django-simple-history Documentation

Release 2.2.0

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django-simple-history stores Django model state on every create/update/delete.

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CHAPTER 1

Documentation

1.1 Quick Start

1.1.1 Install

Install from PyPI with pip:

```
$ pip install django-simple-history
```

1.1.2 Configure

Settings

Add simple_history to your INSTALLED_APPS

```
INSTALLED_APPS = [
# ...
'simple_history',
]
```

The historical models can track who made each change. To populate the history user automatically you can add middleware to your Django settings:

```
MIDDLEWARE = [
# ...
'simple_history.middleware.HistoryRequestMiddleware',
]
```

If you do not want to use the middleware, you can explicitly indicate the user making the change as documented in *Advanced Usage*.

Models

To track history for a model, create an instance of simple_history.models.HistoricalRecords on the model.

An example for tracking changes on the Poll and Choice models in the Django tutorial:

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    history = HistoricalRecords()

class Choice(models.Model):
    poll = models.ForeignKey(Poll)
    choice_text = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    votes = models.IntegerField(default=0)
    history = HistoricalRecords()
```

Now all changes to Poll and Choice model instances will be tracked in the database.

Run Migrations

With your model changes in place, create and apply the database migrations:

```
$ python manage.py makemigrations
$ python manage.py migrate
```

Existing Projects

For existing projects, you can call the populate command to generate an initial change for preexisting model instances:

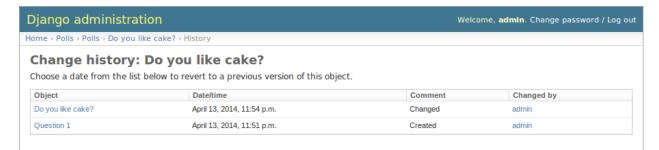
```
$ python manage.py populate_history --auto
```

By default, history rows are inserted in batches of 200. This can be changed if needed for large tables by using the --batchsize option, for example --batchsize 500.

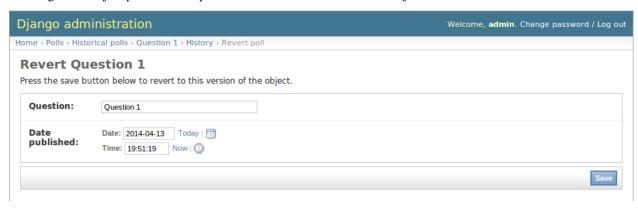
1.1.3 Integration with Django Admin

To allow viewing previous model versions on the Django admin site, inherit from the simple_history.admin. SimpleHistoryAdmin class when registering your model with the admin site.

This will replace the history object page on the admin site and allow viewing and reverting to previous model versions. Changes made in admin change forms will also accurately note the user who made the change.



Clicking on an object presents the option to revert to that version of the object.



(The object is reverted to the selected state)



Reversions like this are added to the history.



An example of admin integration for the Poll and Choice models:

```
from django.contrib import admin
from simple_history.admin import SimpleHistoryAdmin

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```

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```
from .models import Poll, Choice
admin.site.register(Poll, SimpleHistoryAdmin)
admin.site.register(Choice, SimpleHistoryAdmin)
```

Changing a history-tracked model from the admin interface will automatically record the user who made the change (see *Advanced Usage*).

Displaying custom columns in the admin history list view

By default, the history log displays one line per change containing

- a link to the detail of the object at that point in time
- the date and time the object was changed
- a comment corresponding to the change
- the author of the change

You can add other columns (for example the object's status to see how it evolved) by adding a history_list_display array of fields to the admin class



Change history: Poll 1

Choose a date from the list below to revert to a previous version of this object.



1.1.4 Customizations

UUID as history_id

The HistoricalRecords object can be customized to use an UUIDField instead of the default IntegerField as the object history_id either through Django settings or via the constructor on the model.

