The Turret That Shifted
Edwin Callejon, physician’s assistant
NEW BRIGHTON, STATEN ISLAND

"A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, the turret actually shifted—there was a beam that moved during a renovation of the bathroom below. It was tilted about a foot—I had it fixed, and now it’s only four or five inches off. People always used to say that the room looked like a church. So lately I’ve started to decorate it with a lot of religious statues and a church bench. For all the furniture in the house, I try to stick to Gothic style so it matches the structure, though it’s hard to find and is extremely expensive. I do need my television and computer and that stuff—I keep all that in one room downstairs.”

The Turret in the Making
Martin Spokes, physical therapist
BROOKLYN

“THE HOUSE was built in 1885 by James Bailey of Barnum & Bailey. We’ve owned it for nine years and are still restoring it—we haven’t gotten to the second floor of the turret yet. The house has more than 70 windows, including seven in the turret, all of which require curved glass to fit the structure. To get curved windows that fit exactly, there’s a mathematical formula you have to follow—basically, you figure out the exact degree of the curve and then send that out to a glazier. As for the inside of the turret room: We plan to turn it into a dining area with a round banquette and a round table in the center.”

The Turret That’s a Hotel Suite
NORTH ARKHAM, FINANCIAL DISTRICT

“THIS PAST OCTOBER, the Beekman Hotel unveiled two “turret suites,” designed by the architect Martin Brudnizki. The 1,200-square-foot rooms are each two floors, with 30-foot ceilings, Catherine Howe floral room tones, and Beaux-Arts-inspired chandeliers. "The rooms are very ‘writer’s-apartment attic,’" says Brudnizki. "We used oak floors, vintage Persian rugs. They also feel particularly private. Because who would expect someone to be staying inside the turrets of a 19th-century landmarked building?" ($8,500 a night, thebeekman.com.)

The Turret That Was Just Renovated
Andre Major, developer
CROWN HEIGHTS

“I BOUGHT THIS building in 2016. When we started the renovation, the ceiling was covered with several layers of plaster. So we removed the rest of the ceiling and discovered the original framing of the turret was there. intact, from the day it was built in 1888. Before we bought the building, the city landmarked it. The last owner had put flat glass in the curved windows, but according to landmark regulations, those had to be replaced with curved glass that resembled the originals. It was expensive—each window was about $18,000 to redo.”

What’s a turret worth?

Turrets don’t necessarily add value on their own. “I see them as part of a basket of amenities, like fireplaces and hardwood floors, that create prewar,” says appraiser Jonathan Miller of Miller Samuel. “And prewar means an increased value.”

Why are there so many in New York?

Though turrets may evoke charming European hill towns more than, well, New York, there are actually quite a lot of them here. The majority of New York City turrets were built in the late-19th century, when affluence for the Romanesque revival, a style influenced by 11th-century medieval architecture, reached a fever pitch. Areas like the Upper West Side, Part Slope, and Crown Heights developed in the 1860s and 1890s,” says historian Andrew D’okart. “And that was truly the heyday of turrets.”