ROMAN KEY CARD BLACKWOOD

When the trump suit is agreed, we use the 4 aces and the king of trumps as the 'key' cards. When the trump suit is not agreed, the 'key' suit is the last suit bid.

The responses to 4NT are as follows:

5♣	= 0 or 3 key cards
5♦	= 1 or 4 key cards
5♥	= 2 key cards
5♠	= 2 key cards + Queen of key suit

If asker then wants to enquire about kings, then 5NT asks. The responses are: -

6♣	= 0 or 3 kings
6♦	= 1 king
6♥	= 2 kings

There are only 3 kings, as the king of trumps has already been accounted for. It is generally accepted that asker will only ask for kings id all of the key cards are present.

When asker gets a 5♣ or 5♦ response, the absence or presence of the queen of trumps is not known. He can enquire about this card by bidding 5 of the next suit up (not the trump suit which is a sign-off).

Let's suppose that ♠'s are trumps. Asker has bid 4NT and received a 5♦ (1 keycard) response. If asker then wants to ask about the ♠Q, the bid is 5♥. The responses are as follows: -

5 of the trump suit	=	denies the trump queen
5NT	=	acknowledges the trump queen but denies an outside king
5 (or 6) of a suit	=	acknowledges the trump queen and shows the king of the suit bid.

Note that in this last case of showing a king, the cheapest king is bid id responder has more than one outside king.

This is just the basics of RKCB and it will be written up in much more detail at a later date.