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Haleakalā Expert

Writer Jill Engledow visits Maui's Kalahaku Overlook

By [Bonnie Friedman](#) | Photo by [Ron Dahlquist](#)

AAA Hawai'i September/October 2013



Jill Engledow knows so much about Haleakalā, she wrote a book. When a friend first suggested the idea to her, it seemed crazy, even though Engledow had 17 years of experience as a reporter at *The Maui News*. But after some thought, she quit to take on the project. "Haleakalā is so beautiful, so many people love it, and there are so many stories associated with it."

Here's one of them from *Haleakalā: A History of the Maui Mountain* (Maui Island Press, 2012): Hawai'i architect C.W. Dickey designed and built Haleakalā's first shelter in 1894 with funds raised and materials donated by the community. The building soon gained the name "Craigielea" after a visitor paraphrased an old Scottish song of that title in an early guest-book entry. Once the summit road opened in 1935, people bypassed the rest house, leading to its demolition in 1957.

"Look around a few yards from the interpretive kiosk to see bits of concrete or metal stuck in the ground that are obviously part of the building or its water tank," Engledow says of the site, located within the Kalahaku Overlook off Highway 378 (it's only accessible heading downhill, just past mile marker 19). "It's definitely worth a stop."

Her Secret Spot:

Kalahaku Overlook, Haleakalā National Park

Sitting 9,324 feet above sea level (about 700 feet below the summit), the overlook appeals to Engledow's sense of history. "I like to stop by the overlook whenever I go up to the summit, especially if I have guests. You feel like you're on the edge of the world, and then you get to the crater's rim and look down onto colorful cinder cones and dark lava from the most recent eruptions. You'll see hiking trails on the other side of the crater and clouds moving up the Ko'olau Gap.

"I like thinking about people riding up to this point a century ago, before the highway was built, to spend the night in the old rest house. One

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visitor in those days said the sunset from here looked like grape juice on whipped cream.

“I remember my first hike into Haleakalā’s crater in 1971. I’d had major surgery and my goal for recovery was to be able to do the 11-mile hike. I spent six months building myself up, and I did it.”

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