

The Desgagnes group of companies recently acquired another vessel, this one a tanker. She is the 1976-built RIO ORINOCO, (a) JOASLA (79), (b) ORINOCO (82). Desgagnes took possession of this asphalt carrier after salvaging her as a wreck from the shore of Anticosti Island, and during May and June, and well into July, she was at the shipyard at Lauzon, Quebec, where she was receiving a general refurbishing as well as extremely extensive bottom repairs. She has been renamed (d) THALASSA DESGAGNES, but it is not yet evident whether, once her new owner has commissioned her, she will see any service into the Great Lakes.

After almost a decade of service in Great Lakes waters, the Finnish tanker KIISLA finally has departed the lakes. Built in 1974 by Valmet Oy Helsingin Telakka, of Helsinki/Helsingfors, and owned by Neste O/Y, of Naantali, Finland, KIISLA is 405.6 x 57.8 x 26.3, 4681 Gross and 2634 Net, classed by Lloyd's "Ice Class 1A Super". With her black hull and lime-green superstructure, she first came into the lakes during 1984, and subsequently saw much service in ice conditions with which lake tankers barely could cope. Running normally from Sarnia to Chicago, KIISLA at first was picketed by Canadian S.I.U. members who protested her lake service with a Finnish crew and registry, but she gradually came to be accepted as part of the year-round scene at Sarnia. She made her final departure from Sarnia on June 16, 1993, with a chemical cargo bound from Imperial Oil's Sarnia refinery for Rotterdam, and she was downbound in the St. Lawrence canals on June 18th.

While the Canadian lake grain trade has been anything but successful in 1993, the self-unloader operations of the ULS Corporation and Algoma Central Marine have been somewhat better than in 1992. Accordingly, the two firms, who also have been involved in a joint operation of their straight-deckers, recently announced the formation of another consortium, known as Seaway Self-Unloading Bulk Carriers, of St. Catharines. According to Peter R. Cresswell, President and C.E.O. of Algoma Central Corporation, each of the companies "will still own, operate and crew their ships within the partnership". This new operating arrangement, which is expected to lead to more flexibility and efficiency in the running of the self-unloaders, must be approved by two regulatory bodies, namely the Competitions Bureau and the National Transportation Association.

At long last, the Purvis Marine craneship YANKCANUCK is back in service this summer as a self-propelled carrier. She is not on the lakes, however, but rather doing summer supply service to the Arctic, under a 75-day bareboat charter to Transport Igloolik. Early in June, YANKCANUCK was towed up to Thunder Bay, where the Port Arthur Shipbuilding Company yard was to refurbish the ship, which had been used as a barge in 1991, the year Purvis bought her, but lay idle in 1992. Unfortunately, the completion of the work by PortShip was prevented by the picketing of the yard by unemployed S.I.U. sailors, who were anticipating that the charter of the ship would allow the use of non-union crewmembers, and who thought that S.I.U. men should sail her instead because she was a union ship back when she was operated by Algoma Steel. As a result, YANKCANUCK was brought back to the Soo and the work was completed at the Government Wharf there. Early in July, YANKCANUCK set out under her own power for Montreal, but her downbound passage, particularly in the canals, was marked by S.I.U. protests. YANKCANUCK did, however, reach Montreal safely, and by mid-July was en route to the Arctic. It will be interesting to see whether she ever returns to lake service. During 1993, Purvis Marine has been using both of its barges, CHIEF WAWATAM and PML SALVAGER, to carry steel products out of the Algoma Steel plant at the Soo.

The Liberian-registered FedNav salty FEDERAL ST. LAURENT ran into a spot of trouble in the upper St. Mary's River at about 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 9. Downbound with a cargo of grain, the ship missed a turn in the channel and grounded in the vicinity of Round Island. The Great Lakes Towing Company sent its tugs MISSOURI and NORTH DAKOTA to the scene but they were unable to