```
SIMPLE_HISTORY_HISTORY_ID_USE_UUID = True
```

or

```
class UUIDExample(models.Model):
   id = models.UUIDField(primary_key=True, default=uuid.uuid4, editable=False)
   history = HistoricalRecords(
       history_id_field=models.UUIDField(default=uuid.uuid4)
   )
```

TextField as history_change_reason

The HistoricalRecords object can be customized to accept a TextField model field for saving the *history_change_reason* either through settings or via the constructor on the model. The common use case for this is for supporting larger model change histories to support changelog-like features.

```
SIMPLE_HISTORY_HISTORY_CHANGE_REASON_USE_TEXT_FIELD=True
```

or

```
class TextFieldExample(models.Model):
    greeting = models.CharField(max_length=100)
    history = HistoricalRecords(
        history_change_reason_field=models.TextField(null=True)
    )
```

1.1.5 Querying history

Querying history on a model instance

The Historical Records object on a model instance can be used in the same way as a model manager:

```
>>> from polls.models import Poll, Choice
>>> from datetime import datetime
>>> poll = Poll.objects.create(question="what's up?", pub_date=datetime.now())
>>>
>>> poll.history.all()
[<HistoricalPoll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:03:29.855689>]
```

Whenever a model instance is saved a new historical record is created:

```
>>> poll.pub_date = datetime(2007, 4, 1, 0, 0)
>>> poll.save()
>>> poll.history.all()
[<HistoricalPoll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:04:13.814128>, <HistoricalPoll:_

->Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:03:29.855689>]
```

Querying history on a model class

Historical records for all instances of a model can be queried by using the HistoricalRecords manager on the model class. For example historical records for all Choice instances can be queried by using the manager on the Choice model class:

```
>>> choice1 = poll.choice_set.create(choice_text='Not Much', votes=0)
>>> choice2 = poll.choice_set.create(choice_text='The sky', votes=0)
>>>
```

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```
>>> Choice.history
<simple_history.manager.HistoryManager object at 0x1cc4290>
>>> Choice.history.all()
[<HistoricalChoice: Choice object as of 2010-10-25 18:05:12.183340>,

-><HistoricalChoice: Choice object as of 2010-10-25 18:04:59.047351>]
```

Because the history is model, you can also filter it like regularly QuerySets, a.k. Choice.history.filter(choice_text='Not Much') will work!

Getting previous and next historical record

If you have a historical record for an instance and would like to retrieve the previous historical record (older) or next historical record (newer), *prev_record* and *next_record* read-only attributes can be used, respectively.

```
>>> from polls.models import Poll, Choice
>>> from datetime import datetime
>>> poll = Poll.objects.create(question="what's up?", pub_date=datetime.now())
>>>
>>> record = poll.history.first()
>>> record.prev_record
None
>>> record.next_record
None
>>> poll.question = "what is up?"
>>> poll.save()
>>> record.next_record

<p
```

If a historical record is the first record, *prev_record* will be *None*. Similarly, if it is the latest record, *next_record* will be *None*

Reverting the Model

SimpleHistoryAdmin allows users to revert back to an old version of the model through the admin interface. You can also do this programmatically. To do so, you can take any historical object, and save the associated instance. For example, if we want to access the earliest HistoricalPoll, for an instance of Poll, we can do:

```
>>> poll.history.earliest()
<HistoricalPoll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:04:13.814128>
```

And to revert to that HistoricalPoll instance, we can do:

```
>>> earliest_poll = poll.history.earliest()
>>> earliest_poll.instance.save()
```

This will change the poll instance to have the data from the HistoricalPoll object and it will create a new row in the HistoricalPoll table indicating that a new change has been made.

1.2 Common Issues

1.2.1 Bulk Creating and Queryset Updating

Django Simple History functions by saving history using a post_save signal every time that an object with history is saved. However, for certain bulk operations, such as bulk_create and queryset updates, signals are not sent, and the history is not saved automatically. However, Django Simple History provides utility functions to work around this.

