Cheneyville — It seems the whole atmosphere surrounding the little town on the banks of Bayou Beauboub changes as you cross the bridge into Old Cheneyville.

The scenes look almost like pictures from history books.

With even the smallest degree of imagination, a person can see and hear the bustling life of bayou traffic as New Orleans-bound freighters docked at the banks, waiting to be loaded with cotton bales and other goods.

Then, as now, breadd减值ed hatboxes, stretched as far as the eye could see and the smell of newly-drawn air filled the air. Now upon rows of earth came lined the road.

It was an untraveled little with grand plantation homes dotting the landscape. Tall church steeples rose above the trees. And on drawn horse-drawn carriages and wagons were vital parts of the scene.

The early 1900s was a thriving, prosperous time in Cheneyville's history.

In 1882, advanced technology in the form of the rail road system brought the town back to life. People moved from the bayou-side to the area which is now referred to as "New Cheneyville" (along U.S. Highway 11) in order to be closer to the wonder of locomotion.

Old Cheneyville at it was in the mid-1900s eventually died in the grips of progress.

But today's residents are anxious to preserve their heritage.

"A New Look at Old Town" is the theme for the first historic Cheneyville tour to be held Friday and Saturday.

For a $2.50 donation, tourists can reminisce and perhaps catch a glimpse of Cheneyville as it was.

The area is rich in historic homes, churches, and homes.

A tour will be featured in a Fogg Twilight Tour which begins at 7 p.m.

The Christian Church, founded in the 1840s, was one of two churches in the state. St. Mary's Episcopal Church, founded in 1841, is the second established church in the Mississippi River.

Edgefield Baptist Church was founded by slaves in a cabin on Edgewood Plantation.

St. Paul Methodist Church was founded in the 1840s. Across the bayou is Trinity Episcopal, a true replica of Grace Episcopal Church in St. Francisville.

In 1842, the Cheneyville Methodist Church was built in combination with the auditorium Masonic Lodge. Such arrangements were common in the early 19th century. In more recent times the Methodist sold four feet of the building to the Masonic and are now reflected in a church built in 1812.

The original Cheneyville Catholic Church, called St. Francis, was built in 1914 at the site now occupied by the Catholic cemetery. The new church, St. Joseph, was built in 1914 to accommodate an expanding congregation.

The twilight tour will end at the historic "tunnel house," where a special discussion by Frontier Bettie will be held.

(Turn to C-10)