

Young Elgin County readers charmed by kids' book author

ST. THOMAS (Bureau) — To the delight of about 250 area youngsters, Canadian children's author Gordon Korman visited here Saturday hoping to drum up interest in his new book, *Bugs Potter, Life At Nickaninny*.

Korman, sitting on the edge of a table at Elgin Court Public School and twisting an elastic band around his fingers and swinging his legs, described his latest book to an audience of mostly children as the funniest yet. "You have to take that with a grain of salt. Obviously, I like it . . . but I wrote it."

It's the second which centres around the antics of *Bugs Potter*, a self-made teenage drummer, and his band.

The 19-year-old Toronto native, studying dramatic and visual writing at the University of New York, wrote his first book when he was 12 as part of a school project. Three days after his 13th birthday, his book *This Can't Be Happening At MacDonald Hall* was published. The book deals

with the mischievous behavior of two boys at a boys' school north of Toronto. It was an instant success and Korman has since written six other books.

Korman told the audience he switched from Scholastic Publications Ltd., a Canadian publishing firm which released his first books, to an American firm because the United States does not follow the metric system. "It's simple. Do you know what it's like for an author to describe Bruno (one of his original characters) as centimetreing his way across the ledge . . . when you know what you want to say is inching?"

Michael Manchester, 11, a pupil at Sparta Public School who read Korman's first book in two days, said Korman makes him laugh a lot. "He's excellent. . . . You can picture everything happening."

Korman is working on a book to follow in the style of his first and another about two 18-year-olds who take six 11-year-old youngsters on a cross-country van trip.



GORDON KORMAN

Susan McConnell

--- "I like it . . . but I wrote it"

June 20/83