Bulk Creating a Model with History

As of Django Simple History 2.2.0, we can use the utility function

bulk_create_with_history in order to bulk create objects while saving their history:

QuerySet Updates with History

Unlike with bulk_create, queryset updates perform an SQL update query on the queryset, and never return the actual updated objects (which would be necessary for the inserts into the historical table). Thus, we tell you that queryset updates will not save history (since no post_save signal is sent). As the Django documentation says:

```
If you want to update a bunch of records for a model that has a custom
``save()`` method, loop over them and call ``save()``, like this:
```

```
for e in Entry.objects.filter(pub_date__year=2010):
    e.comments_on = False
    e.save()
```

1.2.2 Tracking Custom Users

• fields.E300:

```
ERRORS:

custom_user.HistoricalCustomUser.history_user: (fields.E300) Field defines a_

relation with model 'custom_user.CustomUser', which is either not installed, or_

is abstract.
```

Use register() to track changes to the custom user model instead of setting HistoricalRecords on the model directly. See *History for a Third-Party Model*.

The reason for this, is that unfortunately HistoricalRecords cannot be set directly on a swapped user model because of the user foreign key to track the user making changes.

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1.2.3 Using django-webtest with Middleware

When using django-webtest to test your Django project with the django-simple-history middleware, you may run into an error similar to the following:

```
django.db.utils.IntegrityError: (1452, 'Cannot add or update a child row: a foreign_

→key constraint fails (`test_env`.`core_historicaladdress`, CONSTRAINT `core_

→historicaladdress_history_user_id_0f2bed02_fk_user_user_id` FOREIGN KEY (`history_

→user_id`) REFERENCES `user_user` (`id`))')
```

This error occurs because django-webtest sets DEBUG_PROPOGATE_EXCEPTIONS to true preventing the middleware from cleaning up the request. To solve this issue, add the following code to any clean_environment or tearDown method that you use:

```
from simple_history.middleware import HistoricalRecords
if hasattr(HistoricalRecords.thread, 'request'):
    del HistoricalRecords.thread.request
```

1.2.4 Using F() expressions

F () expressions, as described here, do not work on models that have history. Simple history inserts a new record in the historical table for any model being updated. However, F () expressions are only functional on updates. Thus, when an F () expression is used on a model with a history table, the historical model tries to insert using the F () expression, and raises a ValueError.

1.3 Advanced Usage

1.3.1 Database Migrations

By default, Historical models live in the same app as the model they track. Historical models are tracked by migrations in the same way as any other model. Whenever the original model changes, the historical model will change also.

Therefore tracking historical models with migrations should work automatically.

1.3.2 Locating past model instance

Two extra methods are provided for locating previous models instances on historical record model managers.

as_of

This method will return an instance of the model as it would have existed at the provided date and time.

```
>>> from datetime import datetime
>>> poll.history.as_of(datetime(2010, 10, 25, 18, 4, 0))
<Poll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:03:29.855689>
>>> poll.history.as_of(datetime(2010, 10, 25, 18, 5, 0))
<Poll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:04:13.814128>
```

most recent

This method will return the most recent copy of the model available in the model history.

```
>>> from datetime import datetime
>>> poll.history.most_recent()
<Poll: Poll object as of 2010-10-25 18:04:13.814128>
```

1.3.3 History for a Third-Party Model

To track history for a model you didn't create, use the simple_history.register utility. You can use this to track models from third-party apps you don't have control over. Here's an example of using simple_history.register to history-track the User model from the django.contrib.auth app:

```
from simple_history import register
from django.contrib.auth.models import User
register(User)
```

1.3.4 Allow tracking to be inherited

By default history tracking is only added for the model that is passed to register() or has the HistoricalRecords descriptor. By passing inherit=True to either way of registering you can change that behavior so that any child model inheriting from it will have historical tracking as well. Be careful though, in cases where a model can be tracked more than once, MultipleRegistrationsError will be raised.

```
from django.contrib.auth.models import User
from django.db import models
from simple_history import register
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

# register() example
register(User, inherit=True)

# HistoricalRecords example
class Poll(models.Model):
    history = HistoricalRecords(inherit=True)
```

Both User and Poll in the example above will cause any model inheriting from them to have historical tracking as well.

