Remarks of Michael Gawenda
Editor-in-Chief
The Age
Reflections book launch
August 10, 2004

Premier, Ministers, Members of Parliament, distinguished guests..ladies and gentlemen :

Welcome everyone.

This is wonderful night.

And it is a special occasion for readers and indeed all Victorians.

For 150 years *The Age* has enriched, informed and celebrated our community.

It has covered great deeds and tragedies.

It has reflected and celebrated the community it serves.

It has held to account those in the community who have the power and privilege to shape the future.

That's what a good newspaper does.

Producing journalism that is fearless, fair and independent.

Like any newspaper that has survived 150 years, *The Age* has had its ups and downs but *The Age* has always had a unique relationship with its readers and the community it serves.

In a sense, our readers feel they own the paper, that those who work for it are only custodians of this much loved institution.

You have every right to feel that way.

The Age's story is also your story.

I know that it has been a great privilege to edit this newspaper.

Reflections is a remarkable journey covering the lives, dreams, aspirations and problems that confront ordinary people.

It says so much about Melbourne and Victoria and why this is such a wonderful place to live.

I would like to congratulate and thank our editor Steve Foley.

Steve was always the obvious choice to edit this book.

Thanks to his painstaking research, tireless effort and commitment we have a book of which we and our readers should feel justifiably proud.

I would also like to thank senior *Age* journalists who contributed to the book, books manager, Steve Berry, and our editorial and production teams.

I would particularly like to acknowledge Geoffrey Blainey for his superb introduction to *Reflections* which so beautifully and insightfully captures the history of Melbourne and Victoria during *The Age*'s formative years.

I am pleased that we have been able to showcase some of the best images from the book for the public to see.

You would have seen the stunning images in the Atrium tonight which forms part of a series of free exhibitions and community events *The Age* is conducting in Melbourne and regional Victoria over the next few months. We invite all Victorians to participate in celebrating this important milestone.

I would like to thank our 150th project team and their colleagues – Nigel Henham, Louise Graham, Candy Grady, John Bain, Michelle Kelso, Liane Reynolds and John Kilner.

Finally, I would like to thank Random House. Their enthusiasm and support for this project is greatly appreciated.