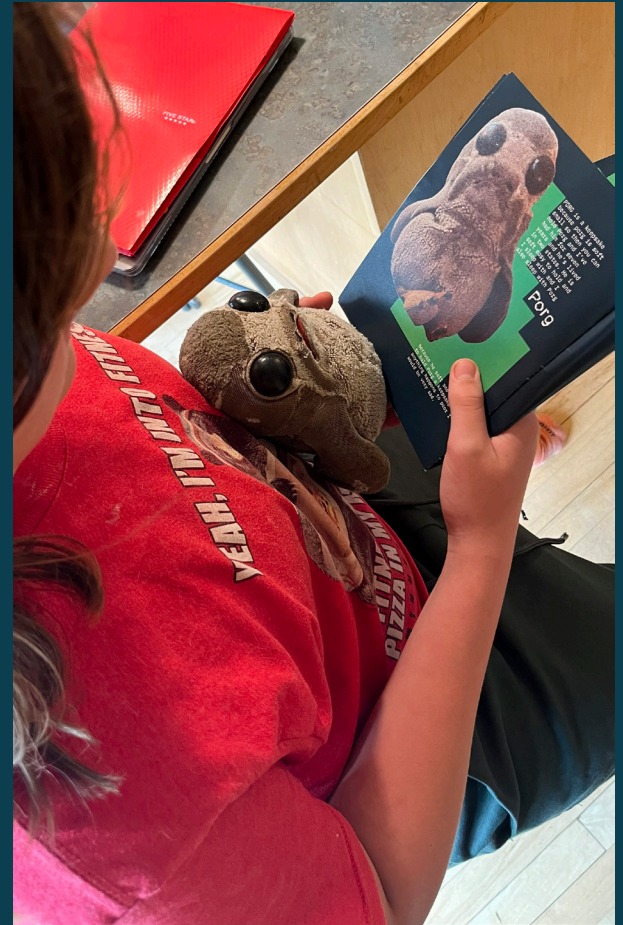
Website Visual Mockups

Here are the visual designs for the website. This is the plan I used moving into the coding phase. The lighter blues are emphasized throughout the design; this is where they really shine. The website relies heavily on this blue pairing. The pink takes a more subtle role, appearing mainly in the logo while the blues carries most of the visual weight.



Models & Mockups

These are some of the photos I took for my mockups. Instead of using Professional mockups, I vouched for taking my own photos. Each one is the person with their keepsake. These ones are viewing their keepsake on the poster and magazine.



Models & Mockups

The only photo I did not take is the mobile one, this is a professional mockup. The other one is a person viewing their keepsake chair sitting on it.

