

## OceanaGold puts Blackwater reef back on exploration agenda

**4 May 2009 - Melbourne-based gold miner OceanaGold Corporation has put the historic deep reef Blackwater underground gold mine near Reefton back on its exploration agenda.**

Darren Klinck, vice president, corporate and investor relations for OceanaGold said from Melbourne that two exploratory drill holes are planned at Blackwater for the second half of 2009.

The Blackwater mine, which operated from 1906 to 1951, was the richest mine on the Reefton goldfield producing over 740,000 ounces of gold.

All the gold was produced from the fabled Birthday Reef — a single quartz vein averaging just 0.65 metres (m) wide containing an average gold grade of 21.9 grams a tonne.

The Birthday Reef was mined over a 1 kilometre (km) strike length and down 17 levels to a depth of 710 m.

OceanaGold has been interested in reopening the unmined deep section of the reef since it drilled a deep exploration drill in 1996, intersecting the reef 270 m below the previous deepest workings. The drillhole showed the reef still at the same width (0.7 m) containing 24 grams a tonne of gold.

In 2004 OceanaGold tried to refurbish one of two old vertical shafts with the idea of dewatering the mine down to 250-300 m and then conducting closely spaced infill drilling of the deep unmined part of the reef.

OceanaGold at that time said it was investigating mining the reef by gaining access through a decline drilled from a lower altitude than the old hilltop shaft sites.

However the rehabilitation programme was suspended in November 2004.

Mr Klinck said that with spot price for gold now NZ\$1,600 an ounce OceanaGold planned to carry out more exploration for new potential satellite deposits, including at Blackwater, along the Reefton strike zone.

OceanaGold's Reefton Globe Progress openpit mine, which started production in 2007, lifted gold output to 76,132 oz of gold in the 2008 year.

Sources: OceanaGold and Lindsay Clark