SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 8-K

Current Report Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934

Date of Report (Date of Earliest Event Reported): July 23, 1997

Arch Coal, Inc.

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

DELAWARE

(State or Other Jurisdiction of Incorporation)

1-13105 (Commission File No.) 43-0921172 (I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

CityPlace One, Suite 300, St. Louis, Missouri (Address of Principal Executive Offices)

> 63141 (Zip Code)

(314) 994-2700

(Registrant's Telephone Number, Including Area Code)

ITEM 5. OTHER EVENTS

The Company announced on July 24, 1997 that its Board of Directors has directed implementation of a share repurchase plan under which the Company may repurchase, from time to time, up to 1,000,000 shares of Company common stock. Shares acquired may be used for general corporate purposes.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in St. Louis, State of Missouri, on July 30, 1997.

ARCH COAL, INC.

By: /s/ Jeffry N. Quinn

Jeffry N. Quinn Senior Vice President, Law & Human

Human Resources

Date: July 30, 1997