1.3.5 Recording Which User Changed a Model

There are three documented ways to attach users to a tracked change:

- 1. Use the middleware as described in *Quick Start*. The middleware sets the User instance that made the request as the history_user on the history table.
- 2. Use simple_history.admin.SimpleHistoryAdmin`. Under the hood, ``SimpleHistoryAdmin actually sets the _history_user on the object to attach the user to the tracked change by overriding the <code>save_model</code> method.
- 3. Assign a user to the _history_user attribute of the object as described below:

Using _history_user to Record Which User Changed a Model

To denote which user changed a model, assign a _history_user attribute on your model.

For example if you have a changed_by field on your model that records which user last changed the model, you could create a _history_user property referencing the changed_by field:

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    changed_by = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')
    history = HistoricalRecords()

@property
def _history_user(self):
    return self.changed_by

@_history_user.setter
def _history_user(self, value):
    self.changed_by = value
```

Admin integration requires that you use a _history_user.setter attribute with your custom _history_user property (see *Integration with Django Admin*).

Another option for identifying the change user is by providing a function via get_user. If provided it will be called everytime that the history_user needs to be identified with the following key word arguments:

- instance: The current instance being modified
- request: If using the middleware the current request object will be provided if they are authenticated.

This is very helpful when using register:

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    changed_by = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')

def get_poll_user(instance, **kwargs):
    return instance.changed_by

register(Poll, get_user=get_poll_user)
```

1.3.6 Change User Model

If you need to use a different user model then settings.AUTH_USER_MODEL, pass in the required model to user_model. Doing this requires _history_user or get_user is provided as detailed above.

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

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```

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```
class PollUser (models.Model):
    user_id = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')

# Only PollUsers should be modifying a Poll
class Poll (models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    changed_by = models.ForeignKey(PollUser)
    history = HistoricalRecords(user_model=PollUser)

@property
def _history_user(self):
    return self.changed_by

@_history_user.setter
def _history_user(self, value):
    self.changed_by = value
```

1.3.7 Custom history_id

By default, the historical table of a model will use an AutoField for the table's history_id (the history table's primary key). However, you can specify a different type of field for history_id by passing a different field to history_id_field parameter.

A common use case for this would be to use a <code>UUIDField</code>. If you want to use a <code>UUIDField</code> as the default for all classes set <code>SIMPLE_HISTORY_HISTORY_ID_USE_UUID=True</code> in the settings. This setting can still be overridden using the <code>history_id_field</code> parameter on a per model basis.

You can use the history_id_field parameter with both HistoricalRecords() or register() to change this behavior.

Note: regardless of what field type you specify as your history_id field, that field will automatically set primary_key=True and editable=False.

```
import uuid
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    history = HistoricalRecords(
        history_id_field=models.UUIDField(default=uuid.uuid4)
    )
```

1.3.8 Custom history_date

You're able to set a custom history_date attribute for the historical record, by defining the property _history_date in your model. That's helpful if you want to add versions to your model, which happened before the current model version, e.g. when batch importing historical data. The content of the property _history_date has to be a datetime-object, but setting the value of the property to a DateTimeField, which is already defined in the model, will work too.

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    changed_by = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')
    history = HistoricalRecords()
    __history_date = None

@property
def _history_date(self):
    return self.__history_date

@_history_date.setter
def _history_date(self, value):
    self.__history_date = value
```

```
from datetime import datetime
from models import Poll

my_poll = Poll(question="what's up?")
my_poll._history_date = datetime.now()
my_poll.save()
```

1.3.9 Change Base Class of HistoricalRecord Models

To change the auto-generated Historical Record models base class from models. Model, pass in the abstract class in a list to bases.

```
class RoutableModel(models.Model):
    class Meta:
        abstract = True

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    changed_by = models.ForeignKey('auth.User')
    history = HistoricalRecords(bases=[RoutableModel])
```

1.3.10 Custom history table name

By default, the table name for historical models follow the Django convention and just add historical before model name. For instance, if your application name is polls and your model name Question, then the table name will be polls_historicalquestion.

