55 Years Later: Friends Reconnect Via PHI

“Joyce Tepley ... Joyce Tepley ... I kept repeating to myself,” thought Beverly Schmittgen, as she read an article in Post-Polio Health.

Schmittgen recalled “a petite little girl with dark brown hair and a friendly personality” who occupied the bed next to hers in the polio ward at Cleveland’s City Hospital in August 1952.

“I wondered what had become of her. I just HAD to contact her!” said Schmittgen. “Her response was delightful. She told me many details about her schooling, her move to Dallas, her career as a social worker, her 20-year marriage and her symptoms of post-polio syndrome.” And so began a barrage of emails, phone calls and reunions.

Tepley said, “I couldn’t believe it! An (email) voice from the past. And not just the past, but the very time when my life changed completely ... It all came slamming back. The minute I read the email, I was transported back to that bed in that ward filled with little kids like me who were scared and sick ... I was so excited to finally see a long-lost friend who I shared such a significant time with.”

Would you like to read more? Go to www.polioplace.org and type Friends in the Search box. Beverly Schmittgen and Joyce Tepley both write about how they renewed a friendship after more than 55 years.

Visit www.polioplace.org. You may find an old friend there.