

Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest App

Introduced in the spring of 2021, the Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest App allows visitors to explore the historic house at their own pace without having to wait for a docent-guided tour.

The app features a 45-minute audio tour narrated by Mary Massie, Poplar Forest's director of programs and education. The tour includes true stories and anecdotes about the president's lifestyle at Poplar Forest and that of his enslaved workers gleaned from letters, diaries and archaeological evidence, as well as information about the landscape design, the carriage turnaround and six interior rooms on the main level of the house. Bluetooth and location services allow the app to recognize which room visitors are in and navigation tools in the app allow visitors to control their tour experience.

The app also includes a tour of the Wing of Offices attached to the east side of the villa. The Wing features the kitchen, a smokehouse and other service rooms where enslaved men, women and children performed tasks for Jefferson such as cooking and laundry. Mary Kesler, Poplar Forest's coordinator of historical references, discusses the ways in which these rooms functioned, sharing stories about the people who worked in them and information about the Wing restoration, completed in 2009.

The Poplar Forest App is free to download and available in the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. Use of the app on the grounds of Poplar Forest is included with admission to the property.