You can use the table_name parameter with both HistoricalRecords() or register() to change this behavior.

```
class Question(models.Model):
    question_text = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
    history = HistoricalRecords(table_name='polls_question_history')
```

```
class Question(models.Model):
    question_text = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')

register(Question, table_name='polls_question_history')
```

1.3.11 Choosing fields to not be stored

It is possible to use the parameter excluded_fields to choose which fields will be stored on every create/update/delete.

For example, if you have the model:

```
class PollWithExcludeFields (models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')
```

And you don't want to store the changes for the field pub_date, it is necessary to update the model to:

```
class PollWithExcludeFields (models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    pub_date = models.DateTimeField('date published')

history = HistoricalRecords(excluded_fields=['pub_date'])
```

By default, django-simple-history stores the changes for all fields in the model.

1.3.12 Change Reason

Change reason is a message to explain why the change was made in the instance. It is stored in the field history_change_reason and its default value is None.

By default, the django-simple-history gets the change reason in the field changeReason of the instance. Also, is possible to pass the changeReason explicitly. For this, after a save or delete in an instance, is necessary call the function utils.update_change_reason. The first argument of this function is the instance and the second is the message that represents the change reason.

For instance, for the model:

```
from django.db import models
from simple_history.models import HistoricalRecords

class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    history = HistoricalRecords()
```

You can create a instance with a implicity change reason.

```
poll = Poll(question='Question 1')
poll.changeReason = 'Add a question'
poll.save()
```

Or you can pass the change reason explicitly:

```
from simple_history.utils import update_change_reason

poll = Poll(question='Question 1')
poll.save()
update_change_reason(poll, 'Add a question')
```

1.3.13 Save without a historical record

If you want to save a model without a historical record, you can use the following:

```
class Poll(models.Model):
    question = models.CharField(max_length=200)
    history = HistoricalRecords()

def save_without_historical_record(self, *args, **kwargs):
    self.skip_history_when_saving = True
    try:
        ret = self.save(*args, **kwargs)
    finally:
        del self.skip_history_when_saving
    return ret

poll = Poll(question='something')
poll.save_without_historical_record()
```

CHAPTER	2

Code

 ${\bf Code\ and\ issue\ tracker:\ https://github.com/treyhunner/django-simple-history}$

Pull requests are welcome.

18 Chapter 2. Code

CHAPTER 3

Changes

3.1 2.2.0 (2018-07-02)

- Add ability to specify alternative user_model for tracking (gh-371)
- Add util function bulk_create_with_history to allow bulk_create with history saved (gh-412)

3.2 2.1.1 (2018-06-15)

- Fixed out-of-memory exception when running populate_history management command (gh-408)
- Fix TypeError on populate_history if excluded_fields are specified (gh-410)

3.3 2.1.0 (2018-06-04)

- Add ability to specify custom history_reason field (gh-379)
- Add ability to specify custom history_id field (gh-368)
- Add HistoricalRecord instance properties *prev_record* and *next_record* (gh-365)
- Can set admin methods as attributes on object history change list template (gh-390)
- Fixed compatibility of >= 2.0 versions with old-style middleware (gh-369)

3.4 2.0 (2018-04-05)

- Added Django 2.0 support (gh-330)
- Dropped support for Django<=1.10 (gh-356)

- Fix bug where history_view ignored user permissions (gh-361)
- Fixed HistoryRequestMiddleware which hadn't been working for Django>1.9 (gh-364)

3.5 1.9.1 (2018-03-30)

- Use get_queryset rather than model.objects in history_view. (gh-303)
- Change ugettext calls in models.py to ugettext_lazy
- Resolve issue where model references itself (gh-278)
- Fix issue with tracking an inherited model (abstract class) (gh-269)
- Fix history detail view on django-admin for abstract models (gh-308)
- Dropped support for Django<=1.6 and Python 3.3 (gh-292)

3.6 1.9.0 (2017-06-11)

- Add –batchsize option to the populate_history management command. (gh-231)
- Add ability to show specific attributes in admin history list view. (gh-256)
- Add Brazilian Portuguese translation file. (gh-279)
- Fix locale file packaging issue. (gh-280)
- Add ability to specify reason for history change. (gh-275)
- Test against Django 1.11 and Python 3.6. (gh-276)
- Add excluded_fields option to exclude fields from history. (gh-274)

3.7 1.8.2 (2017-01-19)

- · Add Polish locale.
- Add Django 1.10 support.

