



Full Company History 1964-2018

1964 Active Minerals International started its life as International Trading Company in 1964. International Trading Company, which came to be known as ITC, was founded by Peter F. Osterchrist and his wife Ingeborg. It started as a one room operation in their home in the traditional American entrepreneurial fashion of many immigrant families. Mr. Osterchrist and his wife were natives of Germany and had immigrated to the United States when Peter got the opportunity to sell Steel for Thyssen. They settled in the Towson area of Baltimore, started their family and grew their business together. Peter began importing steel and selling it on East Coast representing both Thyssen and Sumitomo Corporation from Japan. The steel business became increasingly competitive and the company tried to import and distribute a wide variety of products from Head Skis and Tennis equipment to Flexi dog leashes and other consumer goods.

Peter's family in Germany were kaolin producers in the Hirschau kaolin district in southern Germany. AKW was the second largest producer of Kaolin in Continental Europe behind English China Clay. In the mid 1960's they contacted Peter to find a source of US kaolin to supplement their own activities in paper and to compete with Engelhard corporation which had become very successful in European markets. Peter made contact with Georgia Kaolin Company and negotiated the export rights for their kaolin products to Europe, South America and Japan. The business flourished behind Peter's salesmanship and the strong global demand for kaolin in paper. ITC became a major exporter of kaolin from Georgia selling product for Georgia Kaolin Company, Anglo America Kaolin and ECC America. ITC was one of the first American companies to ship Kaolin in Bulk bags for export markets and the first to combine bulk spray dried clay with Bulk bag cargo loaded on top. They were the first company to successfully export kaolin slurry from the GKI terminal in Savannah to Europe in dedicated bulk slurry vessel. Mr. Osterchrist was innovative and built a global business as a distributor for Georgia kaolin.

1972 In 1972, ITC acquired a bankrupt Japanese company called Fuji Kaolin located in Fuji, Japan in the shadow of the great dormant volcano, Mt. Fuji. Fuji Kaolin had tried to import kaolin from Indonesia to process and compete with American kaolin producers. That idea proved to be a losing battle since the American clays were the best in the world for paper coating and high shear rheology. The Fuji plant site was right next to one of the largest paper mills in Japan. Realizing his strategic site, Peter joined forces with English China Clay Co in a 50-50 joint venture and introduced the first supply of water ground calcium carbonate to the Japanese paper industry for paper coating. The technology was a huge success and the business grew to two other locations providing WGCC to other large Japanese Paper producers. ITC was one of the first American companies to establish a wholly owned subsidiary in Japan when it acquired Fuji Kaolin. Its presence in Japan gave the company a unique German Japanese focus where it participated in the growth of the two largest and fastest growing economies of the 70's and early 80's.

1980's In the mid 1980's the European portion of the business was sold to AKW and they formed a joint venture with Georgia Kaolin called Euroclay. ITC focused its activities in Japan which was growing very rapidly. In March 1984 Dennis Parker was hired as Business Development Manager to diversify ITC into other markets other than the paper industry. The same year Kas Sakurai was hired and the team set out to build a business in Japan. Japan is a very difficult market for any company to enter with new products and ideas but gradually Sakurai and Parker built a business consisting of attapulgite, water washed kaolin, and air float kaolin. Their success allowed Parker to expand sales into Taiwan, Korea, Southeast Asia and Australia. By 1988 the business had grown to the extent that Robert Purcell and Jack Whiteford joined the team to expand our sales beachhead in Asian markets.



1985 In 1985, Mr. Osterchrist realized that the value of his share in Fuji Kaolin was peaking so he sold his interest in Fuji to English China Clay. Seeking another mineral business to invest in, Dennis Parker found America Borate Company, a subsidiary of Owens Corning as a potential acquisition target in 1989. Working with Al Johnson and Dennis Parker, ITC was able to join with Jim Sparks to acquire American Borate Company in December of 1990. Parker and Whiteford had established markets for the Billie mine product in Taiwan prior to the purchase of ABC. The business boomed well into the 21st century and this was a major catalyst for the growth of the company which sold air float kaolin to the same growing industry. It was American Borate's connection to ETI Maden, the world's largest producer of borates, which allowed Active Minerals to grow into a truly global company.

1990's Unfortunately, Mr. Osterchrist was never able to see his dreams come true for ITC. He and his wife and our two company pilots were killed when our company plane crashed on landing in Newark, Delaware in June 1992. Harold Rubin was appointed President and CEO to guide the company through the difficult times ahead. As the company regained its strength it was able to form a joint Venture with Engelhard Corporation to acquire the Floridin Company in June 1996. The two companies produced their individual attapulgite needs in the Quincy facility and each sold independently in the market as Floridin and Engelhard respectively.

1996 and Early 2000's Sparks Investment Group and key employees purchased ITC Inc from the estate of Peter F. Osterchrist in December 1996. Dennis Parker was appointed President of the new Company called Active Minerals. Active Minerals focused its efforts on expanding markets in Asia for kaolin to the fiber glass industry which was growing rapidly and expanding the sales of its Attapulgite operations. Active Minerals acquired Wilkinson Kaolin associates in 2003 to become a direct supplier of kaolin to the global fiber glass industry. In the same year Active Minerals built its Quincy processing plant to produce 100% of its finished products from feed stock purchased from the Joint Venture with Engelhard. In 2005 the life of the Joint venture ended and Active Minerals bought feedstock directly from BASF the new owner of the Engelhard Attapulgite processing facility.

2007 In 2007 a group of employees Led by Dennis Parker joined forces with Merit Capital to acquire the interest of the Sparks investment group in AMI. Active Minerals expanded its production capability in 2008 by building its ACR mine and mill complex south of Climax Georgia. This state of the art facility replaced 100% of Active Minerals need to purchase feedstock from BASF and allowed Active to become the world's largest and lowest cost producer of gel grade attapulgite clay. Clay produced at ACR is shipped direct to customers by bulk truck and bulk rail. Feedstock is delivered to the Quincy South plant and the Quincy North plant for addition bulk rail capacity. AMI has over 200,000 square feet of storage capacity in the Quincy area to meet customer needs for attapulgite products.

2008 In 2008 AMI expanded its kaolin product line and capacity by acquiring Southeastern Clay located in Aiken SC. The "hard" clay produced in Aiken is one of the world's finest naturally occurring resource for kaolin clay. Primary markets are for rubber, catalyst, paints, coatings and other high value market.

2010 In 2010 Active Minerals added production capacity at its Gordon facility by installing 250,000 stpy of additional mill capacity to serve their core markets in Asia. In 2012 Active expanded it bulk bagging capacity to 350,000 mtpy by installing a self designed state of the art bulk bagging system which allows us to ship over 1,000 mtpd of kaolin in bulk bags to export and domestic markets.



2010's 2011-2012 saw Active expand the capacity of its Aiken facility from 75,000 tons per year to 225,000 tons per year with the installation of a new mill and the demolition of the old production facility. Combined with our automated packaging system Active Minerals has the most modern facility in the world for dry processing and packaging of Kaolin Clay.

Active Minerals will continue its focus on what we do best, low cost production of attapulgite and kaolin clays, shipped worldwide at the highest quality and at competitive prices. None of what we have accomplished could have been done without the support and loyalty of our many customers and other stakeholders in our business. Their continued support provides us with the strength to continue to create new products and open new market around the world. We appreciate their support and promise to be the best supplier of Kaolin and Attapulgite in the world.