

The Boston Globe

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2015

ThursdayScene

NIGHTLIFE
SOCIETY
STYLE

THE BOSTON GLOBE THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2015 | BOSTONGLOBE.COM/LIFESTYLE

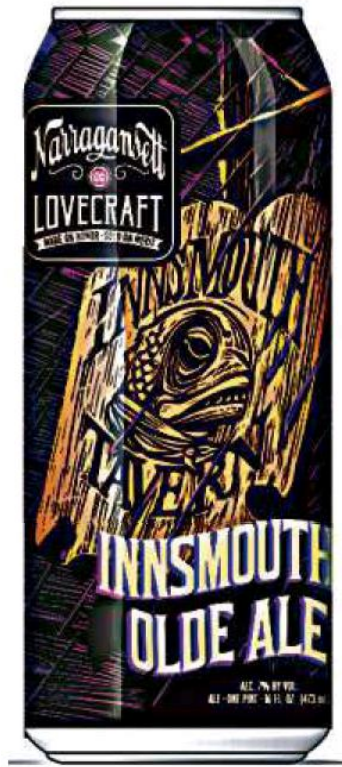
BOTTLES

Narragansett's latest ale celebrates R.I. author

Narragansett Brewing Co. was founded in 1890, in Cranston, R.I. As a company, it has been through many iterations, but the common thread has been an association with its home state. Even when the brand lagged and sputtered after being sold several times, a generation of New Englanders still associated 'Gansett with summertime Red Sox broadcasts and Curt Gowdy.

To that end, Narragansett has recently partnered with companies from Rhode Island to make a stout with Autocrat Coffee Milk syrup, and a shandy with Del's Lemonade. There's another loop in this tightly woven net: The same year the brewery was founded, Howard Phillips Lovecraft, an author whose horror fiction works would go on to inspire Stephen King and others, was born in Providence. Now Narragansett's latest tribute focuses on Lovecraft, who has a city square named after him in Providence, where the company is headquartered. "H.P.'s one of those guys you either know him and love him, or you've never really even heard of him," says Mark Hellenprung of Narragansett.

The CEO's description of the author might also be applied to the company, which experienced its own horror, churning through bad recipes and nearing extinction before Hellenprung bought the brand in 2005. Today, he spends a couple days a week driving around the Northeast peddling the brews. Despite a massive relaunch, he still encounters plen-



Lovecraft Innsmouth Olde Ale draws inspiration from a tale about the fictional seaside town of Innsmouth, Mass.

ty of folks who enjoyed the beer in the 1960s and have no idea is still exists. "I'm constantly surprised by how many people didn't know that we were back, even though it's 10 years in June," says Hellenprung.

Narragansett brews two beers based on Lovecraft's work. The first, released in January, is a honey ale. The latest, Lovecraft Innsmouth Olde Ale, draws inspiration from a tale about the fictional seaside town of Innsmouth, Mass. The beer is brewed with the help of Sean Larkin, founder of Revival Brewing Co., also in Providence, and a collaborator with Narragansett. Both Larkin and Hellenprung thought the old ale style — dark, malty brews with some age to them — appealed to a certain Lovecraft aesthetic, given that it is far from mainstream. "The uniqueness of it kind of helps it stand out," says Hellenprung.

The beer pours a chestnut brown into the glass and has scents of cherry gummy bears and brown bread. Lovecraft is known for short stories, but there's nothing crisp about this beer. The mouthfeel is thick, syrupy, and at 7 percent alcohol by volume, feels as heavy as it drinks. It could be a little more mysterious. It's heavy without any kind of dry, spicy, or hoppy note to pull it back. Curl up with this one and read a long, scary book. *Narragansett Lovecraft Innsmouth Olde Ale* (around \$12 for a six-pack) available at *Atlas Liquors, Medford, 781-391-0410; and Downtown Wine & Spirits, Somerville, 617-625-7777.*

GARY DZEN