3.8 1.8.1 (2016-03-19)

• Clear the threadlocal request object when processing the response to prevent test interactions. (gh-213)

3.9 1.8.0 (2016-02-02)

• History tracking can be inherited by passing *inherit=True*. (gh-63)

3.10 1.7.0 (2015-12-02)

- Add ability to list history in admin when the object instance is deleted. (gh-72)
- Add ability to change history through the admin. (Enabled with the SIMPLE_HISTORY_EDIT setting.)
- Add Django 1.9 support.
- Support for custom tables names. (gh-196)

3.11 1.6.3 (2015-07-30)

• Respect to_field and db_column parameters (gh-182)

3.12 1.6.2 (2015-07-04)

- Use app loading system and fix deprecation warnings on Django 1.8 (gh-172)
- Update Landscape configuration

3.13 1.6.1 (2015-04-21)

- Fix OneToOneField transformation for historical models (gh-166)
- Disable cascading deletes from related models to historical models
- Fix restoring historical instances with missing one-to-one relations (gh-162)

3.14 1.6.0 (2015-04-16)

- Add support for Django 1.8+
- Deprecated use of CustomForeignKeyField (to be removed)
- Remove default reverse accessor to *auth.User* for historical models (gh-121)

3.15 1.5.4 (2015-01-03)

- Fix a bug when models have a ForeignKey with primary_key=True
- Do NOT delete the history elements when a user is deleted.
- Add support for latest
- Allow setting a reason for change. [using option changeReason]

3.16 1.5.3 (2014-11-18)

- Fix migrations while using order_with_respsect_to (gh-140)
- Fix migrations using south
- Allow history accessor class to be overridden in register ()

3.17 1.5.2 (2014-10-15)

• Additional fix for migrations (gh-128)

3.18 1.5.1 (2014-10-13)

- Removed some incompatibilities with non-default admin sites (gh-92)
- Fixed error caused by HistoryRequestMiddleware during anonymous requests (gh-115 fixes gh-114)
- Added workaround for clashing related historical accessors on User (gh-121)
- Added support for MongoDB AutoField (gh-125)
- Fixed CustomForeignKeyField errors with 1.7 migrations (gh-126 fixes gh-124)

3.19 1.5.0 (2014-08-17)

- Extended availability of the as_of method to models as well as instances.
- Allow history_user on historical objects to be set by middleware.
- Fixed error that occurs when a foreign key is designated using just the name of the model.
- Drop Django 1.3 support

3.20 1.4.0 (2014-06-29)

- Fixed error that occurs when models have a foreign key pointing to a one to one field.
- Fix bug when model verbose_name uses unicode (gh-76)
- Allow non-integer foreign keys
- Allow foreign keys referencing the name of the model as a string
- Added the ability to specify a custom history_date
- Note that simple_history should be added to INSTALLED_APPS (gh-94 fixes gh-69)
- Properly handle primary key escaping in admin URLs (gh-96 fixes gh-81)
- Add support for new app loading (Django 1.7+)
- Allow specifying custom base classes for historical models (gh-98)

3.21 1.3.0 (2013-05-17)

- Fixed bug when using django-simple-history on nested models package
- Allow history table to be formatted correctly with django-admin-bootstrap
- Disallow calling simple_history.register twice on the same model
- Added Python 3 support
- Added support for custom user model (Django 1.5+)

3.22 1.2.3 (2013-04-22)

• Fixed packaging bug: added admin template files to PyPI package

3.23 1.2.1 (2013-04-22)

- · Added tests
- · Added history view/revert feature in admin interface
- Various fixes and improvements

3.24 Oct 22, 2010

• Merged setup.py from Klaas van Schelven - Thanks!

3.25 Feb 21, 2010

• Initial project creation, with changes to support ForeignKey relations.