

## Willis Mt. Kyanite Mine Dillwyn, VA 9-19-09

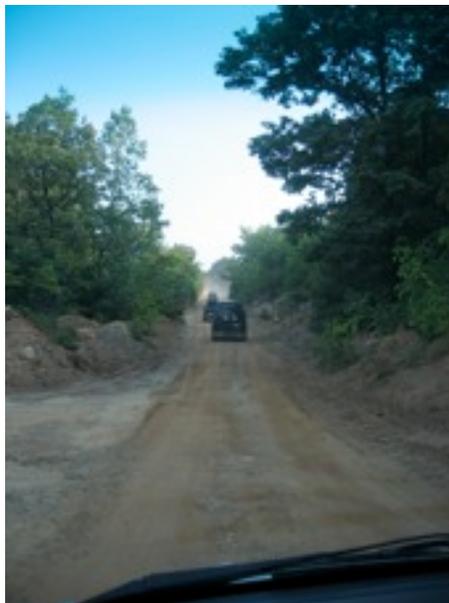
**Field Trip Report:** On a beautiful cool and sunny morning, Heather and I arrived around 8 a.m. Many of the 100 collectors from six clubs in Virginia and Maryland were arriving and enjoying some early morning fellowship. GMSVP had sixteen members in attendance.

This facility is currently open to only one collecting day per year. It is the world's largest producer of kyanite and mullite. Kyanite and mullite provide tremendous amounts of heat resistance. Applications include ceramics, heat shields for space shuttles, brake shoes/pads and spark plugs to name a few.

Dave Callahan, a Lynchburg club member, had a box of nice sample specimens for newcomers to familiarize themselves with. It's always helpful to know what you're looking for!

By 8:30 a.m. the official check-in process was underway in the office parking lot. Each of the club's field trip coordinators were recognized, waivers were signed and a safety briefing was given by Kyanite Mining Corp's (KMC) manager, Mike Morris.

Shortly before 9:00 a.m. each collector drove through the long and winding dirt pathways to top of the infamous "Willis Mountain" in Buckingham County. The views from the top were gorgeous. The last of the cars made it to the top and the masses of people spread out staking a claim to his/her own section of this well-mined mountainside.





Various colors of kyanite were found here today. Pyrite in kyanite and quartz was abundant as well as red mica. Several other pieces were found and will be identified later.

At 11 a.m. everyone drove to the newer "East Side" location for the last two hours of collecting. At 1 p.m. collecting ended and we were officially escorted to the main parking lot. It was a great day!

After returning home, KMC manager Mike Morris contacted me and stated this was the best group of collectors he'd ever hosted.

Submitted by:  
Renee Eichman  
GMSVP Field Trip Coordinator

**When:** Saturday, (9:00am-1:00pm). You must be there at 7:45a.m. for a mine safety briefing, check-in and instructions. If you miss this deadline, you will not be permitted into the mine.

**Where:** Willis Mountain Kyanite Mine  
Dillwyn, VA (south of Charlottesville)

**Directions:**

**What to Bring:** steel-toed boots(required), safety goggles(required), hard hat (required), heavy work gloves, collecting bags, buckets, rock hammer, chisel, drinks, lunch and/or snacks, (no shorts).

**Minerals That Have Been Found:**

Specimens found at this location include kyanite, pyrite crystals, fuchite,  
Finds are dependent upon quarry conditions at the time of the trip.

**Children:** Please remember all children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

**Sign Up:** Please contact field trip coordinator Renee Eichman