

Albert Holm's Biography:

(All Internet links are live.)

Originally from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, I graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from the [California Institute of Technology](#) in 1966, and went on to receive a Ph.D. in astronomy from the [University of Wisconsin-Madison](#) in 1971. My thesis involved building computer models of planetary nebulae to try to understand why some appeared to have dense condensations embedded in them.

My first job after getting my Ph.D. was at [Goddard Space Flight Center](#) where I helped operate the [Orbiting Astronomical Observatory-2](#), the first successful astronomical satellite. The OAO-2 was designed to provide ultraviolet photometry and low-resolution spectroscopy of stars, planets, and other celestial objects. During that time I grew to love observing variable stars. With the OAO-2 we made the first ultraviolet observations of a supernova as well as many other variable stars. After the OAO-2 suffered a power supply failure in 1973, I returned to Madison to help reduce its observations.

In 1977 I joined Computer Sciences Corporation to operate the [International Ultraviolet Explorer](#) from Goddard Space Flight Center. The IUE was a fun observatory because we were always in real-time communication with the telescope. We were able to react immediately to new information either from the IUE itself or from other sources. This made it excellent for studying variable sources. During this time, I obtained new results on dwarf novae and other cataclysmic variables, on R Coronae Borealis stars, on eclipsing binaries, and even on pulsating white dwarf stars.

In 1983 I joined my colleagues at the [Space Telescope Science Institute](#) to prepare the ground system for operating the [Hubble Space Telescope](#). At the Science Institute, I served as manager for the Observation Support System team and then for operation of the OSS-PODPS Unified System. Most recently I served as Branch Chief for Data Processing and Archive Services until I retired in summer 2010.

Because of my interest in variable stars I became active in the [American Association of Variable Star Observers](#). I was a member of the Council of the AAVSO from 1990 until 1998, and served as president of the organization from 1995 to 1997.

I have been giving public talks about astronomy since the early 1990's. Most of the material is suitable for the general public, although I have done presentations for students in middle school and, on the other end of the scale, for amateur astronomers