

# Another ex-Mountie says racism forced her out

## Aboriginal Donna Delaronde joins Marge Hudson in going public with allegations

[CBC News](#)

Posted: Dec 23, 2011 5:25 PM CST

Last Updated: Dec 23, 2011 10:23 PM CST

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Another former Mountie in Manitoba has come forward with allegations of racist treatment, which she says led her to give up her badge.

While several other native Mounties have told CBC News they faced discrimination, only Marge Hudson had been willing to go public with her story — until now.

"When I saw Marge on TV I had so many different emotions," Donna Delaronde said. "I had to get up because I cried."

Delaronde, 45, who lives in Dauphin, was sworn as a special native constable in 1989, joining Hudson and dozens of other First Nation and Métis recruits hoping, she says, to make a difference, "something I've always wanted to do ever since I was young."

Delaronde, who remained in the RCMP until 1997, says she experienced racist attitudes among her RCMP colleagues while working out of the Swan River detachment, including one incident in 1994 that almost cost her her life.

While trying to arrest a drunk driver one night, she said, she called for backup but no officers came to her assistance, leaving her to fight the belligerent man alone. He beat her until she passed out.

"He just hit me right on my face here and I felt my cheek immediately swell up and all I could see was blood from my face," she recalled.

However, she said, she was determined to live out her dream job until a superior personally made sure she knew in 1997 she was not welcome in the RCMP.

In an incident where she took longer than usual to hand in bail money, she was charged with theft and dragged through a court process because the superior didn't like women or aboriginal people, she said.

**'I think these people that do wear that uniform and do have this type of attitude, they need to run and hide because they need to be exposed.'**

— Donna Delaronde, ex-Mountie

She was acquitted of the charge, which the presiding judge called a personnel matter, not a criminal case. There was a "troubling aspect" to the case, the judge added. Another officer testified that Delaronde's superior at the detachment treated her differently than other officers.

### No apology

Delaronde said she doesn't know whether her boss was ever reprimanded, but she did get a chance to confront him after the case was closed.

"I'm not a criminal ... I said, and he just stood there and looked at me with no expression, not letting me know 'I made a mistake, I'm sorry,' nothing," she said.

She quit shortly after she was charged in 1997, and she hasn't worked since, she says partly because she was traumatized by her treatment in the RCMP and partly because the force ruined her name.

"I think these people that do wear that uniform and do have this type of attitude, they need to run and hide because they need to be exposed," she said.

If it weren't for her family, Delaronde said, she doesn't know where she would be today.

"I gave them my life," she said of her career in the RCMP. "I could've went to university; I could've got a diploma. Instead, I got people still looking at me like a thief today."

Delaronde said she hasn't seen Hudson since 1992, but hopes to thank her for inspiring her to finally tell her story after holding it in for the past 14 years.

The RCMP said it has not received any formal complaints of racism or discrimination since CBC News aired Hudson's story.

*With files from the CBC's Sheila North-Wilson*