SINGER® is celebrating their 160th anniversary and we’re getting in on the party by bringing you exclusive stories from our members and staff for MySINGERStory.com! Keep checking back for more interviews and behind the scenes scoops from some of our amazing BurdaStyle members. Up this week, ashchaser from Nashville, Tennessee.

My name is Ashley Adkins, I am 23 years old and a native of Nashville, TN. I live here with my boyfriend, Sean, on a hill by the Cumberland River, where I use my SINGER® to do all kinds of crafty things. When not stitching away in the craft room I am either studying Apparel Design, working at
Urban Outfitters, interning at Local Honey, or riding around town with my all-girl bike group the “Menstrual Cycles”.

When I first learned how to sew, it was more out of necessity to make all of my thrifted clothes fit better. At some point I progressed to making very simple dresses, then on to construction/patternmaking classes at MTSU, and even some draping. Now am trying to balance sewing for myself with making clothes to sell here in Nashville, which is slowly but surely growing it’s own little style scene. Eventually my personal goal is to make or seriously alter most of my clothing, because to me fast fashion is not the best way to go. Handmade garments look and feel much more sincere and more people are starting to realized this, which is exactly why I would love to do this for a living!
I truly find inspiration in everything around me! I love simply going outside and seeing what can be found on the street and in nature. Yet, much of my time is spent on Tumblr looking at unique architecture and furniture design which seems to spark my imagination the best. A mixture of graffiti, wood prints, asymmetry, knitting, and many other random elements can be found in my work.
When researching my SINGER® (Merritt 4538) I found out that it was made around 1990, which would make it about 20 years old. My mother bought it at a Kmart and made these adorable little leopard print outfits for my sister and I (pictured below). A few other projects were finished, but she decided sewing was not her cup of tea and stored the machine in a closet. Years later, I began my sewing quest and dusted this SINGER off for another try. This machine has gotten me through a large number of alterations, fall lines, bad mock-ups, baby clothes, birthday projects, halloween costumes, and some very rough sewing courses. Despite the tension having a mind of it’s own, my SINGER® is in great shape and I love it!
If I could design my “dream” sewing machine, it would be so smart! This thing would be voice activated, suggest stitches, techniques, automatically sew zippers, and be cordless (for sewing outside of course). It would also be dreamy to somehow have a lifetime supply of thread come with the machine, but the laws of physics might get in the way of that one… Perhaps one day this can dream can be a reality, and then I will be able to make a career out of sewing with my super smart SINGER®!

Do you have a SINGER manufactured before 1970? Head over to MySINGERSStory.com, type in your serial number and learn about your machine. Share your SINGER story on MySINGERSStory.com for the chance to win The SINGER 160™ Limited Edition Sewing Machine!

Show and tell time! We want you to share photos of your sewing inspirations, your machine, or your personal history with sewing to celebrate this important anniversary. Simply submit photos to susan@burdastyle.com with the subject line “mySINGERstory” and your shots could appear in our Gallery album!