

ROOFING 101

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# Keeping the Peace

A North Carolina development focuses on preservation

You won't find a big, fancy golf course at Sunalei Preserve, a development of new homes on North Carolina's Snake Mountain. And there's not a manicured, man-made lake in sight. Sunalei Preserve is a community with a decidedly different focus—and a mission.

**BELOW:** Dry-stacked stone columns and de-barked cedar posts preview the style of the lodge's interiors. The deep red windows add a touch of color and echo the lodge's rustic design style. Cedar bays trees up the front door posts topped with copper lantern Company accent lights from Old California Poplar bark siding lines the home's front and back facades; cedar board-and-batten was chosen for the sides and balconies.

"We came to this project knowing this was a last undisturbed parcel in Watauga County, and we really wanted to preserve it," says Mary Jane Rice, wife of Sunalei developer John Rice, and overseer of Sunalei's advertising. They started with a biological study of the 1,000-acre property to identify and protect endangered species and plants. Then they deeded 132 acres of the craggy ridge of Snake Mountain to a conservation group, and plan to deed another approximately 100 acres in the future.

From the remaining acreage, there will be about 120 rustic-style homes on lots ranging from two to 12 acres, some situated on rolling pastures and others on steep forested areas, all with panoramic views of Virginia, Tennessee and North Carolina. "We kept the parcels large to continue the feeling that the homes are part of





the land," Mary Jane says.

So far, a luxurious "main camp" and four homes have been built; several other homes are on the way. Although the emphasis is on preservation and rustic enjoyment—including a minimally invasive trail system developed by a master trail designer—the community is not short on amenities, already offering tennis courts, a pool, fitness center and yes, a putting green.

#### Camp Concept

Mary Jane and John developed a vision for Sunale's "main camp"—the lodge that is both model home and guest house for prospective buyers—from visits to remote camps in the Adirondack Mountains. "The

concept was to make the main camp look like it had been there forever," Mary Jane explains. "We admire the philosophy of the Great Camps: retreats passed on through generations that look like they belong to the land. We studied the progression from old hunting and fishing camps and lean-to cabins to summer homes."

John worked with architects from Moss Creek to create an initial design, then hired Harmony Timberworks of Boone, North Carolina, to finalize the plans and provide and install the Douglas fir timber framing package. Burns Construction of Banner Elk, North Carolina, was the builder/general contractor.

Construction of the North Carolina rustic style lodge

was unusual. "Harmony often works with architects who require a non-standard timber frame; and this was not a typical four- or five-bent system," says Harmony's Jim Kanagy. "The lodge has conventionally built walls, and then we set the timber frame roof system on top of them. The timber framing went up in stages."

The process was tricky, adds David Burns, president of Burns Construction. "It took a lot of coordination with Harmony to get the walls and roofing system to fit. The one thing I learned is if you're going to prepare a structure to accept timbers, what you prepare cannot be off even a half-inch." Still, construction went smoothly, and the lodge was completed in 2004.



#### Rustic Refined

The 7,000-square-foot lodge (including its many decks and balconies) is striking. "The building is big, but there's a lightness about it because of the way the roofs are designed," David notes, Jim calls it, "stunning, grand... but with an entry that brings the roof down to where it's not imposing."

The exterior includes poplar bark siding in the front and back, cedar board-and-batten siding on the sides and balconies, and a cedar shake roof. The front porch and corners of the lodge feature de-barked cedar posts, and the porch is framed with dry-stacked stone columns of rock taken from the property. In lieu of traditional downspouts, the lodge has logging chains

OPPOSITE: The roof of the great room is made of poplar bark siding on the back of the property. The walls are paneled with red oak, with electrified candle wall lights by Roy Nicholson Lighting. Antique Oriental rugs warm the lodge's floors. ABOVE: The great room ceiling peaks at 28 feet, atop walls made from red oak. Ceilings throughout the lodge are lined with tongue-and-groove cedar. The lodge was built by Burns Construction of Banner Elk, North Carolina, to help Boone, North Carolina, to help her with interior furnishings.

