

# Scaling new heights the highlight of his life

By ANDREE COELLI

It was with a mixture of surprise and pride that a Canberra man received a call from his son on Wednesday saying he had just completed a trekking expedition to the highest peak in the Western hemisphere — Mount Aconcagua in Argentina.

Colonel Peter Scott, of Yarralumla, said yesterday that his son Gary had telephoned from the United States with the news that he had co-led an expedition to the dizzy height of 6960m at the end of January.

Gary had also climbed back up the mountain by himself after the expedition in an attempt to break the quickest-ascent record. Colonel Scott said he had climbed from 4300m to 6000m in 2½ hours but then "the wind had beaten him".

Gary did, however, break the world record for the quickest ascent of Mount McKinley in Alaska in 1986. He had climbed the 7108m in 18½ hours, breaking the 30-hour record.

Thirty-year-old Gary Scott began his climbing career during his five years as a boarder at Canberra Grammar School, Colonel Scott said. He had started out on his ventures at the Honey Suckle Creek tracking station and was also a member of the ANU mountain and climbing club.

Gary left Australia to begin his trekking life when he was 17. He lived in Pakistan for 18 months, then Nepal for



Gary Scott took this photograph of himself during a trek in Nepal in 1985. It shows him at the summit of Island Peak (6169m) with Makalu (8400m) in the background.

16 months running his own trekking and guiding company. He has had 24 trek and climbing trips to Nepal.

He has trekked and climbed his way through India, Kashmir, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Australia, Europe and the United States, including Alaska.

He has worked as a professional mountain guide and expedition leader for the Palisade School of Mountaineering in California, Sierra Treks, Wilderness Trips through the state of Washington, **Encounter Overland**, an English-based company in Libya and Nepal, and Alpine Ascents in Nepal.

He was working with the Interna-

tional School of Mountaineering in New Hampshire in the United States when he met his wife, whom he married two years ago. He has been living in New Hampshire ever since.

On his Mount McKinley trip in 1986, Gary worked with Dr Peter Hackett, one of the world's leading high-altitude physiologists, on a two-month high-altitude research project, working at 4358m up the mountain.

"We were able to talk to him when he was on that trip," Colonel Scott said.

Gary had used a radiophone to contact his parents in Yarralumla.

"That was terrific."