

Shark Talk grabs attention

At their regular Tuesday meeting, the Mossel Bay Rotarians were treated to a remarkable talk, entitled: "Meet the Shark," a talk given by Enrico Gennari of Oceans Research, based at the Shark Laboratory Aquarium.

Enrico explained the background behind the project, aimed at educating school children from pre-primary age to 18 years on the fascinating subject of sharks and the marine environment. The programme is used to introduce school children to the world of sharks, dolphins, whales and other sea life, which live and breed off the coast of Mossel Bay and it has also proved how peoples' concept of sharks can be changed through education and knowledge.

The project started in 2008 when local schools were invited to educational meetings - aimed at generating awareness of the marine environment.

In 2009, the project added the "touching

experience," in which children were encouraged to touch live fish at the Aquarium. In 2010 the programme was expanded to include the subject of shark biology and -dissection. Through the use of local tourist boats, children are now taken out into the Bay to view sea life at first hand and for many this is their first experience of going to sea. The programme has been so successful that schools from outside the local area - as far away as Beaufort West - are also taking part now.

Enrico and his team host four to five classes per week and in the last six months, 2 500 children have experienced marine world wonders. He was also warmly thanked by the Rotarians for his enthusiastic- and highly entertaining talk. Details of the programme can be obtained by either contacting Enrico on 044 690 5799 or by visiting the website, www.oceans-aware.org.



Enrico Gennari of Oceans Research with Mika Lutchman, Mossel Bay Rotary Club President after an informative evening regarding shark activity and -education in Mossel Bay.