

MRS NEWTON

JUNE NEWTON (A.K.A. ALICE SPRINGS) TASCHEN, \$85

"Yesterday was my 67th birthday. The day before I had my face lifted." Candour like that deserves a good publisher and Taschen has made a stylish job of *Mrs Newton*. The someday Mrs Newton, photographer wife of Helmut, tells the story of her celebrity-filled life from its rough beginnings on a farm 40 kilometres outside Melbourne. She tells a good tale and has a lively turn of phrase. The diary extracts are especially engaging. The book is superbly illustrated with the author's photographs, a mix of personal snapshots and formal portraits of the likes of Gore Vidal, Nicole Kidman, David Byrne and Anjelica Huston. I enjoyed this anecdote about a visit to the studio of photographer Tom Kelly: "Hel[mut] bought the famous calendar shot of Marilyn Monroe. He asked Tom why he softened the colour. 'Sharp,' he said, 'it's a picture. Softened, it becomes a work of art.'" Simple, really.

