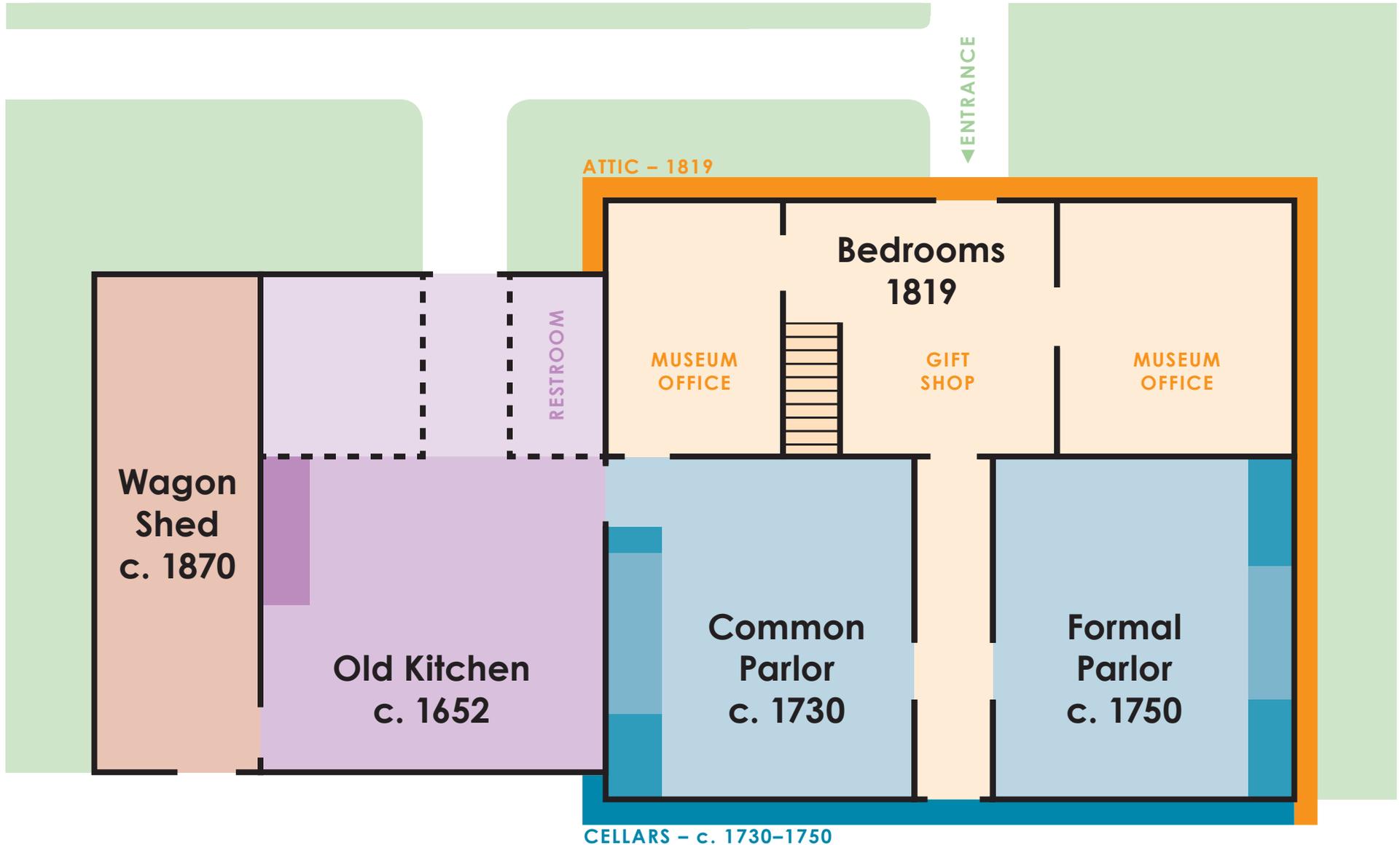




The Wyckoff farmhouse was built between about 1652 and 1819. It is the oldest house in New York City and is the only structure still standing that was built before New York became a British colony in 1664. The house was restored in 1982. Today, it is a national and New York City historic landmark and operates as a museum.



Old Kitchen Built about 1652

The Old Kitchen is the oldest part of the house. This large room originally extended all the way to the front of the house, placing the large hearth in the very center of the room.

This room originally had dirt floors, and there was no glass in the windows, which were smaller.

Even though we call this room the Old Kitchen today, it had many uses. In addition to making food, the hearth was used for warmth, light, making soap and candles, and washing clothes. At night, the room became a bedroom, and the occupants would sleep on palettes (large sacks stuffed with soft materials) on the floor.

★ **What do you think?** *How is this house different from your home? If you lived in this house, what changes would you make to be more comfortable?*

Common Parlor Built about 1730

The farmhouse remained a one-room cottage for three generations of Wyckoffs. In about 1730, Pieter Claesen and Grietje van Nes's grandson, Peter, expanded the house, adding another room and a cellar to the Old Kitchen.

The Common Parlor has an English-style hearth and a built-in cabinet for storing the family's valuables. Today, the cabinet is painted in the same orange and blue that was used in the 1730s. The larger windows, which originally had glass panes, opened out to look over the small kitchen garden.

Dutch families in the 18th Century used the rooms of their houses for many purposes, and the Common Parlor, like the Old Kitchen, was used for many activities in the family's daily life.

★ **What do you think?** *What special objects would you keep in the cabinet if this were your house? How do you think your view out the windows is different today than it was in 1730?*

Formal Parlor Built about 1750

About 20 years after building the Common Parlor, Peter added the Formal Parlor to the house. Today, this is the only room in the house with original floorboards.

Take a close look at the fireplace: the tiles surrounding it are an example of Delft design but are glazed in purple and white, not the more common *blue* and white. This hearth is much smaller than the other two and was only used to heat the house, not for cooking or other work.

This room is where the Wyckoff family would have held many of their prized possessions, including the large *kus*, similar to a wardrobe, in the corner of the room.

★ **What do you think?** *How can you tell that this is the most special room in the house?*

Bedrooms and Attic Built in 1819

The house was expanded once more in 1819 by Abraham Wyckoff. He added a center hallway, built an attic over the newer parts of the house, and created three small bedrooms. This was the first time in the house's history that rooms were used only as bedrooms. Every member of the family now had their own bed.

★ **What do you think?** *Which of these rooms would you choose to be your own bedroom? Why?*



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