The Great Camps of the Adirondacks influenced the look and feel of the main camp at Sunnyside Preserve. Careful design and use of the property has preserved the lodge's character and charm. The walk-out lower level, which are found just outside the walk-out lower level.





that hang from the copper gutters down to wooden barrels that catch rainwater for later use. Cedar logs and twigs are used as accents throughout, starting with the front door. A Bethel, North Carolina, business, Lady's Logs and Daddy Six, hand-applied twigs to the oak entry door (and to other exterior and interior doors) to create a one-of-a-kind look.

Inside, to the right of the foyer, is an open staircase with exotic branch-and-twig work along the railings, and stair treads made of cedar half-logs. "The Lady's Logs staff hand-peeled the twigs for the staircase as construction proceeded," says David, whose staff installed the staircase. The stairs lead to a second floor with a loft overlooking the great room and foyer, plus two guest bedroom suites and an oversized master bedroom suite, all with balconies.

On the main floor, the great room rises to an elegant, 28-foot-high truss system in modified hammerbeam style with black iron straps and tie rods to keep the trusses from spreading. The heavy timbers, machine-hewn for a rough textured finish, appear

traditionally joined with wooden pegs, but have metal joinery inside. The fireplace is dry-stacked stone with a cedar log mantel supported by cedar posts.

To the left of the great room is a dining area and kitchen, both open to the great room. The kitchen features custom cabinets with naturally honed dark gray soapstone countertops. Behind the main kitchen is a butler's pantry. A reading room, guest bedroom suite, and decks with more twig accents finish the main level.

The lodge's lower level includes a family room, guest bedroom suite, fitness center and powder room, with patios and an outdoor fireplace.

#### Showcase for Wood

To inspire prospective home builders, woods are used in a wide variety of ways. Ceilings are pine, and windows are framed with cedar half-logs. Flooring runs from quarter-sawn oak in the great room to American cherry in the reading room, Caribbean pine in the butler's pantry, to walnut in the family room.

ABOVE: The main kitchen is open to the great room and features custom cabinets painted in a light gray color. Below: Cedar posts accent the breakfast bar. The countertops and farm sink are dark gray, naturally honed Vermont soapstone. OPPOSITE: Open to the great room, the dining area features an antique English oak table and chairs with needlepoint-covered seats. The light fixture above the table was custom made by the lodge, featuring hand-peeled logs and wrought-iron chains and straps.



ABOVE: The intricate railings and the interior door to the main level were designed by Lady's Logs and Daddy Stix.

The lodge's russ system features metal straps and tie rods. The loft also offers a close-up look at the dry-stacked stone of the great room fireplace.

RIGHT: Just off the great room on the main level, a sunny reading space is complete with an antique leather Chesterfield couch and a stone fireplace.



Walls range from wormy red oak in the reading room to knotty pine in the master bedroom, and wood paneling runs vertically in some rooms, and horizontally in others.

"We tried to make every room different in flooring, walls, fixtures," Dave says. "We weren't afraid to try new ways to use materials."

"I spent the night at the lodge recently and I was awestruck by the detail, the finery of the craftsmanship," Mary Jane says. "This house just transports you to another time and place."

Dave is proud not only of the workmanship, but also to have finished the ambitious project. "There were so many suppliers and finishing effects involved that I'm proud just to have gotten through it all," he laughs.

Resources

- Burns Construction, (828) 898-9815
- Harmony Timberworks, (800) 969-9663, [www.harmonytimberworks.com](http://www.harmonytimberworks.com)
- Lady's Logs and Daddy Stix, (828) 297-5980
- MossCreek, (800) 737-2166, [www.moss creek.net](http://www.moss creek.net)
- Northern Parker Interiors, (828) 263-8734
- Sunalei Preserve, (877) 982-1986, [www.sunaleipreserve.com](http://www.sunaleipreserve.com)

WEB EXTRA: See more at [timberhomenetwork.com](http://timberhomenetwork.com)

