OPEN HOUSE & DEDICATION

FREEPORT RECREATION CENTER
130 East Merrick Road
Freeport, Long Island, New York

June 21, 1975
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

POOLS
- Demonstration of all swim strokes (1-1:30pm)
- Demonstration of rescue procedures by lifeguards (1:30-2pm)
- Exhibition water polo game (2-2:30pm)
- Canoe joust (2:30-3pm)
- Water ballet (3-3:30pm)
- Straight and clown diving (3:30-4pm)

RINK
- Miniature golf (1-4:30pm)

KIDDE ROOM
- Teen drama production of "Little Red Riding Wolf" for children (every 45 minutes beginning at 1:15pm)

SENIOR CITIZEN LOUNGE
- Art sale (1-4:30pm)

ARTS & CRAFTS ROOM
- Crafts demonstration (1-4:30pm)

GYMNASIUM
- Freeport Recreation All-Star basketball game (1-2:30pm)
- Wheelchair basketball game, Human Resources Center's "Youngbloods" vs Hofstra University's "Flying Dutchmen" (3-4pm)

EXERCISE ROOM
- Demonstration of equipment (1-4:30pm)

LOBBY
- Freeport Arts Council silent art auction (1-4:30pm)
- Jerry Lane and His Puppets
- Freeport Historical Society exhibit on Rock Raynor Smith (1-4:30pm)
- DEDICATION (4:30pm)
DEDICATION CEREMONIES
Superintendent of Recreation and Parks Stanley Brekne
Master of Ceremonies

INVOCATION
Reverend Eugene Strebel, Pastor,
Christ Lutheran Church, Freeport

WELCOME
Freeport Mayor William White
Former Freeport Mayor Robert Sweeney

REMARKS
Congressman Norman Lent
State Senator Norman Levy
Hempstead Town Presiding Supervisor
Francis Purcell
Mr. Robert Raynor, member, Freeport
Historical Society; Interim Chairman, Freeport: Spirit of '76 Bi-
centennial Committee; descendant, Raynor Rock Smith family

UNVEILING OF PLAQ.UE
Mayor White and Mr. Raynor

PROGRAM ENDS
Building closed until 1pm Sunday
Captain Raynor Rock Smith, for whom the building in Freeport's new Recreation Center complex is named, was born in 1788 in what was then known as Raynor South or Raynor-town. The son of Adam Smith and Elizabeth Raynor, both his maternal and paternal grandparents were among those settling Hempstead Town in 1644. His father served with distinction in the American Revolution as he himself did in the War of 1812. As a boy, Captain Smith lived on the family farm which was approximately one block from today's Center. The Center itself is on the site of what was, during the Captain's life and until the 1880's, a gristmill and pond around which today's Freeport was settled. The mill pond was a place where residents swam, fished and skated. Its purchase by the Village of Freeport for a recreational complex thus returns the site to its original usage.

As the Freeporter of today, Captain Smith had an affinity for the sea. In the days before the U.S. Coast Guard, men such as he watched the waters for those in distress. His bravery was tested to the utmost on January 2, 1837, a day when the surf raged in a blizzard and the temperature was down to zero.

The 300-ton barque, "The Mexico," had left Liverpool with 112 English and Irish immigrants and a crew of 18 some 73 days before. She arrived off Sandy Hook on New Year's Eve in the midst of a storm and signaled distress as well as for a pilot but no help was forthcoming then or the next day and she was forced out to sea and driven eastward while all aboard weaken from the rationing of one biscuit a day which had been adopted. At 5am on January 2 she struck the beach and listed helplessly 300 feet off shore while the high breakers slowly began to destroy her.

Alerted, Captain Smith, his sons Zaphar, James and Oliver, and relatives William Curtis Smith, James Smith and Oliver Smith, left Freeport at dawn for an icy journey which was to take several hours. They dragged their surf boat to Baldwin and then across the frozen bay to Point Lookout where other would be rescuers stood helplessly on the beach watching the stricken ship's deck where family groups, already dead, stood locked in frozen embraces.

Faced with mountainous waves and with his beard already covered with ice and snow, Captain Smith ordered his exhausted crew to follow him into the boat, which, against all odds, reached "The Mexico" in time to save eight persons, the sole survivors of the shipwreck which remains today a tragic highlight in the maritime history of Long Island's South Shore. An obelisk at Rockville Cemetery marks the common grave of the victims, aged two to 52.

Such was Captain Smith's deed that it was broadcast throughout the nation. A group of prominent New Yorkers traveled to Hempstead to host ceremonies during which the Captain received a silver cup. The owner of "The Mexico" presented him with $350, a large sum of money in those times, which he gave to his crew. Impressed with the feat, an unidentified artist painted the battered "Mexico" with Captain Smith's small boat approaching it. This, in turn, caused Currier & Ives to base a lithograph on it. Both works are now owned by the Freeport Historical Society and are displayed here today.