

# **CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH... THROUGH THE EYES OF JULIA FLOYD DELAFIELD**

We can be proud to know that the tri-hamlet area of which we live was home to many strong and independent women who have made their mark in history. Examples abound going back to the birth of this nation with the likes of Ruth Floyd, wife of Nathaniel Woodhull, who stood by to bring her husband's body back to Mastic after his cruel treatment and death while under imprisonment by the British. Hannah Jones, wife of William Floyd would be another example. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt has written about her Summer visits in "Old Mastic".

The following will focus on Julia Floyd Delafield, granddaughter of General William Floyd. Julia married Dr. Edward Delafield in 1838. He was a prominent physician who specialized in ophthalmology. Their main residence was in New York City where he later became president of the College of Physicians and Surgeons. They went on to have five children including Francis Delafield who would later also become a renowned physician.

Julia, daughter of Nicoll Floyd, kept a journal which was digitized and made available by the New York Public Library. The writing is truly remarkable with regard to the descriptions she gives of her life, as told in the letters involving her grandfather and signer, William Floyd, and even a mention of Thomas Jefferson.

Her writing contains several entries regarding her dying father Nicoll in his last years of retirement at Towapionke (presently Anna Wintour's home in Old Mastic). She also talks fondly of her sister Catherine who was given the house in Old Mastic after his death. Many of the entries of course involve her husband, Dr. Delafield, and the children she cared for. Of particular note is the fact that Julia was invited and attended Lincoln's second inauguration. She was also the first women in New York to use ether to ease pain during childbirth.

If you enjoyed reading this and would like more information, please come to your local library to browse our wonderful collection.

Yours in history,

-Brad C. Shupe