

Phoenix copper mine to shut down at end of 1978

VANOUVER — The historic Phoenix copper mine, which, like its namesake, rose from its own ashes to begin a second life in 1959, will be closed late this year.

Granby Mining, the owner-operator, has not established a definite closure date. In its "lifetimes", the Phoenix mine, near Grand Forks, B.C., has produced nearly a half-billion lb. copper, 4.5 million oz. silver and more than a half-million oz. gold while providing employment for four generations of British Columbians and millions of dollars of income for employees, shareholders and governments. Granby President R. P. Taylor said at today's metal prices, the mine's total production would be worth \$438 million.

The Phoenix orebody was mined

out in 1976 but the mill has been treating material from low-grade stockpiles and ore from a small affiliate, the Lonestar mine, in Washington state since that time.

In its prime, Phoenix was an incorporated city and a flurry of activity with a peak population of 2,500 and another 1,000 on its outskirts. At an elevation of 4,500 ft., it was the highest city in Canada and boasted a 500-seat opera hall, 17 saloons, two railroads and a brewery.

The Phoenix mine was originally brought into production in 1899 by an Eastern Canadian group headed by S. H. Miner of Granby, Quebec, and Spokane, Washington, interests. In the next 20 years, the mine produced ore containing 268 million lb. copper for processing at the

Grand Forks smelter. Ore minable by the day's methods was exhausted in 1919 and both the mine and the smelter closed down.

Open pit mining methods developed in the late 1950s enabled the profitable recovery of remaining ore at the Phoenix site. The skeletons of the old town and mine were burned to allow the rebirth of the Phoenix as a new open pit mine.

Granby plans to transfer some of the 90 remaining Phoenix employees to its subsidiary Granisle Copper which operates a large copper mine near Houston, B.C. The rest of the workforce will be helped to find work elsewhere in the Canadian mining industry. Reclamation work will begin as soon as milling is completed and will continue into 1979.